

5/12/2014

A mom's triathlon

Last week, we asked you to share your experience as a working mom. **Rowena de Belligny**, from the Financial Markets, wrote a blog sharing her story about how she keeps pace with and succeeds in her own triathlon in life – the mommy's way: balancing sports, work and family.

Some people started to call me an 'Iron Mommy'. I'm a triathlete and a full-time working mommy. I am focused and driven at work and in my training, I am determined, I strive to do my best in everything I start, and get great satisfaction from pushing through my perceived limits. I am also a loving wife and mother of two boys.



Overall second – MetaSprint Duathlon 2014



Ironman 70.3 Putrajaya –
First place and fastest bike split

Training for a triathlon

We don't have a car, so we all cycle or run everywhere. Family, colleagues and friends nicknamed me Iron Mummy, for being 'hard-core' and cramming so much into each day.

After having my second son, I decided that I wanted to try triathlons. I had always been a runner; I had cycled a lot, mainly as a form of cheap (*free!*) transport. About three months after giving birth, I bought a bike. When I went back to work, I cycled to work three days a week carrying my breast pump in my backpack and going as fast as I could in the evenings so that my pots of frozen milk were still frozen when I arrived home!

After the 'dream feed' at 10.30pm, my husband would get up during the night to tend to the children so that I could get some sleep to prepare for work the next day. So each Sunday morning, to give him a well deserved lay in, I would get up with the kids and after breakfast take them for a jog in the park with the enormous double pushchair.

Once or twice a week, in between putting the children to bed and the 'dream feed', I swam between 500 and 1,500 metres. On Saturdays, I joined a local cycling group and gradually cycled further and further each Saturday morning.

After about four months of doing this, I was ready for my first triathlon in January 2013. By the end of 2013, I had won races, come second in my first Ironman 70.3 race, been offered the opportunity to race at the world championships, and decided to get more serious and embarked on a structured, heart-rate based training programme.

Fitting in work and family

Finding time to play all four roles: being an athlete, full-time employee, a mother and a wife is a challenge. So I would try to be 'smart' so I try to take advantage of all of the time-saving tricks.

For example, I usually get home in time for bath time, story time and a cuddle before bed, and then once the children are asleep, I swim, spend time with my husband or drag him out to accompany me for a run on his bike.

Most mornings, I get up early – about 5:00am: during the week I go out once or twice on my bike with a small group of friends and I am back before the children wake up. During the weekends, I get up as early as 4:00am to ride more than 120 km and be home for breakfast at 8:30am. Most Sundays, I run pushing both of the boys, sometimes having to bribe them to keep still with the promise of a *cheese prata* at the end of the run.

I am only able to train like this because my husband is so supportive of my sporting activities. With his support, we can fit it all in!

My tips for 'fitting it all in'



Get up early

- If you've done your training before you start the day, you're far less likely to skip it; you can feel smug having a glass of wine with your dinner or chilling out on the couch in the evening.

Train with your kids

- If you have kids, invest in a pram you can run with. I have a Bob Revolution Duallie but there are many other great models out there! Run to take them places from school to nursery. Or run with them just so you don't need to find childcare/ babysitter when you want to go out for a run. After a while, my boys love it, and now my eldest son quite often wants to get out and run with me.
- Invest in a baby seat for your bike, or even a bike trailer if you have older children. You can go further, faster than running and you can use it to throw lots and lots of grocery shopping or other baggage in when the kids aren't in it... perhaps extra resistance for hill repeats!? Some of the better ones can be bike trailers and once you park your bike, convert to a pushchair for strolling or running (some of them even convert to ski-trailers!)

Multitask

- To get a core work-out every day, try sitting on a swiss ball instead of a chair – at the office, at the dining table, etc.

Be kind

- Be generous and appreciative of your spouse, and kind to those who support you (*and put up with you*). Most of us can't do it without them. They are important – make them feel

that way.

Always be prepared

- Keep sets of work-out clothes, shoes, toiletries everywhere – in the car, at the office. That way if you have some unexpected spare time, you can sneak in a training session.

Use your own steam

- Leave the car at home, or better, sell it. Commute to work on a bike or by running. If your commute is too long, get on the public transport part of the way and cycle or run the rest.

Run errands

- ...literally. If you need to run to the local shop to get bread, or to the bank or post office, put on your running shoes and run.

Ask if you can work from home

- You can use the time that you usually spend commuting to work out instead. If you have to join conference calls that are mainly listening, or listening to podcasts for information, you could listen while you run.

Find a gym with a crèche

- If you find you never go to the gym, despite paying the membership, because you don't know what to do with the kids, find one with babysitting services. The children love them too.

Run around the pitch

- I don't, because my kids aren't old enough yet, but I have heard of many parents taking their kids to sports matches and running laps of the pitch/ stadium while they watch the game.

Turn off the TV

- And save hours. Without TV, any time spent with your children is better quality time. Even sleeping is time better spent than in front of the box. If you absolutely must, watch it while you're on a treadmill, a turbo trainer or, at the very least, sitting on a swiss ball.

Rest

- When you're feeling below par, rest up, including lots of sleep, eat well, drink lots of water, take vitamins and mineral supplements, and stay off of the alcohol. Don't try to plough through an illness or injury, it will only make your recovery much slower and render any training hard and pointless.

Train with heart

- Training by time and heart rate. With data, it allows you to train more effectively and efficient with precise planning. You're far less likely to injure or fatigue yourself by rushing through a workout or overtraining. This way in the long term, you actually spend less time training for the same or better results.

Posted at 10:52 AM | [Comments \(10\)](#)

502 Hits  14 Like

Comments

quite extraordinary

[Edit](#)

Rowena, well done. an inspiring story of focus, purpose and balance. thank you for sharing.

at 5/14/2014 11:07 AM

I am inspired !

[Edit](#)

Will definitely change my routine around to make way for more exercise time. Thanks for sharing.

at 5/14/2014 11:13 AM

Re: A mom's triathlon

[Edit](#)

Awesome! and inspiring stuff Rowena! tough act to follow even without littel children

at 5/14/2014 11:13 AM

wow

[Edit](#)

Thanks for sharing. This is really inspiring!

at 5/14/2014 11:24 AM

Congratulations!

[Edit](#)

Well done Rowena...amazing achievement - putting the rest of us to shame!!

at 5/14/2014 11:24 AM

~~~SUPERWOMAN~~~

[Edit](#)

Way to go, Rowena!!!

at 5/14/2014 11:33 AM

Inspirational

[Edit](#)

Thanks for sharing your story. As another mom trying to juggle life in all aspects, you bring another dimation of maximising your opportunites.

at 5/14/2014 12:26 PM

Incredible

[Edit](#)

Well done Rowena - your story is super inspirational. Thanks for sharing.

at 5/14/2014 4:32 PM

Well Done

[Edit](#)

Impressed by your dedication. Well Done.

at 5/14/2014 5:27 PM

Amazing

[Edit](#)

Have seen you many times cycling away with so much of passion and enthusiasm.

Keep it going and truly inspiring

at 5/14/2014 5:36 PM