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Media Information

For immediate release:

UK Triathlon Industry Growth Continues Alongside Need to Entice Millennials

15% growth in industry spend and 10,000 new participants in 2015

The sport of triathlon enjoyed a year of significant growth in 2015, with 140,000 people accounting for a record total of 220,000 race starts, and a 15 per cent rise in total spend to £417.5 million, according to the fourth annual research study of Britain's multisport community by the Triathlon Industry Association (TIA).

The annual industry health check, which combined an in-depth quantitative survey of 5,072 triathletes with multiple trade interviews, identified both clear strengths for the industry's stakeholders to build upon, but also some significant challenges facing the sport.

The study pointed to a large, engaged and affluent base of participating athletes, with an average age of 42 and salary of £48,900, spending more on coaching, fitness tech and triathlon-related overseas travel than ever before.

The proportion of women doing triathlon stayed the same in 2015 as the year before, at 28%. Interestingly, whilst equally engaged, the female triathlete's spend bias is towards gym membership, training camps and racing overseas in contrast to the male bias towards new hardware.

However, the study also showed that age appears to be a major factor in determining the success of the sport's recruitment initiatives. The landmark age of 40 years old clearly represents an important milestone, with an 8% rise in participation for the larger group of those over 40 and a 9% drop for the smaller group of those aged under 40 recorded.

The research also found that Strava (up to 43% from 35% in 2014) has overtaken Twitter (39% in 2015) as triathletes' most used social platform after Facebook (73%). This, combined with the relatively low levels of triathlon-related social sharing, less than 25% of active triathletes share content at least weekly, indicates an opportunity to grow the influence of triathlon through social media – and build an outreach to the younger community of Millennials.

With a strong British men's and women's team soon heading off to Rio to try to build upon the medal-winning feats of the Brownlees at London 2012, the sport will be hoping for more podium places to place the sport firmly in the minds of the younger sporting public.

Nick Rusling, Chairman of the TIA comments: "Our annual study is invaluable in helping us to build an ever-clearer picture of the triathlon community in order that we can continue to grow our sport and its associated businesses. On the one hand it is very encouraging to see our core audience grow and become more engaged with everything the sport has to offer, but we must also reflect on the challenges we face and collectively develop campaigns to address them. The competition to attract the millennial audience is fierce, so triathlon needs to up its game to remain front of mind."

Jack Buckner, Chief Executive of British Triathlon adds: “The Rio year is tremendously important to triathlon as it represents the sport’s biggest shop window and our greatest chance to attract new people to the sport. We have plans in place to leverage the momentum that the Games will bring to raise awareness of the pathways we are creating into the sport, like GO TRI and the Triathlon Trust’s work creating more children’s triathlons.”

The Triathlon Industry Association comprises event organisers, equipment manufacturers, tour operators, retailers, distributors and media.

For new membership enquiries and more information about TIA visit:
<http://www.triathlonindustryassociation.org/>

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