

CENTRESPORT

Daring to succeed

The Newsletter of the Central Scotland Institute of Sport



Issue No 79

16th January 2008

Gold Haul continues for Nicole

As the season's curtain raiser things could not have gone better for water skier, Nicole Arthur, who won the women's slalom event at this month's World Under-21 Championships in Santiago, Chile.

In doing so the Slamannan 20 year old is now the first water skier to have secured World titles at every age group category from junior to senior.

"I was 16 when I first competed in this event and I got bronze then," said a lean and tanned Nicole at the Central Scotland Institute of Sport today. "So I'm really pleased to get my first gold. Now it adds my fourth world title to last year's Open title and the two junior gold medals I've won."

"Because I'd won the Worlds everybody was expecting me to win again. The first round I didn't ski that well, probably because of that reason - I was nervous. The second round I told myself to just get on with it."

Having qualified second, she set out as the penultimate skier in the final, needing to beat Canadian Witney McClintock's three buoys on the 11.25 metre rope. Nicole set a new mark in getting around the fourth buoy. The last skier, Australian Karina Nowlan, failed to round the third buoy, sealing the top spot for Nicole.

With every world title now accomplished with her teen years barely behind her, Nicole still has one final year in the under 21 category. But as holder of the world's senior title, the next 12 months will be her busiest in the sport.

"Because I won the Open Worlds I've got invitations to all the pro events and all the World Cup stops," she said.

"This year there'll be a lot of travelling and I'll go to America and do the whole States thing. There are about 12 pro tour stops, three world cup stops, three title events. My first event is the US Masters, on the 22 May in Georgia, which is a very big one."

With such a gap before her next major competition,




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Nicole might be excused for having some well earned down time, but the words ‘time off’ are not a part her vocabulary.

“Much as I want to rest, the key for the next three weeks is to get back into my strength work here at the Central Institute. It’s going to be a heavy year.”

CSIS triathlete, Fraser Cartmell began the 2008 triathlon season in good style, finishing third in this weekend’s Ironman 70.3 South Africa race.

Cartmell, who finished seventh in November’s Ironman 70.3 World Championships in Florida, has been based in South Africa for the past six weeks, training and acclimatising for his first full season as a full timer.

The event was held in East London, South Africa, and Fraser emerged from the 1.2 miles swim in the lead and also produced the fastest time for the 13.1 mile half marathon. It was just the hilly 56 mile cycle leg that let him down.

“I had the fastest swim and run splits but suffered seriously on the hilly and demanding bike course,” said Cartmell, who had held a slim lead on the bike ahead of Belgian Frederick van Lierde.

South African, Raynard Tissink, reeled them both in before the half way point on the cycle leg and stayed ahead for the remainder of the race. Van Lierde finished second with Cartmell coming third, his time of 4 hours 10 minutes and 40 seconds some seven and a half minutes adrift of the winner.

“There was far too much time lost on the bike to try and make up on the run but I started the run in fourth position and moved into third midway through the half marathon,” said Cartmell.

“But I am happy with the result given the calibre of the two guys in front. They are both fantastic athletes with superb results behind them.”

Fraser will stay in South Africa to train until 21 February before returning to his base of Stirling and the supporting Central Scotland Institute of Sport to plan the rest of the racing season.

