

QUARTER BY QUARTER



**GLEN
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Peter Robertson was a triathlete's triathlete.

Feared and respected in equal measure for an aggressive, all-or-nothing racing style, he also challenged convention, building to a whole-of-body-and-mind crescendo for races with a self-styled acronym H.E.A.R.T.

It stands for health, enjoyment, attitude, recovery, and training.

It worked. Robertson won three triathlon world championships over the shorter Olympic distance (1.5 km swim, 40km cycle, 10km run), finished runner-up twice, competed at two Olympics — Sydney in 2000 and Athens in 2004 — and won a bronze medal at the Melbourne Commonwealth Games in 2006.

Born in Melbourne, he shifted to Sydney and eventually settled in Western Australia, where he has lived for two decades.

At 50, he is a decade into retirement, happy to limit his exercise to chasing chickens, sheep, pigs and cattle and growing garlic on the 22-acre True Living Farm he has run for five years with wife Jacky and nine-year-old son Riley at Youngs Siding, about halfway between Albany and Denmark.

A member of the Triathlon Australia Hall of Fame, he will one of 10 inaugural inductees to WA Triathlon's equivalent on July 25.

"It's an honour of course but it's more about preserving the history of the sport, really. I'm long removed now from triathlon so it's a bit weird to be getting recognition, because I retired proper about 10 years ago," he said.

Retired "proper" means he retired twice. The first time in 2010.

"I didn't really retire on my terms, I just wasn't racing well enough to keep racing as a professional, and then like a lot of athletes, I really struggled," he said.

"I stayed retired for a couple of years and then I got back into some coaching and I was working with a lot of junior athletes, and it just brought my love back for the sport.

"And so I did come back in 2013 and raced for a few more years, but that time, it was as much about the racing as it was preparing for retirement. So the second time around it was a much easier transition out of the sport."

His three world championship victories — in 2001 (Edmondton, Canada), 2003 (Queenstown, New Zealand) and 2005 (Gamagori, Japan) — were achieved in very different circumstances.

"The first one's always special because it's the first time you become a world champion," he said.

"The year before I finished second by 13 seconds, so I didn't need to make any drastic changes. I just needed to tweak it a little bit and find 14 seconds. That was the mindset.

"I only qualified for that race two weeks beforehand. But I was very confident in my form and just how I was feeling.

"That was post 2000 and the Sydney Olympics, which was a very disappointing event for me as I came



Peter Robertson with wife Jacky and son Riley, 9, at their farm at Youngs Siding. Inset: Robertson winning in 2005.

STATE OF THE HEART

in as one of the favourites and really underperformed (34th finish). I was pretty devastated after that and it took me a while to get going.

"Once I made the team, I was pretty confident that I was on track. It was more confidence than an arrogance. I often knew when I was going to win these big events.

"I knew where my training was at. I knew where my body was."

The 2003 title was about belonging. "That was when I just moved to Perth. I'd been living in Sydney for about six years and I was just over it. I went overseas racing and came back to Australia and I landed in Perth on my around the world trip back home. And I just stayed.

"My attitude went to a whole new level and then winning that second world title, it was confirmation that I belonged. You could fluke one, just have a magical day, but when you win a second, there's no fluke involved. And that was probably one of the most dominant races. Just got off the bike with a two-minute lead and knew I was going to win."

The third win, in 2005, was all about H.E.A.R.T.

"Most people just focus on training, but I never believed that was the

case. And the third race proved that to me. If I ticked all those boxes, then I knew I was ready to perform," he said.

"And you can really relate that to anything. If you're ticking those boxes, you will be successful."

In a sombre backdrop, Robertson's mum Patricia had been diagnosed with leukemia during the build up — she survived and lived until 69.

"That was a shock to us all and I also got proper injured that year. Broke my ribs before the trials mountain biking in the hills," he said.

"I didn't actually qualify and then two weeks out from the race, a guy had pulled out and the first reserve was injured and so they called me.

"I wasn't quite feeling ready but it was more a case I was worried about damaging my record. At that stage, I'd been to four world championships and I'd won two and finished runner-up in the other two.

"I turned it down and the team manager said 'Have a think about it but we need to know today'.

"So that's when I called my dad (Alistair) and that's where this acronym came up after we had a chat.

"He said to me 'I just spoke to you like a week ago and you were telling me how much you were enjoying your

training and you were coming into some good form and why wouldn't you take the spot?"

"I couldn't really answer it outside of it would damage my reputation. It wasn't a good answer.

"I took the spot and that's where that acronym came in because I wasn't 100 per cent physically prepared. I wasn't actually fit enough to race hard for two hours. I felt like I had 45 minutes in the tank. And so I had to find another hour in a world championship race to go easy.

"It's not a simple thing. And so I put all my eggs in one basket and laid it all out in the run and it came off."

Commentators said Robertson loved to deal with pain and force it on other people. "It sounds a bit sadistic now, but I loved the psychological side of the sport. It was a real strength of mine. I did enjoy playing the mind games," he said.

The same commentators mused about his unique head tilt when he was fatigued and on a mission.

"I can thank my three older sisters for that," he said. "They used to give me a Superman ride in the lounge room and when I was eight they threw me too far and I hit the couch and broke my collarbone."



NAUGHTY CORNER (Inspired by Nick Kyrgios)

If any final proof was ever required there it was, sticking out like a bottle of Dom Pérignon P3 Plénitude Brut in a diamond encrusted ice bucket at a FIFA lunch.

FIFA's decision to genuflect in deference to US President Donald Trump after his demand a red card issued to American striker Folarin Balogun be rescinded was confirmation world football's governing body is a joke.

Even Sepp Blatter thought it stank. "Football must never become a playground for political power," former FIFA president Blatter said.

Really? Blatter served as the head of FIFA for about 17 years, only getting up from his gaboon and Luigi Bevilacqua-crafted velvet chair when he was suspended in October, 2015 following a major corruption investigation.

His successor Gianni Infantino received three phone calls from The Don, who says he made no demands, only calling for a review.

Remember, it was Infantino who presented Trump with the inaugural FIFA Peace Prize last December.

Thankfully Belgium proved that Karma is real when they belted the US 4-1 to send them packing from the World Cup.

As Australian great Craig Foster said: Belgium just saved football.

FIRST QUARTER

West Australians Giorgia Patten, Bronwyn Cox and Jacqueline Swick secured a silver medal in the women's four at World Rowing Cup III in Lucerne, Switzerland.

The crew, with Sydney's Georgie Rowe filling the fourth, spot held off the USA to finish second behind Great Britain, a result that secured Australia the overall World Rowing Cup trophy by a single point.

SECOND QUARTER

Dual Olympic gold medallist Matt Wearn is taking his first competitive look at the Los Angeles 2028 course this weekend in the ILCA North American Championships in San Pedro.

A win in LA in the ILCA7 class, formerly known as Laser, would place him in rarefied air. Only swimmer Dawn Fraser, who won the 100m freestyle in Melbourne, Rome and Tokyo (1956, 60 and 64), has triumphed in an individual event at three successive Games.

THIRD QUARTER

Just three months after making his Major League debut for the Cleveland Guardians, Australia's Travis Bazzana has earned an All-Star call up.

The 23-year-old is only the fourth Australian to receive the All-Star nod.

FOURTH QUARTER

Oceania champion Nicole Frain has been confirmed for the 2026 UCI Gravel World Championships in Nannup on October 10-11.

A former professional on the road and Australian national champion in 2022, Frain has over the past two years established herself as one of the world's top gravel cyclists.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

I am gutted.

Australian swimming sensation Kaylee McKeown medically withdraws from the Commonwealth Games due to a bout of glandular fever.