

Tasmanian Matt Bevilacqua has defended his Molokai to Oahu paddleboard title in Hawaii, winning in record time. Pictures: Supplied

Sport

## Tasmanian-born ironman Matt Bevilacqua defends Molokai to Oahu paddleboard title in Hawaii

EMMA GREENWOOD, Gold Coast Bulletin

# MATT BEVILACQUA – REMEMBERS MJR

In 2015, competing in the *Individual Unlimited Men's World Paddleboard Championship*, **Matt Bevilacqua**, the 23-year-old Tasmanian, who is now based in Queensland, overcame a lack of wind and severe pain to take the honours in a marathon 5 hours 20 minutes and 13 seconds. Bevilacqua, who has finished second at the World Oceanman Championships in France, said he had completed a dream he harboured since his days back at Clifton Beach.

In 2016, Matt competed again and this time the Tasmanian Bevilacqua, who now lives and trains on the Gold Coast and finished third in the Nutri-Grain series earlier this year, broke fellow Australian Jamie Mitchell's 4hr 40min 31 sec course record with his astounding 4:29.32 effort in favourable winds.

Watch as he is so exhausted that even as his mother races out to him, he can hardly stand up.

<https://www.facebook.com/molokai2oahu/videos/10157263637975525/>

Matt went to St Virgil's College, Hobart and vividly remembers the MJR sessions with Mitch. Here are some of his opinions on aspects of MJR that help him everyday!

### 1. ATTITUDE - WE ARE IN CHARGE OF OUR ATTITUDES

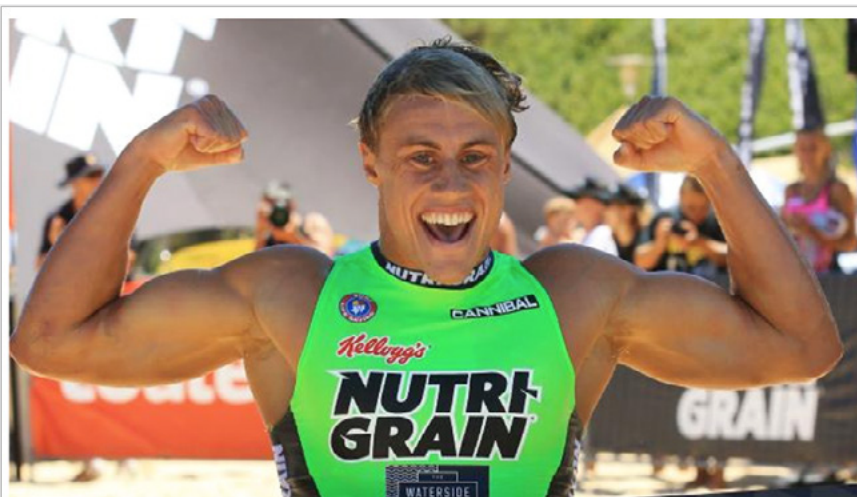
*Attitude is 80% of the battle. Or mental strength. For me a good example and mental fight I face everyday is the 4.30am wake-up for swimming every weekday. If I go to sleep thinking the slightest subtle thought of maybe turning my alarm off in the morning, or pressing snooze, I know I won't make it. For me, (its automatic now) but every time I think of waking up its always positive, there isn't even the possibility of me not going, it simply isn't an option. When facing big challenges whatever they are in life, it's so important to be positive in every way no matter how small. Verbalizing negative thoughts, negative body language, and forgetting the positives in a situation, is so easy to do but can drastically affect your attitude. Once that negative attitude has set in, it becomes much harder to turn it around. For positive people who make it look easy (we all know some) it's because they have these initial steps of destroying those negative thoughts down pat and therefore never have to recover!*

## 2. B.I.Y. - BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

*B.I.Y. was my first my first big hurdle moving out of home. At 18, I packed up my tiny little car with board and ski on the roof with everything I own inside (not much) and set off for QLD. Who was I too dream of becoming the best Ironman in the world and training with the best. I was a little skinny kid from Tassie with no money, no family history in the sport and hardly any natural talent. It's hard thing to believe but we can be whatever we want to be. The world, especially today, isn't as big as it seems and if you're prepared to do what it takes you can achieve anything. After all, if you don't chase your dreams, you'll be filled with the worst feeling there is, regret. All it takes is YOUR best. One day after a year or two that belief clicked inside me, that I can be the best, it may take years but I'll do MY best to do it, and whatever the result I'll have no regret because of that.*

## 3. MAKING THE MOST OF WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN DEALT & 4. TAKING AND USING DISAPPOINTMENTS (TAKING THE GOOD WITH THE BAD)

*This is something I was blessed with. Relishing the challenge. Whatever knocked me down, just motivated me to go harder. You must learn how to learn from your mistakes. It's one of life's most important lessons. If you can learn from every little tough experience, every little problem or mistake you will be so much wiser come tomorrow, next week, next year, next decade. For me, every time I enter the surf, or training, any little mistake in my technique or skill would be learnt from and I would consciously tell myself that under no circumstance should I make that same mistake again.. and there it is, intrinsic motivation just for myself. That's the kind of motivation that can't be affected by anything externally and the type that creates successful people whatever they have been dealt.*



Matt Bevilacqua after winning round three of the Ironman at Newcastle Beach. Picture: Mark Evans

Tasmania's Matt Bevilacqua continued a day of firsts on Newcastle Beach in the Kellogg's Nutri-Grain Ironman series by bringing down the king of surf, Shannon Eckstein.

## 5. USE OUR TALENTS & MAKING LIFE HAPPEN

*I wouldn't say use your talents. I'd say use your love. Your talents may not be what you love. Do what you love. Music, Sport, Art, Maths, anything, if you love it. Do it! Life is short and you can't waste it doing things that you NEED to do to earn the right salary, please the right people or because your good at it. Do what you love because that is the thing you will be most successful at, you will train, work, strive so much harder for as many years as it takes because you love it and it will become easy!*

## 6. MY FUTURE LIES IN MY HANDS

*Unfortunately this one is scary. YOU are the master of your own destiny. At the end of the next few years you are going to have ALREADY determined what kind of man you are going to be and that will be your future. Learn from the people you admire, hammer them with questions because they will love answering them if you admire them. Surround yourself with people you want to be like, because like it or not they will shape you in the coming years of high school. Whether you make good choices or bad don't stress, but apply self discipline if you ever make the same wrong decision, choice or mistake TWICE.*



**Things I Learned from Matt**

**Find five new attitudes/qualities in the MJR book that take after Matt.**

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**2 Chronicles 15:7**

*But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work will be rewarded.*

**How might you relate this article about Matt’s achievements to Jesus?**

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