



New Zealand Olympic Ambassador

# Matthew Randall

**Olympian number:**

943

**Discipline:**

Cycling – Track

**Specialist event:**

4000m Team pursuit

Matthew Randall was born in Invercargill in 1978. He played sports from a very young age, beginning bike racing when he was just 8 years old. With New Zealand's first international standard velodrome and a very active cycling community, Invercargill offered Matthew a lot of great cycling opportunities.

Throughout and after secondary school, Matthew trained and competed in both road and track cycling. He spent a lot of time in Europe riding alongside the world's best riders in international competitions. Matthew worked hard to support himself during this time with some sponsorship and part-time work. He also found time to complete a Bachelor of Physical Education in Exercise and Sport Science at Otago University.

Matthew eventually decided to focus on track cycling to fulfil his dreams of competing at the Olympic Games. He qualified and began training with the New Zealand 4000m team pursuit team. In 2002, the team – Matthew,

## Quick facts

**Favourite food:** Seafood in any form

**Favourite movie:** *Pursuit of Excellence*

**Favourite music:** Mainstream pop, U2, Pearl Jam

**Childhood hero:** Eddy Merckx

**Current favourite athlete:** Javier Gomez (ITU Triathlete and XTERRA World Champion)

**Most rewarding moment in sport:** Commonwealth Games medal, coaching elite athletes

**Talents other than cycling:** Triathlon, basketball

**Biggest injury:** Blood disorder, dislocated shoulder, broken thumb

**Biggest sacrifice:** Time away from family, friends

**Job outside sport:** Triathlon and bike coach

**Other fun facts:** Wife: Paula, Daughter: Evie (15 months)



**New Zealand  
Olympic Education**

Greg Henderson, Lee Vertongen and Hayden Roulston – brought home a Bronze Medal from the Commonwealth Games in Manchester. At the Games, they briefly set a new Commonwealth record time, before this record was broken in the same race by both Australia and England.

Matthew began training in earnest for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. He was selected to represent New Zealand in the team pursuit event alongside Hayden Godfrey, Peter Latham and Marc Ryan. At the Games, they rode against teams that were paid by their countries to be in training all year long, coming in strong in tenth place.

After Athens, Matthew took a break from competitive sport, and retired from cycling. While keeping up physical activity for his own fitness, he trained as a real estate agent and then worked as one for a few years. However, before too long, the sporting world drew him back, and he became involved in triathlons – both competing and coaching. Triathlon quickly became Matthew’s new focus. He told *The Southland Times*,

“Primarily, my day is about doing what I can to be the best I can be, that’s why I’ve left real estate, to focus on it”

(4 April 2012).

Matthew now works hard to train himself and others to reach their goals. He is competing internationally in triathlons, and was chosen as a New Zealand Olympic Ambassador in 2012.

## Links

Matthew Randall’s Olympic Museum profile:  
<http://imuseum.olympic.org.nz/museum/athlete/profile/2068>

Matthew Randall’s website:  
<http://www.swimbikeruncoach.co.nz>

## Career highlights

- 2012 Maui XTERRA World Championship: 30–34 age group (Tenth)
- 2011 Maui XTERRA World Championship: 30–34 age group (Tenth)
- 2004 Athens Olympics: 4000m team pursuit (Tenth)
- 2004 Track Cycling World Cup Classics, Overall series champions: 4000m team pursuit
- 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games: 4000m team pursuit (Bronze)
- 2002 Track Cycling World Cup Classics (Gold)
- 2001 Track Cycling World Cup Classics (Gold)
- 2001 World Track Cycling Championships: 4000m team pursuit (Sixth)
- 2000 Tour of Southland (Seventh overall classification)

## Honours

- 2001 & 2002 Southland Sportsperson of the Year

Follow the NZ Olympic Team here:





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## Official Olympic Sport

# Cycling

Men's cycling has been part of the Olympic Games since the first modern Games in 1896. The events have changed over the years, but there has always been some cycling. Women's road racing was introduced in 1984 and women's track cycling in 1988. The London 2012 Olympic Games were the first time men and women contested the same events in all cycling disciplines.

## Important points

The different cycling events test different combinations of ability: strength, speed, endurance and tactical thinking.

**Aerodynamics:** Cyclists try to reduce the amount of drag they feel from the air, as this helps them move faster. They make themselves more aerodynamic by wearing specially designed light-weight racing suits and helmets, maintaining very little body fat, and often shaving their legs. Professional bicycles are often built of extremely light materials.

**Position:** When you ride closely behind another cyclist, you can ride in their slipstream and reduce the amount of pressure you feel from the air. This is called drafting. It means you don't have to pedal as hard, so you can save energy. In team events, team members often take turns at the front, giving the other members a chance to rest. In individual events, a common tactic is to try to force the other rider to ride ahead of you, so you can save energy for the final sprint.



# The basics

There are four cycling disciplines in the Olympic Games:

- **BMX** (see separate summary).
- **Mountain biking** made its Olympic debut in 1996. The track runs over rough and hilly countryside. All riders start together and the first to complete a set number of laps of the track is the winner.
- **Road cycling** takes place outside, often on public roads. In the road racing event, all the riders start at the same time. The first rider to cross the line wins. The time trial event is about having the fastest time over a course. Riders start 90 seconds apart. In team events, each team has no more than five riders.
- **Track cycling** is contested on a velodrome. Velodrome tracks are a similar shape to running tracks, but the sides of velodrome tracks are sloped up from the centre. The slope is steep on the corners and less steep on the straights. Velodrome tracks are usually made of wood. There are several different types of team and individual track races. The aim of most of the races is to cross the finish line first or with the fastest time. The omnium event is the exception, as it includes several different races, with points being awarded for each race. The rider with the fewest points after all the races wins.

## Olympic events

### Men

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- BMX racing
- Mountain bike cross country
- Road: Individual time trial (about 44km)
- Road: Road race (about 250km)
- Track: Sprint
- Track: Keirin
- Track: Omnium
- Track: Team Sprint
- Track: Team Pursuit

### Women

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- BMX racing
- Mountain bike cross country
- Road: Individual time trial (about 29km)
- Road: Road race (about 140km)
- Track: Sprint
- Track: Keirin
- Track: Omnium
- Track: Team Sprint
- Track: Team Pursuit

