



Media Release

Monday April 8 2002



## **TRIATHLETES FIGHT FOR WORLD SUPREMACY IN ITU ACCENTURE TRIATHLON WORLD CUP IN GEELONG – APRIL 14**

Australia's elite women triathletes are under siege as they fight for national pride and the world's top ranking, when the ITU (International Triathlon Union) World Cup racing season gets underway in Geelong with the Accenture ITU Triathlon World Cup on Sunday, April 14.

An elite field of 25 women, including Australian icons Michellie Jones, Nicole Hackett and Loretta Harrop and America's World No 1 Siri Lindley and Accenture Australian Series champ Barb Lindquist will be racing over the Olympic distance course, with more at stake than the prize pool.

National pride is on the line for the Australians, who are hoping to keep intact their unbeaten World Cup record on Australian soil. Since 1995 no foreign woman has ever won an Australian World Cup event and the locals would like to keep it that way. An Australian win would also give the victor a psychological edge in the battle for the number 1 spot on the ITU world rankings.

The women's race gets underway at 11am, and will be followed by an equally titanic battle in the opening men's World Cup race at 1.30pm.

Australia's Chris Hill begins defence of his No.1 world ranking in Geelong, but is under pressure from Canadian Olympic champion Simon Whitfield, and fellow Australians Peter Robertson (current world champion), Miles Stewart and Accenture series champion Courtney Atkinson.

The race for women's world supremacy is a battle between the Australians and the rampaging USA duo of Lindley and Lindquist. Lindley currently holds the number one world ranking and is the reigning world champion, whilst Lindquist has made her season mark winning three of the five Accenture Series races. For Lindley the opportunity to inflict a homeground defeat, could be significant.

*"I would absolutely love to do that, for sure," said the 32-year old Lindley. "It's not something I think about - but now that you mention it - it would be nice to do it."*

Lindley has been focussing on her preparation for Geelong, after finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in the final round of the Accenture Series on March 31.

*"For Sunday I want to be jumping out of my skin," said Lindley. "At the last Accenture race at Geelong, I was a bit tired and the race didn't quite go as I would like - and I know this weekend is going to be a tough race."*

For Australian Nicole Hackett, the March 31 result couldn't have been better, with the Central Coast athlete breaking through for her first win of the Accenture Series. It's a feat the former world champion is hoping to repeat on Sunday - which would not only keep the race win in the hands of an Aussie, but also give Hackett the first World Cup win of her career. Amazingly the

gutsy 23 year old has never won an ITU World Cup event, despite claiming virtually every other triathlon title on offer.

*"Beating the Americans isn't something I think a lot about," said Hackett. "Although if I had to choose I would always prefer for an Australian to get home before an American or any international triathlete."*

*"I would love to win a race on Australian soil. I haven't won an ITU World Cup before and it would be a great start to a big year of racing,"* said Hackett, whose Accenture win on March 31 guaranteed her a place on Australia's Commonwealth Games and World championship team alongside Harrop.

Sunday's course has been slightly changed from the March 31 race. The bike and run loops have been shortened, and the number of laps increased, however two tricky hills remain in the bike course, and one in the run leg. The course has been widely praised by the athletes, with both Lindley and Hackett saying it represented a challenge.

*"The amazing thing about this course is that it can race differently each time. It would be wrong to expect the same race conditions as March 31,"* said Lindley. Hackett was also looking forward to racing on the course which will be staged along Geelong's waterfront and will include a 1.5km wetsuit swim in Corio Bay.

*"I'm really impressed with the course - it is great to see Geelong take up the challenge and have a challenging course for the triathletes to race on. With hills in the bike and in the run it makes it a very tough race."*

The ITU Accenture Triathlon World Cup is proudly supported by Victorian Major Events and the City of Greater Geelong.

#### **ITU Accenture World Cup Schedule – FREE FOR ALL SPECTATORS!**

**11am Accenture ITU World Cup – Women's Race**

**1.30pm Accenture ITU World Cup – Men's Race**

**Swim Start:** 1.5km swim loop (wetsuit race) - Adjacent to Cunningham Pier

**Bike Leg:** 40km – 8 laps of a 5km loop. From Eastern Beach to Glenleith Avenue(two hills)

**Run Leg:** 10km – 4 laps of a 2.5km loop. Between Eastern Beach and Cavendish Street (one hill)

**Transition:** Steam Packet Gardens

**Media Contacts:** Ingrid Roepers or Sara Jane Morris at irpr on local tel 02 9360 1166 or 04 111 989 44

#### **Complete Start List:**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Athlete Code</b>
1	Lindley	Siri	USA	TRUSA22605196901
2	Lindquist	Barb	USA	TRUSA22504197501
3	Harrop	Loretta	AUS	TRAUS21707197501
4	Jones	Michellie	AUS	TRAUS20609196901
6	Montgomery	Carol	CAN	TRCAN22408196501
7	Hackett	Nicole	AUS	TRAUS21012197801
8	Reback	Laura	USA	TRUSA20107196901
10	Ashton	Melissa	AUS	TRAUS21501197301

11	Carney	Emma	AUS	TRAUS22907197101
18	Donnelly	Sharon	CAN	TRCAN22907196701
21	Cave	Leanda	GBR	TRGBR20903197801
30	Keat	Rebekah	AUS	TRAUS2202197801
39	Ohmatsu	Saori	JPN	TRJPN
46	Evans	Heather	NZL	TRNZL
47	Taylor	Pip	AUS	TRAUS20303198001
55	Niwata	Kiyomi	JPN	TRJPN
61	Docherty	Fiona	NZL	TRNZL
63	Kargotich	Jane	AUS	TRAUS20403196801
66	Emmerson	Annie	GBR	TRGBR21005197001
74	Warriner	Samantha	NZL	TRNZL
152	Snowsill	Emma	AUS	TRAUS20605198101
159	Carfrae	Mirinda	AUS	TRAUS22603198101
194	Hall	Megan	RSA	TRRSA20503197401