

 MultiSport Canada

GRAVENHURST 2022: POST-RACE REPORT

Jun 14, 2022

Worth the Wait

By Dempsey Cruz, MSC Ambassador



...and we're back!

This past weekend, MultiSport Canada (MSC) hosted their season opener event in the charming Muskoka town of Gravenhurst. What an exciting time this was for the series as they begin to re-establish normal operations, post-pandemic. I could not have selected a more fitting and iconic race event than Gravenhurst to kick-off my race season this year. This was my first scheduled race in two years after all since the onset of the pandemic. Having watched the [pre-event site update](#) by Race Director, Jason Vurma, I was buzzing with a little bit of nerves and a whole lot of excitement!

At this point, having previously raced at this venue for at least four seasons now, some may consider me a MultiSport Canada regular. I am quite proud of this achievement and seeing my role as a returning ambassador to drive the engagement for the sports of triathlon and duathlon in Ontario, I am ready to make an impact again. For Jordan (my partner who is also a MSC regular and my official photographer 📷) and I, this has become our welcomed routine; starting the day at 3am while the rest of the city is still fast asleep, watching the sun slowly peeking through the clouds from the rear view mirror as we drive down the 400, and waking up to the soft and percussive beats of house music.



A familiar feeling

We passed through the familiar archway branded with the town moniker, [“The Gateway to Muskoka Lakes”](#). Moments later after seeing the iconic Muskoka Steamboats from which triathletes jump off to start their race, I thought to myself, “it’s nice to be back”. Even though there is comfort in the familiarity, the air feels a little different every time we come here. Perhaps it is from being introduced to all the faces of new athletes and their friends and family, and maybe it is from

experiencing the transition zone under different weather conditions, or hearing new sounds through the venue speakers; nonetheless, this is what makes Gravenhurst such a wonderful place to race in. The one consistent element in all the MSC events is the warm welcome given by the staff and volunteers that immediately makes us feel at home.

The clouds opened up and it started to rain as I was checking in. The sight of athletes all huddled under one tent or tree made me smile. This truly exemplified the camaraderie seen in all MSC events. The sport can be competitive but there is shared experience among athletes and we all look out for one another – this is what makes MSC so unique and special.

Community above competition.

The race experience

Before heading off to the start line, we wished the triathletes good luck as they sailed off to start their swim. The race briefing, which is normally a nerve-wracking moment, was a relaxing and comforting one thanks to Carolynne’s caring and humorous speech (again, extra points to MSC!). The horn echoed across the Muskoka Wharf Sport Park and off we faced the humbling hills of Gravenhurst. These rolling hills always make for a satisfying and rewarding experience, reminding me of why I take my training seriously.

Twenty minutes later, I got on my bike (but not before running on the wrong side of the pylon and the staff kindly redirected me!). I absolutely love this bike course! It is well-paved, the traffic is light, the scenery is stunning, and the course is not too technical so you can really push yourself. The road was slippery from the rain but every athlete was so respectful of one another on the course to ensure each other’s safety.

This was a fast race – I was sprinting the final 2.5km before I knew it!





Crossing the finish line, I met the three young athletes who battled it out for first. We celebrated at the finishers chute, congratulated one another, and exchanged props and respectful nods. This type of healthy competition is definitely what keeps me coming back for more. To wrap up the day, I handed out the podium medals with fellow MSC ambassador, Jessey the Elf, and applauded all the athletes who raced that day. All in all, what an incredible experience! It was worth the wait!



Next up

MultiSport Canada will be back on June 25 and 26 to host the [second event of 2022](#) in the stunning town of Welland, also known as Rose City. I have also raced there with MSC many times. The swim is in the calm and pool-like Welland International Flatwater Center, the bike course is fast and flat, and

the run on the paved trail surrounded by beautiful trees – it is the perfect venue for new athletes and probably the most spectator friendly venue that I have seen! Be sure to check it out!



[Race with MSC](#), you won't regret it!