

## Indian Triathlon Academy Australian Training & Competition Camp 2004

After a successful Training & Competition Camp in Australia in 2003, 5 athletes from the Indian Triathlon Academy once again ventured “down under” to experience the unique lifestyle of living, training and competing in Australia. As in 2003, the Academy set up base at Shoalhaven Heads on the beautiful South Coast of NSW.

'Grandma' Robyn Morgan with Brett & Lynette Mace

The Athletes accompanied by National Triathlon Coach, Brett Mace along with High Performance Consultant Rob Pickard were:

T.S Kavya

S. Kanthamani

Mahesh Shinde

S. Mani Singh

Syed Jabir

The Camp was held from February to April, and as was the case last year, the Indian Triathlon Federation and the Indian Triathlon Academy were very grateful for the support of The Shoalhaven City Council through Mayor Greg Watson and John Wells who assisted the Academy in a number of areas. Combined with the generous support of the local community of Shoalhaven Heads through the Chamber of Commerce and people like Ken Merrifield and Rod Larkin, the Academy was once again made very welcome and indeed very well looked after.

Academy Athletes with Swim Squad at Bomaderry Pool, Australia

On arrival the Team was greeted again by many familiar and friendly faces, but unlike last year the Team had very little time to settle in as the time in Australia was limited due to the Asian Triathlon Championships, which doubles as the Asian Olympic Qualifying event was being held early on April 3/4 in Subic Bay, Philippines.

Fun and games near the Academy Base on the Soth Coast of NSW, Australia

The weekend after arrival, the Team headed off to the Port Stephens Triathlon which produced a wet and cold race, not quite what the athletes were looking for, but a good event all the same, and a good chance for a 'hitout'. Mani Singh, competing in his first foreign event was the best performed of the Indian Team closely followed by Syed Jabir and then Mahesh Shinde, who didn't enjoy a good race at all.

Indian Female Junior Triathletes with Host Family in Indian Dress

Kavya was besieged by bad luck by not only having a puncture on the first of two laps on the cycle, but experienced a second puncture soon after repairing the first. Her race ended in the back of the 'sag wagon' which was disappointing after placing 2nd in the juniors of the same event last year.

Kanthamani didn't compete in this Olympic Distance event as she is relatively new to the sport and has only previously competed in 2 sprint events and was in Australia mainly to gain experience for the future.

Indian Triathletes above Wollongong in Australia

The following weekend saw the Academy athlete's competing at their favourite 'local' event, the Berry Biathlon. This long standing event consists of an 800m swim followed by a very scenic 5km run. Once again the Indian athletes were very prominent but as was the case last year, were unable to crack the number 1 position in the male and female open events, however Kanthamani managed to take out the Junior Girls event.

Indian Triathletes before departure to Australia for 2004 Camp

In the men's open event Mahesh Shinde led most of the way on the run only to be caught in the 'shadow' of the finishing line, while Mani Singh finished a strong 3rd and Syed Jabir finished 4th for the second year in a row. In the Open Women's event Kavya was once again the bridesmaid finishing runner up for the second year in a row.

Khatoon or Mausai as the Academy Athletes call her

The busy schedule continued 5 days later with an invitation for the Indian Team to compete at the NSW All Schools Triathlon Championships at the International Regatta Centre, west of Sydney which played host to the Olympic rowing and kayaking events at the 2000 Olympics.

Mani Singh comes into contact with a Kangaroo for the 1st time

In the senior category of the School Championships held over the sprint distance (750/20/5) Kavya and Syed Jabir were the Indian Team representatives with Kavya finishing 6th and Syed Jabir also in 6th. This was a particularly good result given that a number of athletes in this category are members of the NSW Junior Elite Triathlon Squad.

Taking instruction from the Academy's Swim Coach in Australia Mark Terechovs

In the Intermediate Category, Mani Singh continued his outstanding form by finishing a very strong 4th just behind a number of outstanding up and coming Australian athletes. Kanthamani continued to gain experience and despite a poor swim managed to gain a number of places on the cycle and the run. Unfortunately Mahesh Shinde was too old to compete and did an outstanding job as Team Manager for the day.

Kanthamani competing in NSW Schools Championships, Australia

Just 2 days later the Team was back in action again with yet another invitation to compete at the Illawarra Club Triathlon in Wollongong. Despite looking forward to fine and mild racing conditions, the Team was greeted with cold, wet and windy conditions. Luckily the rain held off for the race but unfortunately not the wind and cold making for a very bumpy swim and a tough cycle and run over an up and down course.

Kavya & Jabir Pre Race NSW Schools Triathlon Championships at  
International Regatta Centre, Australia

Also accepting an invitation to this event was the NSW Institute of Sport Squad who were in camp on the South Coast preparing for the World Championships to be held in Madeira, Portugal. Though this added a lot of strength to the field, the Academy athletes in their last event before the Asian Championships in 2 weeks and their 3rd event in 8 days, along with the tough conditions competed very well finishing just behind the Australian Elite Juniors. We thank the Illawarra Triathlon Club for their warm and friendly welcome and we look forward to future events with them

Kavya exits the water, Schools Triathlon Championships, Australia

The last weekend before the departure to Subic Bay saw the Indian athletes at another of their favourite events, the Nowra Cross Country at Willandra. This event is always popular with the team with its beautiful scenery, friendly people and challenging course. Rob Pickard, the Indian Triathlon Academy Coaching Consultant managed to show the Academy athletes that despite his 50+ years he is not ready to let them win so easily, especially Kavya who has shared many hours of racing and training with Rob.

Kavya on her way to 6th position, Schools Triathlon Championships, Australia

Afterwards Rob, who lives nearby at Berry, hosted the Academy athletes to a tennis afternoon and barbeque as the Academy athletes began to wind up what had been a very busy but successful trip once again to Australia.

Mani Singh finishing 4th Schools Triathlon Championships, Australia

The Indian Triathlon Federation and Academy are indeed very grateful and privileged to have the services of Rob Pickard. Not only is he very knowledgeable in the many areas of Triathlon, but he has become a very good friend to all in the Academy and the Federation visiting India on a regular basis and assisting the team when in Australia. Rob has contributed much to the success of the Program and we all look forward to his visit to India again in the near future.

Pre Race Briefing, NSW Schools Championships

Another contributor to the success of the Academy athletes while in Australia and the Asian Championships was Swim Coach Mark Terechovs. With the kind support of John Wells from Shoalhaven City Council, the Academy were fortunate enough to swim each day with Mark's Squad at Bomaderry Pool. This also enabled the Academy to not only develop their swim stroke under Mark's

watchful eye, but also gave the athletes the opportunity to meet and train with young Australian athletes on a regular basis.

Start, NSW Schools Triathlon Championships

It would be remiss of us not to mention our dear friends Khatoon Wotton (affectionately known as Maudi) and her daughter Naomi who are an invaluable support to the Team.

Another great friend of the Academy is Mick and Razz Morgan and their children Josh & Bianca who host us each year, though soon after our arrival they headed off on a 6 month odyssey around Australia.

In their place was Robyn and Noel Morgan (known to the Team as Grandma and Grandpa). They became the Team's surrogate "Grand Parents" this year with Robyn "mothering" all in the Team and Noels attending to the most important of duties which included helping everyone with the preparation of fishing gear (in the small amount of spare time available) and of course the cleaning of the fish on the few occasions the team was successful, and not to mention chasing and catching snakes in the laundry.

In hindsight it was a very successful trip to Australia as the Indian Team turned in the best all-round performance ever by an Indian Team at an Asian Championship and much of that credit goes to all those above who have assisted the Academy. We thank you all.