

20 Questions Stuart Lumb

Triathlon Club



For more news from Stuart, see his triathlon blog on www.tri247.com

For many club members he's simply known as JSSV, but less well known is the fact that Stuart Lumb regularly dominates European competitions in his age group, winning both XTERRA and ETU off road events this year.

How old were you when you started Triathlon?

My first race was August 2001 and I was 58. One of our neighbour's daughters won a competition that the triathlon magazine 220 were running and then she suggested to me that I get into triathlon. For my first event, a supersprint in Nottingham, I ended up borrowing a bike from wife's friend.

Have you always been a sporty chap?

Not really, no. I did a lot of sports when I was at school, rugby, running and swimming, but after 18 I didn't really do very much until I got into triathlon.

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What is a typical week's training?

It depends on the situation really. At the moment I'm training for the XTERRA event so I've been out every day recently which is quite unusual for me as I normally go out every other day or go to the gym. I find that an hour solid in the gym can be worth a couple of hours out on the road.

Have you ever had a favorite pet?

I had cats when I was a kid, but apart from that no.

How would you compare off road and on road triathlons?

I only got into off road about 2 years ago and I really enjoy it. For one thing there's no traffic, but you've really got to focus, you can't switch off like you can on a road bike, otherwise you're in the ditch. It's also quite taxing, especially as for me these events are equivalent to a half Ironman as they can take about 5 hours.

How did you get your JSSV nickname?

Jet Set Super Vet – that was one of Steve Braund's 'senior' moments shall we say. He came up with it about 6 or 7 years ago as I was traveling a lot for work and was away every 4 or 5 weeks. But now I'm vintage, so perhaps I need to get a new nickname!

Do you get less excited about the competitive aspects of racing as you get older?

If you're not worked up to some extent

you're not going to do well. You're always trying to beat someone and what normally happens is that I'm generally good on the bike so I'm always trying to pass a few people there.

Have you ever had any embarrassing incidents in a triathlon?

I have come off my bike and got covered in mud quite a few times, but I wouldn't say I've really had an embarrassing incident.

What's your favorite TV programme?

I don't watch a lot to be honest, but I suppose generally when I come in and CSI is on, I end up watching this with my wife.

What training and race plans do you have for the next 6 cold winter months?

Well, I've got the Off Road Triathlon World Championships in Spain in April, so I'll be training for that, and getting up to Dalby a few more times, Locally, I go from home (South Cave) over to Raywell and round the woods there.



What do you do when not in training or competing i.e. the day job?

I'm a freelance journalist covering livestock production mainly, so I end up going over all the world to trade fairs and the like.

What's your favorite Triathlon distance, and why?

Probably the Olympic for traditional triathlon, but obviously off road it's just the one distance anyway, a 1.5k swim, a 30k bike and a 12k off road trail run.

How would you describe what the Barracuda club means to you?

Early on, I got a lot of encouragement from the more experienced members of the club. It's amazing what you can pick up from people when you're training and racing with them. I'd advise anybody to join a club as it's such a collective boost.

How did you meet your wife?

We met up in a pub in Cottingham and as she's a midwife, it transpired that she had delivered a lot of my mates' wives at Bishop Burton College where I was working. Because most pigs are physiologically similar to humans, for example using the same drugs for birth, there was an element of commonality there!

If you could choose the distances for your perfect triathlon event, what would they be?

It would be a 1k swim, 40k bike, and a 5k run. Though if I really had the choice it would be 'bikeathon' a swim and a bike with no run. I think the jargon for me is a 'carhorse' - I can't run to save my life!

What has been the highlight of the season just gone?

I won a gold medal in my age group in the European Cross Tri Championship. Instead of starting the medal presentation with the youngest first, they did it the other way around – starting from the oldest and so I was miles away when they read my name out, but managed to stagger on to the top step of the podium and then they played the national anthem – amazing!

What's your most useful piece of kit?

A stopwatch – generally when I'm running I've got a circuit that I do and it's useful to measure the times and see how I'm doing. I also find my heart rate monitor very useful.

How have you seen triathlon change over the time you've been involved?

It's got massive. They say that Ironman racing now is the same as Marathon racing 20 years ago, so these events are filling up in 24 hours. It's also good that they've got a lot more local events like the 3Xtri and Freebird events. When we started, we used to go down to Southall a lot as they did Spring and Autumn triathlons, but now we can do it locally, a 6 mile round trip instead of 50 miles.

What advice would you give to someone starting out in Triathlon?

Just enjoy it – don't get hung up about doing well. I've got a friend in Germany who bought an ex professional bike but she hasn't even done a race yet as I think she's just hung up about coming last.

How long can you keep on going for?

How long's a piece of string? Touch wood, just as long as I can keep going and my legs hold out!