

Athletes with Type 1 diabetes competing at the Oceania Track Cycling Championships



Diabetes
New Zealand

Three athletes with Type 1 diabetes will compete at the Oceania Track Cycling Championships in Wanganui from 30 November-4 December 2005: Hamish Norton representing Wellington, and Jamie Bate and Damian Wiseman representing Nelson/Marlborough. They provide some hints on how they keep their blood glucose levels stable while training and racing.

Hamish Norton

Hamish, a 28 year old from Wellington, was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in April 1988 while trying to do a 40 hour famine and a sailing regatta.

Hamish says the benefits he gets from physical activity are so many 'the list would contain the same number of items as an iPod does songs.'

His hints for keeping blood glucose levels stable while training and racing are:

- Base it on the facts. Insulin comes through so quickly and the food you eat does too. Just notice the impact of the exercise and use this knowledge to help you plan the next time you exercise.
- If I don't exercise for a couple of days, my blood glucose levels start to go 'awol' and I need loads more insulin. So, in short, exercise, and then exercise some more to increase your body's sensitivity to insulin, which means you'll need less of it.



Hamish Norton
Events: Sprint, Kerin

Jamie Bate

Jamie, a 28 year old from Nelson now living in Auckland, was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at 11 years old.

The benefits Jamie gets from cycling are:

- Enjoying the feelings from being fit and healthy
- A good mental break from work

- I feel I am taking control of my diabetes by doing what I enjoy
- It gives me a good understanding of how my body and diabetes react and therefore gives me the freedom and confidence to tackle new situations.

Jamie's hints for keeping blood glucose levels stable are:

- If it's a long ride, then based on experience, I know how much I need to eat and the amount to drop my basal. For example, I typically drop my basal by approximately 30% while exercising, and eat and drink on the bike to hold my blood glucose stable with no highs or lows.
- If it's short intense training, for example, at the track, then I test between efforts and just closely monitor my blood glucose. Intense workouts often increase my blood glucose so I will bolus (*an extra amount of insulin taken to cover an expected rise in blood glucose*) to keep them down. Then keep testing afterwards and make sure that I eat enough and not have any hypos.
- I have had a lot of trial and error with what foods suit me, when I need food when exercising, and when I don't. I have found it has changed over time as my body has adapted to new workloads. For example, I ride to and from work every day. I used to need some food for the ride but now I don't.



Jamie Bate
Events: Kerin, Sprint, Kilometre Time Trial, Scratch Race

Damian Wiseman

Damian is 29 years old, originally from Blenheim and now living in Auckland. He was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when he was 23 years old.

Damian's main benefit from physical activity is having a more stable control of his blood glucose levels. His hints for keeping blood glucose levels stable are:

- I keep my blood glucose levels stable when training and racing with constant monitoring of my levels and adjustment of food and insulin intake.
 - As I'm on a pump, the ability to suspend basals and manipulate insulin infusion 'on the fly' is incredibly helpful for managing sugars when training and racing. Often the stress of competition can mean that insulin requirements and blood glucose responses are much different from training so being able to manage this with the pump is a real plus.
 - Generally it's a case of a change in basal, having carbohydrates and water on hand, and plenty of testing to keep everything in check.
- Recovery from each exercise session has been one of the biggest factors in allowing me to train from one day to the next, between one and three sessions per day. Proper recovery, particularly nutritional recovery, has had a huge impact on my incidence of post-exercise and nocturnal hypoglycaemia.
 - Recovering well, including nutrition, stretching, compression tights, resting, sleeping, spas and massage, means that you are able to get out and train the way you need to the following day.



Damian Wiseman
Events: Sprint, Kerin

Photo: Kevin Chang