

ISSUE 12.5

AUSTRALIAN **Triathlete**

*EMMA SNOWSILL*  
2004 WORLD CHAMPION



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& WALTON**

A WINNING COMBINATION

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# A Winning Combination

BY NOEL McMAHON | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID MAGAHY, GOLDCOASTPHOTOGRAPHY AND DELLY CARR

Every sport, every industry has a glamour couple. In true 'New Idea', 'New Weekly' tabloid journalism, it is almost mandatory for two people to have that title foisted upon them. Until recently it was Brad and Jen, the 'Pooh and Delta', Paris Hilton and... well we don't have the space to go there, but you get the picture.

Until recently triathlon's glamour couple had always been Ken and Glenda Baggs, but of more recent times the scurrilous metro dailies have said there is a new challenger on the block – Craig Walton and Emma Snowsill.

When questioned about the issue, Emma couldn't stop laughing and Walto treated it with the contempt that it deserved. So Australian Triathlete has it on good authority that the Baggs title is safe for a while yet.

"I wouldn't really call us glamorous. I wouldn't say triathletes are glamorous and wouldn't say we are glamorous. I don't think it is very fitting. I have seen that title and had a good laugh at it. I really don't think it suits us two," Emma said

"I didn't even know we were the glamour couple. Maybe Laura and Benno (Reback and Bennett) are, we should have a race off for the title. Emma and I are happy together and that is the main thing and I don't even look at it like that. That's a good joke," Walton said.

Craig Walton and Emma Snowsill share much in common. They have outstanding talent, both have an uncanny ability to blow a race apart and are two of triathlon's hottest properties. More importantly they share a love for each other and a desire to see each other do well.

They also share the fact that in the run up to the Athens Games, they both were omitted by the Australian selectors (some people would say duded), something has only served to bring them closer together and made their resolve even stronger.

Having dispelled those 'challenger' rumors, AT decided to chat with them about triathlon and life in general.

**Australian Triathlete:** Sitting at home watching the Olympics on the TV must have been difficult. What were your impressions?

**Craig Walton:** There were no surprises at the Olympics, I predicted what was going to happen because I had been there and done the course at the test event. I was disappointed in some ways because when you see that sort of thing happen and you knew what was going to happen. The most disappointing

thing for me is that Australia didn't have all bases covered. It was frustrating to watch it and what was going on. There was a bunch of runners there and that was it. I knew because I spent the money out of my own pocket to go over there because I thought it was worth it. One of the things that was difficult to watch was that some of the athletes who were chosen weren't the right athletes for that course.

On a happy note it was great to watch Loretta. We all know how tough she is and knew that she was going to be one of the outstanding girls. Also Thomo too was good, if he didn't have so many falls he would have done well in the race I think. And Benno too, you can't take it away from those two guys, they did super well.

The thing that comes out of it for me is that you can't expect anything from anyone in that sort of racing because there are so many variables. I don't want to be seen as dogging the guys. I am not bitter, but disappointed, probably more with the selectors than the athletes.

**Emma Snowsill:** I cried during the Olympics, I cried for Loretta. I was so disappointed for her. I don't enjoy watching triathlon on TV but obviously I wanted watch that. I was extremely upset watching that knowing how much she had been putting into the training and how much she put into the race itself. For that to happen I was gob smacked. For it to be taken away like that in a few seconds was extremely >>



**Opposite page:** Emma & Craig with their faithful Lab, 'Benson' and new family member 'Jet' the Staffy pup.  
**Above:** Emma racing to victory at the 2004 Noosa Triathlon.

hard to watch. It was sad, I really thought she had it and I wished she had it. But she has taken it well and that is the way it goes. You can't win them all and sometimes things are out of your control.

It made me hungrier for Beijing, definitely. It is the Olympics and it is something that any sports person aspires too. It is a different excitement and I definitely want to be a part of it. I can only do what I can, if the selection process doesn't play my way well, it is not meant to be. We will see.

**AT:** Racing in America has become a major part of your lives. How did it come about?

**CW:** After the Sydney Olympic Games disappointment I was at the crossroads and lucky enough for me, going to America was always something I could fall back on. I had put so much into the Games and it had become very political and I was better off over in America and it was time to start establishing some sponsors and I had to worry about my future in the sport and what was going in my pocket rather than ITU points.

*The Athens Olympics were going to be a goal of mine and if I made the team I was going to choose races heading to the Olympics. When I didn't make it I changed direction and decided to try something new.*

My first ever win there was in 1995 at the US Pro Champs and I was back in 1997 and won Chicago, so I had been in and out of America and half knew the ropes but I had never set up there. America is a funny place, you can't walk in there and expect to get sponsors out of one race. You have to show everyone that you are there for the long haul.

Non drafting races are where the sport really started and where Australians really excel. Macca, Crowie and myself have all decided to go down that route and has worked out well for us. To make up for his disappointment, Macca decided in the Olympic year to go over and I followed on the year after because the whole Olympic thing was over with. It has been a good thing for all of us.

The US is not a series, you just pick what races you want to do. The races you focus on are the high profile races Chicago, LA, Alcatraz, Wildflower Half Ironman, St Croix and St Anthonys. They are the big races. There are not a whole lot of money races over there but the ones that are on are high quality and help create a great sponsorship base if you do well in them. They really look after you well over there and the sponsors really get behind the pros.

**ES:** Not making the Olympic Team was the catalyst for me. The Athens Olympics were going to be a goal of mine and if I made the team I was going to choose races heading to the Olympics. When I didn't make it I changed direction and decided to try something new.

I have grown up as an age triathlete, doing non drafting races. That was how I started so it was a matter of going back to where I started and having fun with that. >>





**Above:** Craig & Emma preparing to take on the 2004 Noosa Triathlon together.

America is great. The Americans are full on and overwhelming but they embrace triathlon hugely. It is a popular sport and a lot of fun to be around. They are pretty high profile races over there and now I have been I have a better understanding of how their season works and what they are about.

**AT:** Both of you are high profile athletes, with the demands of a heavy training and racing schedule, plus the fact that you live and travel together. How do you balance it all?

**CW:** The relationship has been a great thing both myself and Emma and it is great to travel with your partner, rather than leaving them at home and go away for 4-6 months and not see them. For me it

works a lot better and we are both very happy together and get to train together which is another bonus. Something some people wouldn't like but it works for us.

One advantage for Emma in traveling with me is that I know ever race like the back of my hand and I can pass that on to her. We can train the right way for that style of racing. I always knew she would do well, she just lacks confidence in herself which you wouldn't think would be the case. But she certainly does and it was just a matter of getting her there and racing and everything took care of itself. It certainly makes things easier for her. There are races she still hasn't done like Wildflower, Alcatraz and if I can help her in anyway, that is what I am going to do.

**ES:** Craig and I have always know each other. We used to train together we trained with Bill Davoren. Craig was already training with Bill and I went there in 2000 and so we have always known each other but we went our different ways, with different coaches and came back together when we were training with Brett. We got close in camps and the friendship just developed from there.

We live and train together, so obviously we have to give each other space and we do our own things at home. But having someone else who does the same things as you and goes through the same things, like when you are extremely tired and irritable from training, they totally understand how you feel. You can walk around the house in silence knowing that it is nothing personal, just that you are



Lifetime Fitness was my big aim and people back here don't understand the enormity of the race and how important it is. They are my biggest sponsor and it was the one I wanted to win and I put a lot into it. I was happy with the result it was just that the handicap was way to hard and Loretta was on fire. But the most important part is that I win the men's section, if I won through the handicap it would have been a huge bonus. It was a great race for me but everything went down hill from there.

It was a disaster year in terms of traveling too much and not being settled. Things weren't right at Chicago and the day after I got sick and then the glandular came on. Other than Australia I didn't get to win any thing big in America. It was nice to finish off with Noosa and get at least one good win in the year.

*I would still like to go to the Commonwealth Games but I'm not going to put everything on the line for it. The most important thing for me is going to the US and keeping my sponsors happy over there and maintaining a high standard of results again this year.*

In 2005, it will be a matter of doing the races that I have to do. I would still like to go to the Commonwealth Games but I'm not going to put everything on the line for it. The most important thing for me is going to the US and keeping my sponsors happy over there and maintaining a high standard of results again this year. One thing I really want to do this year is to do an Ironman around the April May time of the year because I found in 2002, which I think was one of my best ever seasons in America, I did an Ironman at that time which gave me a huge base for the short course season over there and even for the ITU drafting races. Other than to try and perfect an Ironman, because I still haven't won one, doing an Ironman gives me a great base across the board. So certainly an Ironman in April/May and then head to America to do my thing, Wildflower, Alcatraz, Chicago, LA and depending how the Ironman goes, maybe Hawaii to finish off with.

bugged. It works really well and I think it will continue to work well. It is a fun relationship.

**AT:** Last season was a mixed bag for both of you. Some good wins but also the frustration of injury and illness. What is planned for 2005?

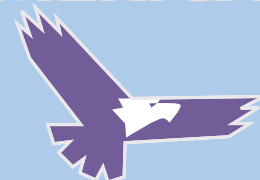
**CW:** Emma had some great results in 2004. She was injured pretty much after February until June and then she got back into training and came good for Chicago and LA and finished off well in the US.

For me everything went well in the Australian season I was happy with my results and how I went. But I have never really gone through an Australian season full bore and then go to the US and do well.

**ES:** Losing Brett as my coach was a personal blow in terms of coaching and having that mentor. But you obviously have to take into account personal circumstances and see it from his side. Everyone has to do what they have to do. But for myself, the things that I have already discussed with him and the goals that I have had in triathlon are things I still want to move towards. I still want to go to an Olympic Games and a Commonwealth Games and I want to try an Ironman as well. Those goals still stand but it is now up to me now to prioritise them, rather than consulting Brett about it.

The Commonwealth Games is definitely a focus, especially being in Melbourne and my home country, it is something I want to work towards and represent Australia in front of a home crowd. It is a bonus and something that attracts me. >>

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I am just starting to map out my 2005. We have been on a break and wanted to turn off everything triathlon. We were waiting to see if the Australian season would eventuate but we will just race the domestic season for getting back our fitness. Nothing too serious at all.

I was injured a lot last year trying to push too much racing into a short period of time and ended up paying for it. That is something I definitely don't want to do this year. I am going to take the Australian season a little more relaxed and use it to build into the US season.

### ***We will just race the domestic season for getting back our fitness.***

I will be doing the high profile races. Escape from Alcatraz, Minnesota is a big draw card because of the money, LA, Chicago and couple of half ironman at Wildflower and St Croix. It is matter of sitting down and working out a viable time line to fit them all in and travel between them all.

I like to have a go at Ironman before Beijing. It wont be a huge focus but using Ironman training as a base for short course racing. Everyone talks about doing a base and during time off now is the time to be doing that. If I get through the base phase and decide why not try something different and do an Ironman, I wouldn't rule it out at all.

At the moment I haven't put my sights on one particular Ironman, it is just something in the back of my mind that when I feel like giving it a go I will just do it. I'll let you know if that happens.

**AT:** Emma has a new career, a new relationship, a new house and a new life. What have the last few years taught you?

**ES:** The changes in my life have been remarkable. It is coming up to the third anniversary of Luke's death, so I guess it is a time for reflection. To think that three years have passed and there have been changes that have occurred in my life personally and in triathlon. Everything is a challenge in both life and triathlon and you can only learn to go with the flow. 🐾



*Above: Emma and their new puppy 'Jet'.*



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*As used by - Craig Walton, Chris McCormack, Michelle Jones, Barb Lindquist, Chris Legh, Peter Reid, Lori Bowden, Brad Bevan, Greg Welch, Mark Allen, Simon Lessing, Spencer Smith and Paula Newby-Fraser*

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**TRIAL 3**



# Emma Snowsill

**Years in Triathlon:** 7 see [www.emma-snowsill.com](http://www.emma-snowsill.com)

**Best results in the last year:** 1st Chicago Triathlon USA  
 1st Los Angeles Triathlon USA  
 1st Noosa Triathlon AUS  
 1st Sylvan Half Ironman CAN

## Swim

**Wetsuit:** Orca Predator  
**Goggles:** Eycline  
**Favorite training tool:** Paddles

## Bike

**Frame:** Felt USA  
**Forks:** Reynolds  
**Aerobars:** Profile  
**Groupset:** Shimano 10Speed.  
**Chainring:** 42/54  
**Cassette Size:** 11/25  
**Cranks:** 167 5mm  
**Wheels:** ZIPP 404's  
**Tyres:** Vittoria  
**Pedals:** Look  
**Bike Shoes:** SIDI  
**Seat Post:** Easton  
**Hydration:** Profile  
**Saddle:** San Marco (Selle)  
**Helmet:** Giro  
**Favorite feature:** Custom hand-made to my size

## Run

**Runners:** New Balance.  
**Socks:** Felt socketts  
**Sunglasses:** Oakley  
**Other training tools:** Life Fitness 97ti treadmill

## Nutrition

**Drink:** MegaBurn Mega-LytePlus  
**Bar:** MegaBurn Bar  
**Other:** Mars Bars.

## Other Training tools

**Watch:** Oakley

## Race Gear

**Swim:** Orca  
**Bike:** Orca  
**Run:** Orca

## Other comments

Please browse website: [www.emma-snowsill.com](http://www.emma-snowsill.com)

Photography by Delly Carr