



IT'S

PARADISE

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## PRESS RELEASE

1<sup>st</sup> September 2015

### Southbroom triathlete targets World Championships triumph

The Sardinian commune of Orosei, Italy will provide the backdrop for the biggest race of Darryn Purtell's life next month.

It's here where the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast Southbroom athlete will fulfil his lifelong dream of representing South Africa in the TNatura Sardegna Cross Triathlon ITU World Championships from 26-27 September 2015.

"I am very excited and honoured to be heading overseas for the first time. It's always been a dream of mine to travel the world and compete against the best there is," Purtell, who punched his ticket to the international event with a podium placing in Grabouw earlier this year, told *eHowzit*.

A decorated mountain biker, Purtell found instant success in multi-stage competition when he won his debut Xterra race at Buffelspoort Dam in 2013.

His meteoric rise has seen him capture two South African Xterra titles, two national X-Tri titles and two medals (silver and bronze) at the South African National Triathlon Championship in just three short years.

No-one has been more surprised by his remarkably successful transition to triathlon competition than Purtell himself, who admits his imminent World Championships debut exceeds the wildest expectations he harboured as a triathlon greenhorn. "It's surreal. I don't think the magnitude of the event has really hit me yet," he said.

"I think because we are still finalising the last of the funds and I've been keeping busy with exams and races recently, I haven't had much time to sit down and let the feeling sink in, but I think very soon I will be bouncing off the walls."



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Born with the self-discipline and work ethic synonymous with top-class athletes, Purtell hasn't allowed complacency to stunt his evolution.

Rather than relying on his natural ability, Purtell has been pushing himself in training to ensure he continues to improve in all three facets and believes he's a much-improved triathlete to the specialist mountain biker who first dabbled into multi-sport competition.

"Over the last few years, I have really learnt so much from the people around me and just drawn on their wisdom. Training with some of the best around have lifted me to a new level."

The World Championships race – which will consist of a 1.5km ocean swim, 30km mountain bike ride and 10km trail run – is not only a giant leap in his blossoming career, but also serves as Purtell's swansong race in the 20-24-year age division.

Varsity College's mountain biking captain had qualified for the global showpiece in both 2013 and 2014, however, circumstances and financial constraints have delayed his participation until now.

Purtell believes the timing is perfect as he feels he's at his physical peak. "This year I feel like I am much faster than before. I've had a couple of issues but with the help of close friends and mentors I've managed to grow and develop, so I thought this was the year. On that note, though, if it was not for my family, friends and other really generous people in my life who have helped me fund this dream, I really wouldn't be going anywhere. From what I hear, I think there is going to be a massive step up in competition, but having never raced there or raced anyone my age from overseas, I have no idea what to expect. The best I can do is to just ensure I am as ready as I can be before the day and push as hard as I can on the day."

And with the stunning and diverse KwaZulu-Natal South Coast as his training yard, Darryn's mentors, trainers, family and friends are giving him the thumbs up.

Says Ugu South Coast Tourism CEO Justin Mackrory "We are incredibly proud of the young sporting talent that is coming out of the greater South Coast area. We also have world renowned sporting legends such as surfer Heather Clark, cricketer Pat Symcox and Rugby Springbok player Ryan Kankowski who are proud South Coasters. It would seem our 365 day climate and geographic offerings of the ocean and hinterland, along with our sporting infrastructure, that the South Coast is the perfect incubator for world class talent. Here's to metaphoric fame Darryn!"



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Ends.

Word count: 690

Source: Edited. With thanks to Quintin Van Jaarsveld, eHowzit.

<http://www.ehowzit.co.za/news/local/southbroom-triathlete-targets-world-championships-triumph/>

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Photo supplied: Darryn Purtell

S/O 5.10 Q1 2015/2016



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