

Some questions to:

## Helen Russell

20.10.2019

### Can you introduce yourself? What did you do before quadrathlon, when did you started, ...

Born 1975, Female, 170cm

Helen comes from Bromsgrove, Worcestershire and can often be found either running on the Lickey Hills or cycling around the roads of Worcestershire. Helen is now based in Evesham and trains six days a week to maintain a top international performance as well as working as a trade union official.

As a child Helen was a member of the Bromsgrove and Redditch Athletic Club but gave up running during her school exams. She didn't return to the sport until in her mid-twenties when she realised that a sedentary lifestyle was not good for her health. Helen's first triathlon was in 2006 and as a late comer to triathlon she has shown that it is never too late to regain fitness and that if you work hard enough you can achieve unimagined success.

She has won a number of international and national age group titles, including World and European Duathlon Champion, European Triathlon Champion and World Quadrathlon Champion.

Helen put her triathlon ambitions on hold in 2015 to take part in a challenge that was more important for her than winning medals. Ex England footballer and cancer survivor Geoff Thomas asked Helen to be one of only two women to participate in Le Tour-One Day Ahead. The challenge saw eleven riders cycle the whole route of the 2015 Tour de France one day before the pros to raise over £1m for Cure Leukaemia to help fund clinical trials and research nurses at the QE Hospital, Birmingham. She continues to combine fundraising with competing and in 2017 raised £2,000 for The Air Ambulance Service by cycling up the three roads of Mont Ventoux in a single day and organising a number of fundraising events. In 2018 she raised funds for the West Bromwich Albion Foundation and was the only female participant in the Baggies Big Bike Challenge, which raised over £29,000 for the Foundation.

In 2017 Helen turned her attentions to Quadrathlons (swim/kayak/bike/run) and in her first season won the British Championships as well as the British Series Trophy. In 2018 she took gold in the World Sprint Quadrathlon Championship and World Cup Series in her age group as well as defending her British titles.



### Where do you live?

Evesham, UK. Evesham is a small town in Worcestershire, which is in the midlands region of the UK. Evesham has just over 23,400 residents. It is a beautiful small town with a river which is ideal for kayaking and swimming. It is also situated on the edges of the Cotwolds region of the UK which is famous for its beautiful countryside including some big hills for cycling on!

### What's your favourite discipline?

Cycling.

### What was your best:

- Race: In quadrathlon my best race was the Sprint World Championship in 2018 where I won my age group and finished second overall.

### What's your biggest tip for a beginner in quadrathlon?

If you are from a triathlon background like me, then join a kayak club and get some lessons as the kayak leg is so important.

## **How many hours do you train a week?**

Depends. Sometimes around 13 hours but it can be less. If I am away from work it can be hard to fit sessions in.

## **Have you ever won a European or World title?**

### **How many, and when?**

- 2019 World Middle Distance Quadrathlon Champion (40-50 age group)
- 2018 World Sprint Quadrathlon Champion and winner World Cup Series (40-50 age group)
- 2018 British Quadrathlon Champion and winner British Quadrathlon Trophy Series (overall)
- 2017 British Quadrathlon Champion and winner British Quadrathlon Trophy Series (overall)
- 2014 European Aquathlon Championships, Cologne, Germany, 2nd place 35-39 age group
- 2013 European Sprint Triathlon Championships, Alanya, Turkey, 1st place 35-39 age group and 2nd overall
- 2012 European Sprint Duathlon Championships, Horst, Holland, 1st place overall women and 1st 35-39 age group
- 2011 World Sprint Duathlon Championships, Gijon, Spain-1st place 35-39 age group
- 2010 World Aquathlon Championships, Budapest, 3rd place 35-39 age group
- 2010 European Standard Duathlon Championships, Nancy, 2nd place 35-39 age group
- 2009 World Standard Duathlon Championships, Concord, 3rd place 30-35 age group

## **What are your best results in the world cup ranking?**

2018 – 3rd overall and 1st age group (40-50)

## **Do you like hilly courses?**

Yes so much so that I did the Alp d'Huez triathlon (short course)!

## **Who is your idol?**

Rosa Luxemburg

## **Describe yourself in one word:**

Organised

## **What's your favourite food/drink?**

Food - Bread and cabbage.

Drink - Squash. We drink a lot of squash in the UK, which is water with a flavoured cordial added to it.

## **What's your favourite pre-race track?**

I enjoy listening to motivational music before a race. My track list includes Lady Gaga 'Edge of Glory' and Katy Perry 'Roar'. The lyrics mention glory or champions which helps me to focus on the race.

## **What do you do before a quadrathlon race?**

I try to find time to do a warm up which consists of a short run, then some limbering up exercises and stretches. Sometimes my warm up is very short as it takes quite a long time to set up for a quadrathlon!

## **What do you want to get as a prize if you win a race?**

I like to get trophies as they are a good reminder of a race.

## **Where's your favourite training place?**

Every winter I visit the Costa Blanca in Spain for at least a week of warm weather training. I stay at the Terralta Hotel in Benidorm which is a great base at the bottom of the Marina Mountains. Lots of pros train there in the winter and it is fun to spot them when out riding.

In the summer I love staying in the UK. I am still discovering lots of great places to ride but my favourite is Snowdonia in North Wales. There are great hill climbs, lakes to swim or kayak in and stunning off road runs.

## **Do you avoid alcohol? If yes, only in the season, or always?**

No! I am too old not to enjoy a glass of red wine!

**Who do you think is the best quadrathlete in history? Man / woman**

I am new to the sport so don't know the greats from the past but at the moment Lisa Teichert is an amazing athlete.

**What's your favourite place?**

North Wales

**More**

You can find out more about me on  
[www.hrussell.co.uk](http://www.hrussell.co.uk)

Or on Twitter @helengoth

In 2015 I won the Wychavon Sporting Hero Award for my quadrathlon results and fundraising. This is a regional community award of which I am very proud.