

|  |
| --- |
| In Conversation – Change Our Game ChampionsGrant Cosgriff, CEO Triathlon Victoria  |
| Video transcript |

**[Change Our Game Logo]**

**[In Conversation – Change Our Game Champion. Grant Cosgriff, CEO Triathlon Victoria**

**Grant Cosgriff:**
I'm Grant Cosgriff, CEO of Triathlon Victoria, and I'm a Change our Game Champion.

**Interviewer:**

Grant, congratulations on being a Change Our Game Champion. Triathlon is a sport that historically is involved men and women almost since the beginning.

**Grant Cosgriff:**

Yeah, I think that's one of the beauties of building a modern sport. You know 1970s is the birth of triathlon, although that's always a bit of conjecture about where it exactly starts, but it hooked into that '70s endurance philosophy of the real upsurge in marathon running and endurance events and the story goes it was the challenge between the swimmer, the biker, and the runner and using three events in Hawaii was the start of really the birth of triathlon. It had a great story. But yeah, men and women at that stage in the 1970s, there wasn't the same level of I suppose gender inequity that had been around for hundreds of years for other sports. And so we're really fortunate to have started when we did.

**Interviewer:**

And from an Australia perspective with the likes of Emma Carney, Michellie Jones, and Loretta Harrop, women have been at the forefront as well, which must be helping you in your capacity to grow the sport holistically today.

**Grant Cosgriff:**

Yeah, well look, we're really fortunate about the success on the international stage, especially through a period of the '90s where Australia dominated, whether it be men or women, but the women were at the forefront. They were incredible competitors and I think a lot of admiration from the public about the way they went about it certainly demonstrated to everyone that it was a sport that everyone could enjoy. It was a sport that was about endurance, about discipline, about hard work and training. And it didn't matter whether you are male or female, you went and gave it your best. And we had some great exponents in that time that really demonstrated that when you went out and did your best, that was all anyone would ever ask of you.

**Interviewer:**

So that's the upside. The downside of course is that having that sort of growth brings challenges. What are the number one challenge that you would be facing today for triathlon Victoria in terms of involving more women and girls in the sport?

**Grant Cosgriff:**

Yeah, I think our real number one challenge is around senior role models within the network. We've identified that and fortunately are a partner in the Change Our Game program and have some funding to address those challenges. But it's certainly around, I always believe you can't believe what you can't see. And so we need more female officials at the senior levels, taking the senior roles at events, being the people on the marker [inaudible 00:02:43], giving the pre race briefing, we need more female coaches. There is differences in the way in which men and women participate and like to be coached and women have a real role around developing more female participation and bringing that side of our sport. We're about 65% male, 35% female. So whilst we would believe we're very gender neutral, really the participation and memberships that state that twice as many men as women participate.

So there are some challenges there and that extends down into [inaudible 00:03:22] where the traditional committee structure of presidents and executives, a lot of those positions are taken up by men. We have only about 18% of presidents across our clubs are female. We'd like to grow that to at least be equitable with our participation and membership. So in that 35% and you know the end game is to have a 50/50 and that goes across triathlon Victoria, triathlon Australia, and even worldwide triathlon and some of the big players like Ironman have a real aspiration for 50/50.

**Interviewer:**

So there's a lot of good goals there. New to the Change Our Game game program as a Champion. When we come back at the end of the year and check in on you, what are you hoping to get out of the program in this year?

**Grant Cosgriff:**

I think there are a lot of people in there that will have experienced some of the challenges we have. We're a fair bit smaller than a number of the other organizations involved. Whilst I've been in the sports administration sphere for 20 odd years now and pretty experienced, I'm always one that takes some humility about, I can still learn from others, so I'm looking for that from other people as to how they've tackled some of these issues. I think there's an interesting byplay for me and for our organization between. There needs to be some real practicality and encouragement around progress, but there also needs to be the hard edge policy development to make sure that if I was to leave that the passion and enthusiasm doesn't diminish and there's some real structure and policy behind it to make sure that it's an ongoing effort from our organization.

There's a lot also of support from a board perspective around this. We've managed to be relatively gender neutral at a board level. So we have nine board members. We've been five/four, four/five for the whole four years I've been involved. And that commitment at the board level I think's really important because that feeds down through the staff and through the subcommittees of the organization, that it's not just Grant Cosgriff, that it's Triathlon Victoria and it's us committed towards changing the game and making sure that we've got greater female participation.

I'm Grant Cosgriff, CEO of Triathlon Victoria, and I'm a Change Our Game Champion.

**[Change our Game logo]**

**[State Government of Victoria logo]**

[Authorised by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, 50 Lonsdale St Melbourne. Spoken by D. Culbert and G. Cosgriff]

To receive this publication in an accessible format email Change Our Game <changeourgame@sport.vic.gov.au>

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, April 2019