



ONE OF CANADA'S BEST ENDURANCE ATHLETES CONFIRMED FOR THE YMCA OF CHATHAM-KENT'S BULLDOG TRIATHLON

The only thing Bracebridge, Ontario native **Nat Faulkner** is complaining about when it comes to this year's YMCA of Chatham-Kent Bulldog Triathlon is that the event is too short. The 29 year-old Canadian endurance specialist loves the pain of a long event and has a racing resume to prove it.

Faulkner started in the Kids of Steel Triathlon program in its very first year and raced Olympic Gold Medalist Simon Whitfield when the two were teenagers. After becoming the national age group Kids of Steel champion, Faulkner turned his sights on bike racing. Over the next 12 years, Faulkner won bike races across the planet and even held the team record for the famous Race Across America a few years ago. Along the way, Nat has taken some relaxing 3000km bike trips with his buddies and his father Barry.

Late last fall, Faulkner was looking for another endurance challenge and called Harrow, Ontario triathlon coach Barrie Shepley for some training advice. Shepley was the man who started the Kids of Steel program many years ago and was the Olympic Coach in Sydney when Simon Whitfield won gold in 2000. Coach Shepley invited Nat to become a member of his **C3 High Performance Training Club** and immediately the two struck a plan that would see Faulkner try to qualify for the grueling Hawaii Ironman in 2008.

"Nat is a competitive guy and he has many years of endurance training in his massive legs, but qualifying for Hawaii takes many people 4-5 years" said Shepley. Faulkner moved to C3's winter training base in Tucson Arizona and instantly qualified in March for the Hawaii Ironman this fall by being the top amateur at the California 70.3 Ironman Race. "I knew Nat would do well, I just didn't realize how strong, fit & competitive he was" said Shepley. Faulkner has backed his California win up with two more USA victories since, and was the top amateur recently in the world-class Muskoka Chase Triathlon in mid-June.

Faulkner left the race in Muskoka to put in a 1000km training week on his bike by riding to Boston and back for a wedding. "The guy is an absolute machine" said his coach. "How many people would do one of the hardest long-course triathlons in the country, then ride their bike for the next 5 days to Boston for a wedding" said Shepley. "Nat has the potential to be one of the best long-distance triathletes Canada has ever produced, and that is saying a lot" said Coach Shepley.

Faulkner is in the middle of a huge block of training focused on winning a medal in Hawaii later this October but will be coming to Chatham for the August 24th YMCA of Chatham-Kent Bulldog sprint triathlon. This very much fits his background given proceeds from the Bulldog tri events benefit the Y's "Strong Kids" campaign. Said Shepley, "Right now Nat isn't planning on riding his bike down to Chatham from Hamilton, but knowing the guy's personality, its not totally impossible".

Coach Shepley is so confident in his athlete, that barring a mechanical bike problem, Shepley will give away his training DVD free to anyone who can finish their bike split within 3 minutes of the C3 superstar (relay teams included)!

Whether you're racing or simply want to see one of Canada's best endurance athletes, make sure you come out to watch Nat Faulkner at the YMCA of Chatham-Kent's Bulldog Triathlon on Sunday August 24th.