

12th Asian Triathlon Championships, Chennai

The Indian Triathlon Federation successfully hosted the 12th Asian Triathlon Championships on Sunday 2nd November 2003.

A field of 120 athletes from 14 Asian countries entered the event, including the host country India fielding a team of 14 Triathletes.

Japan were the dominant country of the Championships winning 4 of the 6 Individual Championships and also taking all 4 Team Awards. China and Kazakhstan won the other 2 Championships.

The Indian Team competed creditably with the Junior Girls Team of T.S Kavya, S Kanthamani from the Indian Triathlon Academy and Sneha Shampur from Karnataka taking the bronze medal in the Junior Girls Team.

It was a particularly creditable performance from Kanthamani who was not only competing in her first triathlon, but upon joining the Indian Triathlon Academy 18 months ago, could not swim.

Kanthamani from Karur in Tamil Nadu was identified through the assistance Mr. P. C Davidar of the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu when just 13 years of age through her running ability.

Kanthamani is now working towards developing her triathlon skills for the future at the Indian Triathlon Academy on a full scholarship provided by the Indian Triathlon Federation. In addition to triathlon, Kanthamani is still undertakes fulltime studies and is currently studying in the 11th Standard at Lady Willingdon Higher Secondary School in Chennai.

The Junior Boys team, all from the Indian Triathlon Academy, also turned in good performances and finished a close 4th in the Junior Boys Team Category with good performances from Syed Jabir and P. Arun.

Indian Triathlon High Performance Consultant Mr. Rob Pickard from Australia, assisted National Triathlon Coach Brett Mace in the preparation of the team for this event as Brett also undertook the duties of Race Director for this event. Rob will play a key role in the future, as he has in the past, in the future development of the Indian Triathlon Academy working with the National Coach and the athletes.

The focus of the Indian Triathlon Academy is to develop junior athletes for the future with the aim of qualifying for the 2008 Olympics and results from this Asian Championship were encouraging, but also shows just how much more hard work is required to keep making an improvement.