



It takes a team to successfully transition between events.



Over 3,200 athletes entered Penticton's 2011 Ironman.



A 3.8 kilometre swim is the first leg of the competition.



Starts are crowded, but competitors soon spread out.



Swimmers are already peeling out of their wetsuits as they splash toward the transition area.



Penticton attracts top triathletes to Subaru Ironman Canada

PHOTOS BY BRUCE KEMP

IRONMAN



The 6:45 a.m. start time doesn't deter spectators who line the course to cheer and shout encouragement.



Penticton's Subaru Ironman Canada is the oldest Ironman race held in continental North America.



Fans can get closer to the athletes than in almost any other sport.



Looking strong, Abel Torsten of Tucson, Arizona, kept up the pace in the run and cycling leg to take second place overall in the 2011 event.



Some 4,500 volunteers provide a host of services like keeping vital water stations constantly restocked.



Meredith Kessler of San Francisco, California, finds a little shade to preserve her strength during the 42.2 kilometre run that caps the Ironman.



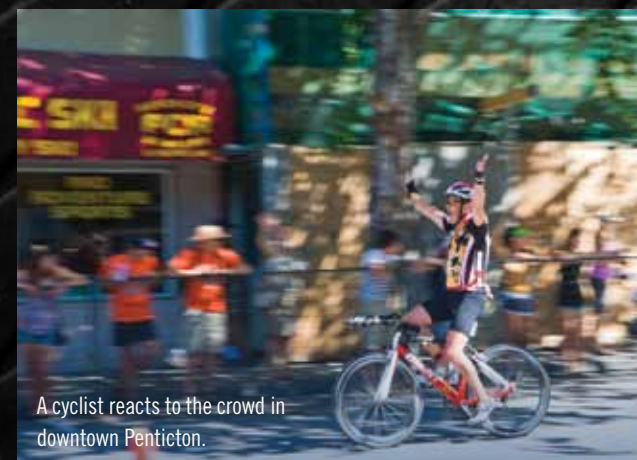
Entrants range in age from under 20 to over 80. John Dobrowski (55) was just one of a large group of over 50s in the race.



High SPF sunscreen is a vital part of the athletes' kit.



Nearly a third of the competitors are women.



A cyclist reacts to the crowd in downtown Penticton.



Penticton's Jordan Rapp took first place in the 2011 Ironman.