Age Group Definition

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Dear Lorrie

RE-AGE GROUP DETERMINATION

I refer to a letter you wrote earlier in the season querying why 1 July was the age determination date for triathlon.

Since this is a historic matter which pre-existed my involvement, I've made an effort to speak to people who have been in the sport longer in an effort to provide you with a correct answer.

It appears the reasons are:

1. To enable all competitors to know who their competitors are throughout the season (presumably so there are no 'surprises' later in the season from superior triathletes moving up an age). This is similar to school sport where age is determined at 31 December and if a junior turns a particular age during a year, THAT is the age group they compete in. i.e. They know they are, for example, '15s' for the whole year.

2. In earlier years, and still to some extent, great importance was placed on national and state age group rankings. Obviously such a ranking system would be unworkable if competitors were changing age groups mid-season. (i.e. Would their points count to the 50-54 ranking or their 55-59 ranking?)

3. Given the above, it is then logical for 1 July to be the age determination date because it comes at the end of the triathlon season. 1 January and age on day would be unacceptable because you would have people jumping age groups mid-season.

To comment on some of your other points:

1. 1 January would not solve the problem of someone being 11 months too old (or too young) for a particular age group. A 55 year old Masters Swimmer would've had to race you when you were still 54!

2. The various examples you quote (swimming, athletics) show no one agrees on a single date policy anyway.

3. The ITU ruling (age on day for age groupers) applies only to ITU events—basically world championships—not to Australia (and probably not to most other countries who would also have their date) Bear in mind too we are 6 months out of synch with northern hemisphere countries for geographical reasons.

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4. Even though the International Women's Triathlon was nominally 'international', it was not an ITU-run event and Australian rules applied. Thus 1 July.

5. The Tropicarnival entry form was certainly misleading when it asked for 'age on day'. There is no reason for them to have that information since it was a Queensland Championship and Surfers Paradise TC, the organisers and virtually all competitors know age is determined on 1 July.

6. Financial Year is used, not because it is the end of the Financial Year, but because it is the end of the triathlon season in most of Australia.

Hopefully you can now understand that 1 July is logical, fair in the sense that everyone has to live with it, and therefore acceptable.

Yours faithfully

Brian Chapman
SECRETARY

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