

Interview with Belinda Granger

Written by Administrator

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We reached Belinda Granger, after her successful performances in Arona and in the Philippines.

Belinda, first of all congratulations for your latest victory at Ironman 70.3 Philippines! A victory come from behind, thanks to a brilliant run, which allowed you to overtake Amanda Stevens, after a difficult bike portion due to the rain. How would you report your race?

I was extremely happy with my race in the Philippines and also a little surprised. It is not common for me to win a race from behind and rely on my run to take the win. I really thought I would catch Amanda on the bike but the wet roads meant I could not take the corners as quickly as I usually do and I was definitely being a lot more cautious....my priority was to stay upright. But once onto the run I felt great and the further I ran the better I felt....it was a really great race for me.

Another victory, three weeks after your win at AronaMen. Could we say that Arona brought you luck?

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I loved my race in Italy....my first time racing there and just so much fun. Aronaman was such a great race. I really enjoy the Half Ironman distance....I think it suits me. What I loved most about AronaMen was the ride...a good mix of flat and fast and then some good hard climbing...a perfect combination. I think AronaMen definitely brought me luck.

AronaMen 112.9 Triathlon was your first race in Italy. What was your impression of this first Italian experience?

Bellissimo!! I loved it. I knew I would love Italy....what is there not to love...great food, warm weather, beautiful people and amazing shopping!!! All the things I love in life. The race itself was so well run...it was hard to believe it was a first-time event. The organisers were wonderful and they did such a great job. Getting to finish in the centre of Arona was stunning.

Before IM 70.3 Philippines, Justin and you spent some time in Switzerland to train. What kind of training did you get? Did you focalize your preparation on something peculiar or you balanced your training among all the three disciplines?

For the first time Justin and I travelled to Ascona in Switzerland for three weeks....of course we went there to train but we also went there to relax and recover after Challenge Roth and to discover new places that we had not yet seen before. So even though we trained we also took time out to look around...it was a very 'relaxed' training program. I truly think this approach worked in my favour as I travelled to the Philippines feeling refreshed and re-energised. We basically made sure we did two training sessions a day. One of my favourite training days was when we rode the entire way around Lago Maggiore...amazing!

Now, after a while spent in Europe, you are at home in Australia again. A little rest or there's not yet time to think about holidays?

I did take a week off post-Philippines race...it took me that long to unpack and get myself organised back here at home. It is amazing how many things you accumulate when you are away for a couple of months. But I am back into a full training schedule now as I have another race coming up in three week's time- Japan 70.3. I won't take a proper break now until mid December. Lucky I love to race.

The season will end with the Ironman World Championships in Kona and with the Ironman 70.3 World Champs in Las Vegas. Are you going to take part in both of them or as for most of the professional triathletes, THE EVENT to concentrate on is just Kona?

For the first time in 10 years I am not racing Kona this year. I decided back in April that I would pass on it this year. My last three outings there have been terrible so I just thought 'why not take a break'. I am going over there to watch and to work with some of my amazing sponsors. My next races will be Japan 70.3 in September, Challenge Cape Town in November and the Phuket 70.3 in December so plenty of racing still left to do.

The new WTC rules about Kona qualification caused a lot of controversies. It was also told that qualifying to Kona has become just some business matter, more money, less effort. What is your opinion about this matter?

We definitely needed a qualification system for the World Championships. This should be a race that only the very best get to race so I do agree that a new system was needed. I am just not sure that the WTC have got it 100% right. There are many races that are worth too little points and too little prize money. It also looks like it is much, much harder for women to qualify. It can already be seen that females have had to race a lot more this year in order to get the points

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needed to stay inside the top 30. But as with any new system, it takes time to perfect and I am sure the WTC will smooth out any issues it has for next year's race. For me- it is about racing the races I love. I am at a point in my career where I won't be told what races I should do.

Unfortunately, the NYC Triathlon recorded two deaths last week. Both died during the swim portion and that caused some arguments about the danger of this sport. What do you feel to say about? And what is your advice to those who compete for the first time, especially if the swim portion is in open water?

It was terrible to hear the news from the NY Triathlon. Triathlon is definitely not a dangerous sport, especially if an athlete has prepared correctly for it. Triathlon is a sport for everyone of all abilities but it is important to make sure you are sufficiently trained across all three disciplines before you attempt to tackle a race.

Last question: will we see you in Italy again next year? Italian espresso is worth it!

ABSOLUTELY! I loved my time there this year. Aronamen is on the race schedule for 2012....as is another short trip to Milan :)

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