

# HUMAN PERFORMANCE CENTRE

Want to know more about Iron Man competitions? We Can Help!

Have you ever thought about competing in an Iron Man competition but weren't sure how to prepare yourself or how to go about entering? We Can Help! Gina Spear Burrows has been kind enough to fill us in on her experiences.

**How do you prepare for an Iron Man competition both physically and mentally?** *"This is my 7th IM and 2nd time going to Kona. My 1st was back in 2005 when I was 40 years old. It is definitely harder the older you get but you have to train wiser and pay even closer attention to recovery, training and nutrition. The typical week spent training 2-3 months out of race day is 16-20 hours - just like a part time job! The mental aspect is very important in endurance racing - you have to continually think positive thoughts throughout the day of the race and while training. A good support system is necessary too!"*

**How long does it usually take for you to complete?** *"My fastest Ironman is 10:29 and my slowest is 11:35. It depends on*

*the course and the conditions of the day; a flat bike course is much faster than a hilly one and a hot day is often much tougher than a cooler day. Hawaii is the toughest course because of the heat humidity and the wind. My time in Kona in 2011 was 10:52, which I was extremely happy with as I placed 4th in my age group!"*

**Do you have to get a certain placement to go on/compete in others?** *"To qualify for Hawaii is becoming more difficult. You have to qualify at an Ironman event where there is often over 2000 people and 40-50 qualifying spots for all the age groups. This means that for females in the 50-54 age group (MY AGE GROUP), you have to win or place 2nd in most of the Ironman races. More than 60,000 triathletes try each year but only 1900 professional and age group athletes win Kona slots."*

**What are the distances that you have to run, swim, and bike?** *"The swim is 3.86 km, bike 180kms and run 42.2 km for a total of 140.6 miles!"*

**How do you feel afterward both physically and mentally?**

*"Physically tired of course as it is a long day. You are sore and often mentally fatigued so it is great to cross the finish line whether you had an Ok day or an awesome day! Once you get showed and start drinking fluids and eat recovery starts to take place."*

**Do you have to be on a certain diet or only eat certain foods beforehand so that your body works with you and not against you?** *"Nutrition is the MOST important part of the equation. If you don't fuel properly you won't be able to make it through the bike and onto the run and certainly won't be able to race to your potential. You have to eat properly all the time before and after workouts because most days you are doing 2 workouts. Prior to race day I have to cut back on my fiber 3-4 days out."*

**As you are competing in Hawaii, what excites you most about the experience you will be enduring?** *"It is the most*

*amazing sporting event as you are surrounded by the fittest group of athletes of all ages for 1 1/2 weeks. I feel I am very blessed to experience this for the 2nd time and to be able to race with the professionals and experience the World Championships again will be amazing!! It would be like a high school football player getting on the field with Tom Brady during the Super Bowl."*



Gina Spear Burrows



738-8299  
3636 Westfield Road