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On camp with Coach Brett Sutton

Posted by: Editor
Posted on: Wednesday 5th August 2015

TAGS Brett Sutton | Jane Hansom | St Moritz

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Jane Hansom on the Brett Sutton Training Camp experience

British Age-Group athlete **Jane Hansom** is one of the most active and successful athletes we know of. European Champion in 2013 and Silver medalist in 2014 over the Standard distance, Jane has also previously won overall the Sandman and Snowman events. In the last couple of seasons Jane has focussed more on the longer distances, winning her Age-Group this year at Ironman 70.3 Mallorca and Ironman 70.3 Pescara.

2015 was also to include a new challenge - a first Ironman, with the hope of qualifying for Kona at the first attempt.

In order to do that, Jane spent some time in St. Moritz, Switzerland on a training camp under the guidance of the legendary / infamous **Brett Sutton** (www.trisutto.com), regarded by many as the best coach in the sport. What was the experience like and what did she learn? That's what I asked Jane, and here is her report addressing just that...

I had been trying to find time to come over to St. Moritz and train with the famous Brett Sutton for a quite a while now. Suddenly things fell into place and here I was, Day One on the poolside at 6.50 am with the rest of his athletes ready for a week of hard graft. I was nervous and excited at the same time. I wanted to make the most of this opportunity.

I was in good company.

Olympic Champion Nicola Spirig, Ironman 70.3 World Champion Daniela Ryf, ITU Long Distance World Champion Mary Beth Ellis, multiple Ironman winner Corinne Abraham, 2013 Ironman 70.3 European Champion Ritchie Nichols, 2011 World Junior Champion Lukas Verzbicas and Ironman Wales winner Matty Trautman were all sitting by the side of the pool waiting for the arrival of the man himself, who would then assign their lane dependent on what their individual plan was.



That was the first thing I noticed. There is no one size fits all approach here. Everyone is given a different workout.

I was put in to lane three and we started with 12 x 300's with 10 secs rest. With paddles and pull buoys. "Straight in at the deep end then" I thought. Then off we went. Immediately I could feel then air was thinner than normal. A few lengths in, I was beginning to get dropped and the hideous realisation set in that I was neither as fit nor as strong as I thought I was. I also realised that everyone was only swimming front crawl instead of a mix of strokes. But then again, this is the point. At Brett's camp, you practice what you race.

Brett patrolled the poolside with assistant coach Robbie by his side, and corrected everyone's stroke. I was told to keep my arm cadence high and my large paddles were thrown in the bin. I got new smaller ones that would self correct the back end of my stroke. It worked immediately. So much so that after a few more 300's my forearms caved in. I simply had not been engaging them effectively. Good news though. I had highlighted a weakness.

It was quite bizarre looking at this motley crew of triathletes all using different swim toys. All specific to them. They were like some renegade band of swimmers. I smiled. I could see how this was so effective.

At 8am the GB squad came in. Ali and Johnny warmed up on the poolside then jumped in to the lane next to us and I chuckled to myself under the water as I swam side-by-side with Ali for half a length before he cruised away.



Ovaverva is St Moritz's new and amazing 25m pool and spa complex. The facilities are fantastic and what a view it has. Not a bad place to train looking at the surrounding Enagadin mountains while notching up the lengths. The spa is also a pretty relaxing meeting place at the end of the day to massage the legs and catch up on all the chat.

After the swim session we were all (individually), told what to do that day.

Which brings me to the biking. So many amazing routes to ride. My favourite is a four hour ride to Livigno in Italy and back, which means you get to speed through passport control James Bond style without stopping. I rode there with Brazilian Pro athlete Mariana Andrade and Corinne Abraham most days, and spotting the BMC and Astana teams was a regular occurrence. Apparently we just missed Contador by five minutes one day but we did bump into the GB ladies squad on the second day near the summit riding down the mountain past Non, Vicky and Sophie who were on their way up.

Run wise, St Moritz is gobsmackingly beautiful. There is a track and lake for fast running and trails galore so you can run for miles. I saw Vicky and Non running around the lake most days but for me, my favourite running was on the forest trails checking out the beautiful horses that lived in the villages dotting the routes.

The week passed far too quickly and as soon as I was feeling the benefit, it was time to leave.

I stayed on for a few days, as I couldn't bring myself to leave. There was a fabulous simplicity of life there; train, eat sleep. Repeat. But I had a business to get back to, so I had to go.

On reflection, the key to Brett's genius is that he is a master of observation and seeing this is action is seriously impressive.

He seems to clock what kind of athlete you are by the way you move. This, overlaid with the fact that he has spent half his life on the poolside means he can see immediately what will make you move faster through the water. He then tells you how to fix it in a simple way and what equipment will help you do it. Then, it's down to you.

It's pretty awesome to be on the receiving end of such a wealth of knowledge that is simply impossible to learn from a book. Or an online course...

By 9am on Day One, I had more useful information I could put into practice than I would have learned in an entire week on any other normal Tri camp.

But this is the thing.

This IS no normal tri camp. This is a high performance Brett Sutton Tri camp.

Which comes with the opportunity to learn how to be a better athlete direct from the man himself.

This does not mean it's a camp just for Pro's as Brett believes he can help all age groupers of any ability regardless of how good you are.

There is just one pre requisite: that you want to better yourself as an athlete, and if you do, then learning opportunities quite simply do not get any better than this. And one thing is a definite, you will leave a better and more knowledgeable athlete than you came.

For camp details visit www.trisutto.com.

And that Ironman plan that Jane had? Well, shortly after the St. Moritz camp Jane returned to Switzerland to race the Ironman in Zurich... and won the 45-49 category by 24 minutes, clocking 10:37:38 and taking her Kona slot at the first attempt.



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