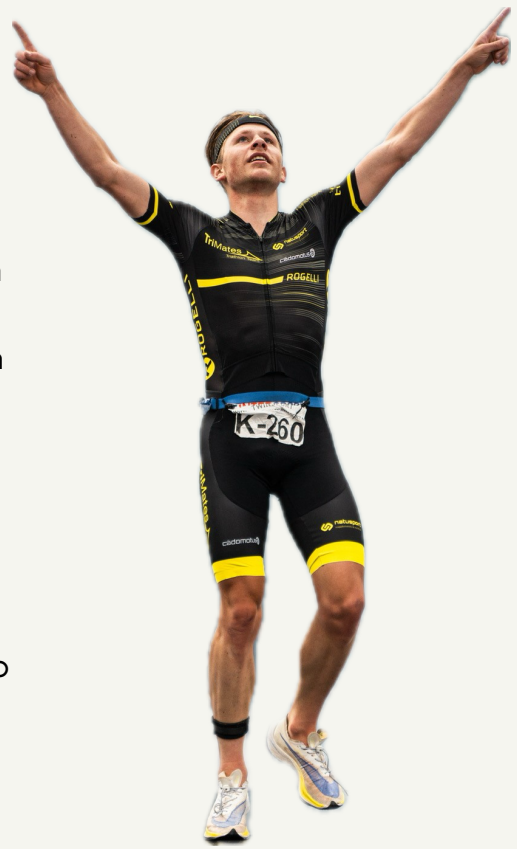


Reimagine sports

Simon den Braber (triathlon)

“When I run in the forest there is definitely a feeling of being one with nature.”

“The water is special somehow. If you start fighting you won’t get ahead. You must be one with the water. Be fluid. Flow.”



Simon den Braber practices triathlon and is found in the top ten in the Netherlands. To compete at his level, he often has to travel abroad to participate in major competitions. This sometimes leaves him with no choice but to fly.

If you ask Simon what sustainability means to him, he'll give you a detailed answer. He talks about a long-term vision that should meet the needs of the current generation but not hinder the future generation. He is actively involved in what he can do personally to live more sustainably. Even skipping a competition abroad because another flight doesn't feel right is an option for him to contribute to a greener future.



Nature & training

Simon prefers to train in his own region, outdoors in nature. Triathlon is off course very well suited for outdoor practice. All the disciplines are in nature. He finds that there's plenty of space for it in the Netherlands. Being outdoors so much and enjoying it creates a feeling of urgency wanting to do something to ensure this remains possible for future generations.

Direct consequences

When asked about the effects of climate change and how it specifically affects his sport, he mentions alarming experiences. Contrary to what many think, effects of climate change are not something for the future. He talks about how the Dutch championships were being held in temperatures exceeding 30 degrees Celsius and how other races were cancelled. Extreme weather conditions will be the new normal and this makes the sport increasingly difficult to practice outdoors because it simply becomes unbearable for the athletes.

World of sports

When asked about what the federation is doing to help the athletes in this regard, there is silence. He pauses for a moment and then says the federation is doing almost nothing. No regulations have been put in place, for example, to require sustainability reports for major competitions so that athletes can see the impact. The federation is also not taking any action to motivate athletes to live sustainably or to speak out collectively about it.

Change!

As an athlete he wants to make the world of triathlon more sustainable, "I can't achieve much on my own so we need to cooperate and discuss serious alternatives!"



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