

# Wu proves her ironman worth

By Julia Whyte  
Triathlon

ACT's Michelle Wu proved she could go the distance yesterday when she stepped up to the 120km of a half ironman and claimed outright victory on the back of an impressive run to the finish line.

Wu, who is more renowned for her success over Olympic distance triathlons, took out the women's race in the Canberra City Half Ironman Triathlon in front of some of Australia's top professionals.

Queenslander David Dellow finished in 4:08.40 to win the men's race, his first in almost six years over the distance, which includes a 1.9km swim, 93km bike ride and 21.2km run.

Wu started in the 20-24 age group eight minutes after the first wave of elite competitors but closed the gap to cross the line two minutes behind Amelia Pearson and clock the winning time of 4:44.26.

She was almost four minutes behind Pearson when she started the run leg, but completed the half marathon distance in 1:23.14 to surpass the Tasmanian and claim outright victory by more than six minutes.

Wu, 24 of Isaacs, considered the run her strongest leg and was not surprised she had done well over the final stage of the race, but was shocked to have won her first half ironman.

After winning the first two events of the national triathlon series, she said she felt strong before yesterday's race and had aimed to complete it in five hours.

"Because I haven't done this distance before I didn't know what to expect out there, it's a long way to go, that's for sure," she said. "I'm used to doing half of this and my training was still focused mainly on the Olympic distance series, so I didn't change it too much, but I've been training really well and my past couple of races have been really good, so I knew I'd do fairly well here, but to win is fairly amazing."

"I had to pace myself on the bike and on the run and make sure that I ate on the bike and on the run as well so I wouldn't fall into a heap. I didn't go through any really bad patches, which is surprising."

Wu, whose next major race is the third national series triathlon in Canberra next month, said she would remain focused on the shorter races

## THE WINNERS ARE

### THE CANBERRA CITY HALF IRONMAN TRIATHLON

■ **Mens:**  
David Dellow 4:08:40  
Christian Kemp 4:10:34  
Klayten Smith 4:11:03

■ **Womens:**  
Michelle Wu 4:44:26  
Amelia Pearson 4:50:55  
Emma Major 4:52:09

■ **Teams:**  
Tripod 4:42:22  
Frank-The-Tank 4:50:54  
BondiFit 5:11:38

but did not rule out a return to the half ironman in the future.

Pearson, who used the race as preparation for the Australian Ironman in Port Macquarie in February, said she had struggled on the run but was happy with her overall effort.

It was the first time this season Pearson has crossed the line first after a third on the Gold Coast and seconds in Port Macquarie and Shepparton in Victoria.

Dellow, 28, has ruled out the Australian Ironman, saying he wasn't crazy enough to double the distance.

The former AIS athlete is one of a host of athletes competing for the final spot on Australia's three-man team to go to next year's Olympic games.

After completing the half ironman, he described it as a "really good, hard training session".

Some of the biggest applause from the rain-soaked crowd at Rond Terrace at Commonwealth Place was reserved for Daniel MacPherson, who was competing at a triathlon in 1998 when he was scouted for a role on Australian soap Neighbours.

Since then he has starred in The Bill and City Homicide, but is still considered a tough competitor among his triathlon counterparts.

MacPherson, 27, finished yesterday's race 38th overall and sixth in his age group in a time of 4:39:01. He resumed competition in Canberra two years ago after seven years away from the track and said he always enjoyed returning to the ACT to race.

"It's nice to be able to come back and chart my progress," he said. "And while it's a tough race I enjoy competing in it because it's a great event with great support."



WINNER: Canberra's Michelle Wu crosses the line at the City Half Ironman Triathlon yesterday. Picture: GRAHAM TIDY



SUCCESS: Queenslander David Dellow raises his arms in triumph.



FINISH: Tasmanian Amelia Pearson wins the professional section.



ALL SMILES: Actor Daniel MacPherson completes the triathlon yesterday.