

 MultiSport Canada

BARRIE 2022: POST-RACE REPORT

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A race to remember

By Dempsey Cruz, MSC Ambassador



A welcoming view

“Wow, *this is stunning!*” This was my first reaction as the Barrie Waterfront came into view upon our arrival to the race venue. It was the perfect sight; the 6 am sky painted with soft hues of blue, pink, and gray, the sun timidly peeking behind the scattered clouds, and the calm Kempenfelt Bay glistening joyfully below the picturesque sky. I had to take a moment to soak in the scenery before unloading my gear from the car.



Not the typical Sunday morning

Jordan (my partner, fellow MSC athlete, and “official” photographer) joined me as I walked towards the spacious and grassy transition zone, optimally located at the heart of Centennial Beach Park. Seeing athletes accompanied by their friends and family and local residents out on their Sunday morning walk, I am reminded once again of the welcoming community spirit that I have always felt at every MultiSport Canada event. After a challenging week leading up to the race weekend, I was not sure if I was going to be able to race. I am grateful that after about 7 weeks since my last race, I got the opportunity to lace up again and rack my bike.

At registration, I caught up with MSC President Jason Vurma, who gave me a brief history lesson of how the Barrie Triathlon joined forces with MultiSport Canada. I find it so fascinating to learn about what goes on behind the scenes! As athletes, we don’t often think about the race logistics and the amount of planning and coordination involved in hosting a multi-day event of this scale. To my fellow

athletes - *be sure to thank the crew and volunteers who work so hard day in and out to make every race an amazing experience for all participants and spectators.* After my chat with Jason, I was pumped to race!

The duathlon was scheduled to start a half hour after the triathlon so we cheered on the first few waves of triathletes as they started their race. The sprint triathlon was a qualification race for the 2023 World Championships so there was a diverse mix of athletes. Many experienced tri-club triathletes were hoping to qualify, but there were also lots of new triathletes going for their season best in this speedy, closed-course race. As for me, this was my first time racing in Barrie, so I was here for the new experience.

In the heat of the moment

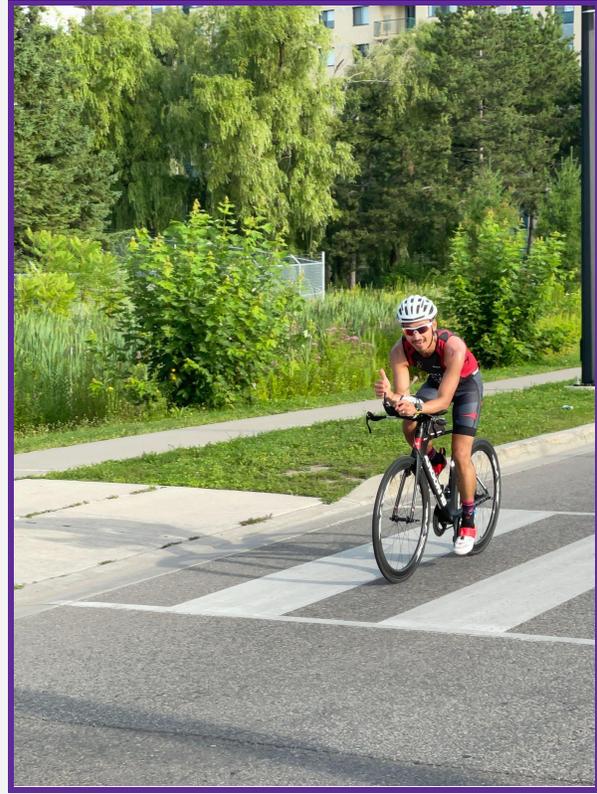
Moments later, I joined my fellow duathletes at the starting line and we exchanged a few words and nods of good luck. MSC staff Carolynne Simons and Andre Gordon briefed us on the race ahead and directed our attention to the drone flying above us (what a nice touch!) while we waited for the countdown. Two loops for the first run - 3, 2, 1 and we were off!

A few hundred meters from the start, in the heat of the moment I had forgotten for a few seconds that I was racing. I looked over to my left and admired the scenic view of the lake glistening under the warm sun. To my right, bikes were zipping swiftly as the first wave of triathletes were starting the bike leg of their race.

I came to my senses as I began to feel the 40 degree heat bouncing off the pavement. The hydration station appeared just in time where I poured water on my head to try to stay cool.

On the second loop, I watched the first three duathletes pull away ahead of me, then another duathlete passed me, and a few seconds later, the triathlon leaders joined us on the run course. Athletes were cheering one another despite the fierce competition. I checked my Garmin as I wrapped up the first run and surprised myself with a fast 5km. It was full of action; I was already drenched in sweat and I couldn't wait to feel the cooling breeze on the bike.





The bike course consisted of 4 loops around a closed course. For someone who is always concerned about getting lost in the course, it was perfect for me! Jordan was well-positioned to spectate the bike leg and it was a boost seeing him there every time I completed a loop. Most of the course was well-paved but there were some rough sections. It was refreshing to see the high level of respect and consideration for safety that all athletes had for one another on the course. I was thankful for the F2C Nutrition Hydra-Durance in my bike bottle to help me fuel and hydrate in this heat. It was a fast and smooth ride to T2.

I headed out of transition for the third time and at that point, I did not have much left in my tank. One loop around the run course and that was it! I reminded myself that I had 10 more minutes in the sun. My legs and lungs were on fire and I had a painful side stitch. I knew that I was dehydrated but I pushed to the end until I had nothing left to give. At the finish line, I was met with the three duathletes who fought hard to secure their Top 3 spots. I came in 4th and was met with congratulatory handshakes and smiles from my fellow duathletes; *friendly competition and sportsmanship at its finest!* Very much “on brand” at MultiSport Canada.

Post-race conversations

After the race, I had to jump in the water to cool off and recover under the cool shade. Shortly, I joined Nadine in the Brubeck Body Guard tent to congratulate a few athletes and to talk about Brubeck gear. One of the duathlete top finishers joined us and I asked him what got him into racing. I learned that he started racing during the pandemic and it was his triathlon club that encouraged him to race with MultiSport Canada. For me, this re-affirmed what I've always said about the way multisport grows in Ontario. It's all about the power of community. *"I joined the sport because someone I know got me into it."* These types of conversations humble me, and hearing about the origin stories of athletes motivate me to keep writing about my own experiences as a MultiSport Canada athlete.



Growing the sport

As multisport athletes, our sport is a significant part of our lives and we love to share our passion with others. By openly discussing our experience, whether we are doing so on social media or in person, we are helping multisport grow. I hope that we continue to see more diversity in this sport, as I have personally seen at MultiSport Canada, because there is truly a place for everyone no matter who they

are and where they come from. Thank you to the crew, volunteers, spectators, and fellow athletes for another incredible race experience! See you in a couple of weeks at Toronto Island!

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