

## Smiles all around at Zest West Devon Aquathlon

27 April 08



Over 80 young athletes from across the South West converged at Parklands and Okehampton College playing fields last weekend to take part in the first Zest West Devon Youth Aquathlon. Throughout the morning experienced athletes as well as first-timers sportingly competed over the swim and run courses. Parents, athletes and friends of Zest Youth Triathlon were out from 6am to prepare the course and from 9am they marshaled, timed the races and made sure the results winged their way back to registration.

The racing began with eight year olds in TriStar showing great spirit completing the 50m swim and 600m run, earning themselves a goody bag as well as a finishing trophy.

TriStar One 9-10yr Girls then tackled 150m swim and 1500m run with Zest athlete Emily Ackford taking first place in 9mins and 17 seconds just ahead of Megan Bassett from Kelly College. The TriStar One Boys race was led from start to finish by Jordan Channon from Zest followed in by Matthew Green another Zest athlete, both showing great early season form.

Again from Zest, Hannah Greep overtook 6 athletes in the run to take first place in TriStar Two Girls with Alice Dixon from Frome taking second. Reece Worth from Yelverton led throughout to take first place in TriStar Two Boys with Scott Jenkins from Somerset in second.

TriStar Three Girls saw victory for national runner Naomi Speake from Seaton with Jess Wood from Somerset second. With a very strong swim, Tivertons Simon Cooper led from start to finish with Adam Speake running through fast to take second place.

Kelly College athlete Rebecca Windamere overtook Plymouth Leanders Emma Carter to win the Youth Girls, Emma held on to second place. Brett Bassett and Cameron Carpenter-Warren from Kelly College were strong throughout the Youth Boys to take first and second place.

Fantastic performances kept coming from team members and individuals alike, cheered on to the finish by friends and parents, ending with smiles all around as the young athletes crossed the line.

Every athlete was given a goody bag as they finished their race, which included their race t-shirts sponsored by the University of Exeter. They then gathered for the prize draw and presentation of awards. Local companies had given generously for the spot prizes and Western Power had sponsored the Individual Awards.

After an award was given to Tammy Messenger, from West Devon Borough Council, for all the help and support she had given to Zest Youth Triathlon in their first two

years, Tammy presented the athletes with awards for their individual races. Then the eagerly awaited results of the Team competition was announced and perpetual cups awarded. The TriStar One and TriStar Three trophy went to Zest Youth Triathlon, the TriStar Two and Youth trophy to Kelly College.

Race director Paul Chinn said: "The participation of athletes from local schools and swimming clubs along with the sporting rivalry from British Triathlon members in the South West gave the event a great sense of community. We managed to cater for new to the sport as well as seasoned athletes. The University of Exeter and Western Power gave tremendous sponsorship, and along with an amazing group of Zest volunteers, the support from local companies including Active Co, The Original Pasty House, BS & JS Williams, Tecnica Europe, Certini, Dartmoor Cycles, Pens and Moor, Stokes, Ambrosia and Fat Face, it meant that the organisation and rewards equaled the quality of the competition."

The Zest team have had great response since the race and the comment from Trudi Jenkins from Somerset seems to sum up the day: "Scott and Kirsty really enjoyed it, and it was so well organised. It was worth getting up at 5.30. They are both very excited about their trophies!"