



## *EXECUTIVE BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT*

All correspondence to: [info@zimtri.org](mailto:info@zimtri.org)

### **2017-2018 SEASON**

I would like to begin this report by extending my sincere thanks to all who have made the effort to attend this very important meeting as it marks the beginning of a new, and I have no doubt, an exciting time for Triathlon Zimbabwe.

We have as a country endured a long, hard history both pre and post Independence, and it is ironic that this new and young Sport ran its course during these past 38 years, by being constituted within the new Independent state of Zimbabwe.

In essence this sport has endured all of the countries parallels through good and bad and it has, flourished and floundered, but above all, it has survived.

It must be noted that, as you may or not have seen on your agenda- that this is the 30<sup>th</sup> such occasion that this Association has met to finalise the past season and then plan for the next, and I would like to think, that just as we are as a country, on the threshold of a turning tide.

And so it must be with this Association, we have to be positive about our future and I am delighted that we have the correct opportunity to bring about positive and constructive change to our leadership.

If you take the time to read the resumes of the potential Presidential candidates you will see constructive and proactive thinking in this regard from them all.

Whatever the outcome of this election, and whoever is successful in the voting process, we collectively have a lot to offer to support and ensure the continued success of this Association.

I personally have never pretended that we are not a minority sport. Triathlon is tough and demanding as it involves three sporting disciplines. This needs time and effort to be able to participate at any level and consequently it naturally will not appeal to all because of this reason.

It is also an individual sport and this will appeal to only some people and in particular, within the Schools system, this is not really encouraged as team work is critical to a young person's development and interactive skills.

However as a minority sport we have continuously produced a platform for those who do wish to be part of the sport to be able to participate in a safe, fun and fair environment.

Our relationships with key sporting custodians, sponsors and local authorities have all been based on professionalism, good governance and transparency and as a minority sport we have set the bar very high. This must continue if we are to survive and make headway in the potential new dawn of post election Zimbabwe and therefore your considered votes are critical to this progress.

On a point of order with regard to the election process, I would like to reiterate that only members of Triathlon Zimbabwe are permitted to vote and by this, we refer to those who are present and active on our data-base.

In addition, we will follow the laws of the land in that only persons who have attained the age of 18 are permitted to vote. Finally, only proxy votes that have been received by email by the Secretary General or were handed in at the Registration for this AGM to the Secretary General, and that are compliant with the requisites as laid out for this process, will be counted as votes.

Therefore at this very time, Proxy votes are now considered late and will not be valid if presented during the voting process other than those already received by the Secretary General.

#### **THE 2017-18 SEASON:**

With regard to the immediate past season, it is my great pleasure to be able to report that we have enjoyed a continued growth in new members joining the sport. This augers well for the future and we must continue to find more methods to attract new people to this great sport. Good strides have been made in this area and the Development Report will expand further on this.

The positive numbers of participants with the introduction of Aquathlon in the 2016-17 season, did drop away slightly this last season, but the signs are still positive for the future of this platform and the growth of our involvement with new schools.

This last season a total of 2,362 participants took part in our scheduled 14 events as opposed to a 5 season peak of 2,639 in season 2016-17.

Of these 2,362 participants, 556 took part in the 6 Aquathlon events, and 1,802 took part in the 14 triathlon events.

This constituted a 24% split Aquathlon to 76% Triathlon. The 2016-17 split read 50% Aquathlon to 50% Triathlon.

For Triathlon, this therefore constituted a holding trend and even a slight increase in participants competing than in previous years and our Tri-Kidz and Tri-Sport categories were evident of this growth week on week, as with the

Short Mini, which probably enjoyed the greatest boost of all categories with regard to growth.

The growth of these categories must continue then into the older age categories.

More worrying however is the drop in U13 competitors and this does will not assist going forward with our more competitive and representative age groups. Again this aspect is covered in the Development Report.

As with other more specific Development programmes we also somehow need to capitilise on the existing and established Junior Schools Duathlon Series to draw these competitors into triathlon- this should now become a priority going forward to grow this U13 category.

Reporting now on our representative categories, I must again compliment our touring teams to both the South African Championships and the ATU African Triathlon Championships. Our young people continue to be an asset with their manners, behaviour and with their performances on the field of play. You do us all proud.

A small Development team of only 14 athletes, in comparison to previous years, travelled to compete in the South African Championships held in Bloemfontein. This again amplifies our need to be more active in the schools system to grow these once highly competitive age groupings.

That said, 4 medals were achieved, 1Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze and this was still a handsome return on our representation and our heartiest congratulations go to the medallists and the entire Team for all of their performances.

A small National team was then further selected to travel to Rabat for the Africa Triathlon Championships and sadly some of these selected members elected not to travel.

Those that did travel however endured the fickle character of the French airline system, and a host hotel that was situated at least 15 kilometres from the race venue. All still managed with good humour, to produce excellent performances that did us proud in very tough open water swim conditions, our proverbial Achilles heel.

The event doubled as the Youth Olympic Games Qualifier, brought forward at 30 days short notice by the ITU and the IOC based on the organisational concerns regarding the mandated qualification event being the African Youth Games in Algiers to be staged in July.

Our selected athletes just missed the qualification with combined 4<sup>th</sup> positions with only 3 Nations qualifying from Africa. It is never great being the nearly guys, but that is sport and we will all grow and improve with losing.

However our Youth boys enjoyed a great race, mainly against each other, but their performances were of a very good standard and we were complimented on our quality, and I might add, the depth in this category, as a good backbone for the future.

My sincere thanks go to all of the Tour management for both of these tours, there were a lot of moving targets along the way and they were all dealt with accordingly. The fund-raising and preparation for these tours, and the actual management on tour, is a thankless task and not at all easy, and again I wish to express my gratitude for a job well done in the end.

Our continued efforts to roll out the Corporate Challenge are starting to make some ground and we will continue to push this really important development tool next season as well. As reported and as with last year, the pre-season marketing must be continued and even stepped up for this category in conjunction with Schweppes and Coca Cola.

The Youth Olympic Games Qualifier has been a major part of some of our young athletes' lives for 2 seasons now and this has involved Development Camps in Tunisia, Morocco and later this month, to Brive, France. I would like to think that these have been positive and exciting experiences for our young athletes.

This age group was targeted in 2016 by the ATU for development funding here on onto junior level, and this process will continue as these athletes are targeted as the Continental Elites for the future.

There are many future plans for this group including an African Junior Challenge at the Discovery World Cup in February next year.

Compliments must go to Gideon Benade as he took the decision to turn U23 Elite this last season and start the learning curve of managing this level of International competition. It was great to have an Elite level athlete racing again at Troutbeck and we hope that this is the start of a career that you will make positive progress in and fly the Zimbabwean flag on the Continental and International stage.

With regard to Technical and Development, we as an Association had Pamela Fulton and Gideon Benade both selected to travel courtesy of the ITU to Korea in late 2017 to attend ITU Level 2 and ITU Level 1 Coaching courses respectively. This has to be the start of a move to include more Coaches into our set-up going forward and it would make sense for us to now search for an ITU Facilitators course to enable us to stage self-funded Coaching courses locally to grow this base. This must be aimed at the school teacher and other interested, but committed participants.

In the past parents have been the majority of attendees who have attended these past courses, which are not that frequent, and we have lost ALL of them as their children leave the sport to move onto University.

The blow is that of a double-edged sword- we lose our best age group athletes from junior level to University, usually outside of the country, and invariably never to return. We then also lose the direct input from a wider parent group who have assisted in coaching, and to a lesser degree, also technical, from the sport.

Full credit however must go to those few parents, and I do mean a special few, whose children have left the sport and that have continued to contribute to the sport way above all expectations. These are the very people who have made this sport so strong and it is your contributions that have allowed this sport to continue and not only survive, but also flourish. I honour you and thank you most sincerely for your passion, your valuable time and efforts.

On the Technical side, we as an Association continue to have our Technical Officials represent the ITU and the ATU at different African events as Technical delegates and also as Assistant Delegates.

Of particular note for 2018, was the appointment of Dave Ellis to be the Technical Delegate at World Triathlon Cup Cape Town, also as TD at the African Cup in Bloemfontein, Cath Jennings as TD and Demos Koutongos as Assistant TD, to the new African Cup in Rwanda, Mel Barnes as Assistant TD for Troutbeck. The experience is invaluable.

I also would like to mention that Shaun Shelton, Obs Steffens and Dave Ellis will be travelling to South Africa in August to attend their ITU Level 2 Recertification Seminar. This course will equip them with all of the tools to continue not only as TDs but to also move more importantly into Event Management which is a bonus for us as an Association as this will further add value to our events and further enhance the athlete experience at our local events.

I also take this opportunity to thank Shaun Shelton for his management of the local Technical Team for our local events for this last season. This was a very frustrating time for Shaun as he attempted from race to race, marshal resources to assist with our events. It is time that we expanded this pool of resources and this must start with this new season.

The Treasurer has already presented his in depth report and the financials for the last season and to this end I thank Gary, Carol and Tammy for all of their hard work and excellent management of our resources.

This is a fine example of why Triathlon Zimbabwe is one of a handful of fully compliant National Sporting Associations that have received the new Operators Licence introduced by the Sport & Recreation Commission.

Possibly one of our biggest headaches both operationally and financially has been Mount Pleasant swimming pool. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Colin Weston for his tireless work in this facility. His experience in the

Water Chemical business brought us peace of mind with the management of the water quality and all of the maintenance and repairs associated with the last season.

We experienced borehole replacements, Chlorinator breakdowns, a three year old pump being repaired owing to a plastic bottle being sucked into the pump and a variety of other minor repairs. The expenditure for the pool amounted to \$5,132 being spent on chemicals, \$1,755 going to repairs and the pump rewind being carried out courtesy of Jim Brown, to whom we extend our grateful thanks. Costs for the re-tiling and a new Chlorinator are still ongoing and to be finalised.

Added to this, based on the ongoing financial impasse between Council and Employees, the reduced pool staff was reluctant to do too much additional work at the pool. To this end, prior to each race we would employ a clean-up team to sweep the entire area collecting litter and rubbish, sweeping up leaves and cutting grass. In addition to improve the sanitation levels in the ablutions, and again courtesy of Jim Brown and Ilala Lodge, a cleaning company was contracted to thoroughly clean the ablutions and the briefing room weekly and also before and after each every event.

Currently Colin is now managing the re-tiling of the entire pool to remove all broken and loose tiles. He has managed the fundraising on his own and has resourced all of the necessary materials to carry this all out. The pool is now empty and the work well underway. I would therefore like to urge all of you who have not contributed to this cause to please consider a small donation to this cause.

One of our off-season priorities is to open negotiations with specific Mount Pleasant Councillors and other key persons to have Arundel school road resurfaced based on our mutual contributions to the Swimming Pool as part of our community commitment. We cannot keep on patching this route for our bike course.

The Treasurer has also mentioned the contributions of our various Sponsors and I would like to also add my grateful thanks to all of our fantastic sponsors.

To our Troutbeck sponsors, Coca Cola and Schweppes Holdings, and their associates FreightAir and Servcor, our established sponsors Bon Marche and DHL Zimbabwe. To all, our grateful thanks for continuing to support this showpiece of our season. Now entering our 12<sup>th</sup> year for this event, the planning has begun already and the date is set for 16 February 2019.

We will continue to grow this event into a Multi-sport festival and grow the International Elite element by again hosting the event the week after the Cape Town World Cup event. To this end, the introduction of this calendar placement and the conversion to the Sprint distance was a success and the recipe for the future.

To our loyal season sponsors, our eternal gratitude as you has supported us through thick and thin. These include Introwise Commercial Catering, Ilala Lodge, Homestyle Bricks, Cold Chain Zimbabwe with their brands Bokomo and Snickers, Bratz Basement for aligning yourselves directly with Tri-Kidz and Tri-Sport. We also welcome on board Kenac Computers and Evolution Insurance.

Kenac will assist also with computer hardware for our use and Evolution has come on board to cover all of our Insurance requirements. These include Public liability, assets and the importation cover for visiting athletes to Troutbeck. In addition Evolution will assist financially but specifically in the Development arena.

Currently we have final negotiations with 2 other sponsors for the new season.

A special mention, and a huge thank you, must be made to Niall Rooney of Rooneys Hiring Specialists who has been a very good friend of Triathlon Zimbabwe for a number of years and assists us always with our logistical requirements through the season and for Troutbeck. Not only a Partner, but realistically, one of our sponsors.

In conclusion, I would like to most sincerely thank my Executive Board for all of your hard work and time through the last season, it is greatly appreciated.

I would like to also take this opportunity to wish the new Executive every success for the future. I will continue to assist in any way possible and in particular directly with Sponsors, local events and the Event Directorship of Troutbeck.

If I had to thank all of the people who have contributed in all manner of ways to the success of this great sport during my 28 year tenure, we would still be here next week and to this end, thank you all where ever you are, most sincerely for your contributions, your time and most importantly, your friendship.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Fulton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**RICK FULTON**  
**PRESIDENT**

**EMAIL: [fultonrickh@gmail.com](mailto:fultonrickh@gmail.com) MOBILE: +263 772 573534**