

October 10, 2004

## **"Junior days end on high note for triathlete" - Winnipeg Sun story on Friday October 8th**

By Glen Dawkins

Triathlete Erin Braun couldn't have picked a better way to finish off her junior triathlon career. In her last event before graduating from the junior ranks, the 19-year-old University of Manitoba student won the Canadian junior duathlon title, last Saturday in Quebec City. Braun led the sprint-drafting event from start to finish, covering the 5km run, 20km cycle and 2.5km run in a time of 1:12:21.

Jenna Wilson, the 2003 junior champion, took the bronze medal in 1:14:36, followed in fourth by fellow Manitoba National Triathlon Centre member Amy Briscoe.

This marks the fourth year in a row that an MNTC triathlete had won the junior duathlon title with Briscoe winning in 2001 and 2002 and Wilson last year.

"It hasn't always been a given (that one of them would win) but we've always managed to do it," said Braun, who first got involved in triathlon through a Kids of Steel program at her elementary school.

"That was something our coach (Gary Pallett) was hoping that we'd accomplish with all three of us going in it."

While a triathlon combines swimming, cycling and running, a duathlon has two running legs surrounding a cycling segment.

The Canadian Duathlon Championships marks the end of the 2004 triathlon season. While Wilson was able to carry on to the world duathlon championships last year in Switzerland, there are no such opportunities for Braun this year.

Fortunate

But she's not disappointed by that turn of events.

"I've done a lot already this year," said Braun, a second year Agriculture student at the U of M. "I've travelled the most I ever have this year. I've been fortunate with that."

This year, Braun won the bronze medal in the junior sprint women's event at the Pan American Triathlon Championships in Edmonton in July and represented Canada at the ITU World Triathlon Championships in Portugal in May. She also topped the field at the USA Triathlon Junior Worlds Qualifier in Florida in March and was fifth in the Canadian Junior Triathlon Championships in Caledon, Ont., in August.

For now, Braun is content to get back into her 20-to-30 hour a week training regime and run cross-country and track for the Bisons.

Next year, she'll move up to the Under-23 category which features Olympic distances that are generally twice as long as those for the juniors. The Under-23 category allows the juniors to ease into the Olympic distances without having to go head-to-head with the elite competitors.

"(Next year) will be more of a transition year (for her)," said Braun. "It's twice the distance. I've done it before but it's still tougher."

Awards Evening: Triathlon Manitoba will present its annual Awards Evening, Oct. 30 at 7 p.m., at Sir John Franklin Community Centre.

Sharon Donnelly, 1999 Pan Am Games triathlon gold medallist and 2000 Olympian, will be the guest speaker.