



elete Athlete Profile: Marie Kirton, Ironman Athlete



(Above:) Marie Kirton pictured in her New Zealand gear earlier this year.

Marie Kirton was born a die-hard athlete. She grew up in a small farming town in New Zealand and tried as many sports (running, swimming, netball, rugby, soccer,) as she was able to during her childhood and high school years. While studying Physical Education and Commerce at university, Marie completed her first half marathon. "I had never known such pain," she states. Rather than the experience deterring her, it fuelled her passion for endurance racing. From there, she set off traveling and working round the globe, continuing to participate in both full and half marathons wherever she could. She began her triathlon career upon returning to New Zealand for postgraduate study. "I remember competing throughout the season in an old surfing wetsuit and a borrowed road bike, three sizes too big for me! I enjoyed it immensely though," says Marie.

Since then, Marie has competed in four Ironman races, seven Half Ironmans, and numerous other standard and sprint distance triathlons. From 9 to 5, Marie lives and works in Bristol as a Business Analyst contractor. In between her busy work schedule, she squeezes in a grueling training regimen, which has paid off well.

In 2011, she placed 3rd and 4th in her age group at the UK Half Ironman and UK Full Ironman

and qualified for the World Long Distance Champs and the Ironman 70.3 world champs earlier this year.

Marie was introduced to **elete Electrolyte Add-In** earlier this year and uses it faithfully before, during, and after her workouts. In fact, Marie will not leave the house without her pocket bottle of **elete**.

How and when did you first get involved with your sport??

"I had my first taste of triathlon in 2003 when I entered a women's only triathlon race. It was a super sprint distance (300m swim, 15km bike, 3km run) and I had ladies twice my age and size, passing me on old shopping bikes! It was quite a humbling experience as I had always thought of myself as reasonably fit and active! I was so motivated to improve and that is where the triathlon seed was sown."

What are some of the recent awards you've received/current ranking?

"Earlier this year I was selected to represent New Zealand at the World Long Distance Triathlon Championships in Las Vegas. In June [this year], I came 3rd in my age group at the UK Half Ironman and qualified for the 70.3 Ironman World Championships. In July, I came 4th in my age group at the UK Ironman race."



(Above:) Marie pictured with her award from the UK Ironman in Wembley, U.K.

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What are your plans and goals for 2011?

“The 2011 triathlon season is almost over, but my final goal is to make the podium for my age group at the World Long Distance Champs. Also to be the first Kiwi girl over the line! For 2012, my aim is to qualify for the 2012 World Champs in Kona, Hawai’i.”

Describe your average day. What is your typical training regimen?

“I was lucky enough to have three months off work over the summer so was able to train to my heart’s content! So, on a typical day, I would wake up at 5.15 and head to the pool for an hour’s swim session with our tri club. After breakfast I head up to the gym for an hour of yoga, pilates, or core work. I come home, eat a small lunch then head out on my bike with a friend for a two-hour cycle, often followed by a run immediately after the bike for around 30-45mins. I then have the afternoon for recovery and stretching, before heading out to volunteer at an after school club for local kids. I’m now back working so I no longer have the luxury of time or daylight hours to get all my training and recovery done! I still swim early in the morning and will do a long run or cycle on the turbo trainer once I am home from work. A typical training regime per week would be three to four hour swim sessions, four bike rides (ranging from 1hr30 – 4hrs) and three to four run sessions, the longest around 1hr30. I also do weights at the gym once a week and at least 2-3 yoga/core/strength classes. Due to my work schedule, a long week would be 25 to 30 hours of training and during work 10 to 15 hours per week.”

In terms of nutrition, what are the indispensable items or strategies you’ve found are key in giving you the edge over the other athletes?

“Eat enough on the bike and ensure electrolytes are topped up. I have seen so many triathletes fall apart on the run section of a triathlon and quite often it is because they have not eaten properly on the bike to maintain their energy levels or have neglected to add electrolytes to their fluid intake. I notice a huge difference in performance if I stick to these two rules. I also ensure that I have a mix of both high and low GI food, as my blood sugars are quite sensitive. On the bike, I eat energy bars, gels and peanut butter and jam sandwiches! In both my sports drink and



(Above:) Marie pictured during the UK Ironman. Of elete, Marie says, “If I don’t have it, I just don’t feel 100%.”

later bottles on the bike and run sections, I add elete – if I don’t have it, I just don’t feel 100%.”

What is the biggest factor in terms of winning? Likewise, what are the biggest obstacles?

“Knowing yourself both mentally and physically, being able to trust your body when you need to push harder and preparing for all situations. In an Ironman race, you need to know how and when you should conserve energy and when you should push.”

Interesting or little-known fact others may not know about you?

“I’m getting married in March 2012 in New Zealand! I was hoping to do the NZ Ironman race, which just so happened to be a week before the wedding, but unfortunately it was sold out. Probably a good thing



(Above:) Marie pictured accepting First Place in the Full Boar Triathlon earlier this year in England.

non-exercise related activities, i.e. a day of shopping or out sightseeing while abroad!”•

as I may not have been able to walk down the aisle in my heels!”

What is your personal philosophy?

“Never ever give up. Never stop trying. Especially when you want to. This is how you achieve your goals and what sets you apart from the rest.”

How did you come across elete Electrolyte Add-In™?

“I was recommended it by a health store as I was looking for a product to help my parents with their cramps at night. I ended up trying some myself on a long bike ride and noticed the difference immediately. I now never leave the house without it in my bottle—regardless if it’s for training, work, or heading out to the shops!”

Describe some of the specific benefits you’ve noticed using elete.

“I don’t feel as drained at the latter stages of the bike section and feel noticeably fresher once I start the run. I also seem to have more energy throughout the day and sleep better at night! I no longer suffer from calf cramps after a long swim session or during the run section of a race.”

For the average person who participates in mild to moderate fitness activity, what would you tell them about elete?

“It will help you feel better during exercise and it doesn’t have any calories. It also helps you stay hydrated and alert throughout the day and during