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Sky's the Limit for Moon

Deborah Kurelik

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The sky's the limit for Moon

Tansy Moon's famous last words as she finished the Ironman Triathlon World Championship in October were "I don't want to do this ever again."

The USF St. Petersburg alumna wasn't alone in her sentiments. More than a few participants, after battling 45-mph winds and 85-degree heat in this most ultimate of events, were unsure whether they would come back next year. The race involves a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run. It features some of the best athletes in the world.

Moon quickly changed her mind, however. After finishing the grueling triathlon in a respectable 13 hours, 10 minutes and 42 seconds, Moon soon rebounded and began training for the New York Marathon in November.

"I know it sounds weird, but once you do one triathlon, you're hooked. Just the fact that you *can* do—it makes you feel good to accomplish something."

Moon is no slouch. Her day typically begins at 5:30 a.m. at North Shore Pool in St. Petersburg. After swimming laps for an hour and a half, she runs for another hour. Then she goes to work at Suncoast Sports and Rec in Clearwater, where she holds a hectic job as the store's public relations coordinator. Moon graduated from USF in May with a bachelor's degree in mass communications and is putting her professional training to good use.

After work, Moon joins a group of other athletes in St. Petersburg and goes biking—racing along in the dark for a couple of more hours. She's even gotten some speeding tickets for going faster than the law allows cars to travel. Later on in the evening, she's apt to spend some time balancing the books at her family's China City restaurant in St. Petersburg.

Now she's training for the Boston Marathon in April, and planning her wedding.

She's only been running about five years, after her boyfriend encouraged her to start training. George Mayforth, also a triathlete, is now Moon's fiance. Before she met him, Moon says, she would never be seen in public in her bathing suit. Not that she was fat—she's only lost 10 pounds since her regime began—but doubted she was fit enough to be on the beach.

"I used to have big hair and wear a lot of make-up, too," she says, laughing. "Now my priorities have changed. I don't have time to primp." Her locks are now short and easy to style, allowing her to go from sport to sport without suffering bad hair days.

Moon was always competitive in other aspects of her life, so when she started exercising it was natural to push herself hard and started competing in races. She likes long-distance runs because her times are better.

Her free time is spent training. When not running, swimming or biking, she's usually lifting weights. But she's made a tight circle of friends through sports, socializing while working out. "We're totally obsessed, but we're normal. We're like a family."

Saturdays usually find Moon and Mayforth on a 100-mile ride, replete with rough terrain and hills, through Jacksonville on their road bikes. Moon says it's a good way to relax. She and Mayforth even got engaged last year on the eve of the Timex Ironman Canada triathlon in British Columbia. On top of that good news, both qualified for the Hawaii Ironman.

She's a natural for working in a sporting goods store. She practices what she preaches and she has the opportunity to learn about other sports as well. She'd like to learn to scuba dive and golf.

"Anything I do in the future will be sports-related. I know I'm not fast enough to be a professional athlete, but I can rank (high enough) to make it to the Hawaii triathlon—that's enough for me."

By Deborah Kurelik



Tansy Moon puts on the mega-miles as she competes in the Ironman Triathlon.