



# SPORTING HEROES

PROFILING ROE VALLEY SPORTS STARS BY PETER JACK

## Athlete Anne stays one step ahead!



**Name:** Anne Paul

**Sport:** Triathlon

**Occupation:** Sports Services Officer UUC

**Sporting Achievements:** -

### TRIATHLON

International career started with the Commonwealth Games in Auckland in (1990).

Won six Irish titles and represented Ireland at European championships for several years.

Two bronze age-group medals at world triathlon championships in Canada (1992) and Manchester (1993)

1 silver age- group medal at world half-ironman championships in Florida (2008)

Qualified for the world ironman championships Hawaii (2009)

### DUATHLON

Won eight Irish titles 5th European championships/13th world championships/2nd European cup series/top six many European cup races

Then moved to longer distance races again achieving several podium places at International events.

### ATHLETICS

Represented NI cross-country for many years

Won NI cross-country/5k/10k/half-marathon titles in same year.

3rd overall Belfast marathon

10th overall elite two Oceans International ultra marathon

1st age-group London marathon 2013

**Q1:** What are your earliest recollections of playing sport?

**A:** Kicking football in the garden with visiting male cousins and the telling off afterwards from my mother for wrecking the flowers.  
Was worth it every time!

**Q2:** Who were your early mentors/coaches?

**A:** My PE teacher at school and then Fiona Lothian from Scotland who taught me everything I know about duathlon/triathlon.

**Q3:** How many years have you been participating?

Did my first triathlon in 1981.  
Breaststroke all the way as could not even do frontcrawl!

**Q4:** What do you enjoy most about your sport?

The variety and the great people involved in the sport.

**Q5:** Of which club(s) are you a member of?

**A:** Triangle Triathlon club/City of Derry AC/no cycling club this year as yet.

**Q6:** What is your greatest achievement to date?

**A:** Fortunately, I have had so many special memories, its hard to pick one out.

Podium finishes on the European duathlon circuit were very satisfying especially as the majority of the other girls were pros.

Winning an Irish championship on home territory in Portrush.

Qualifying for the Hawaii Ironman.

**Q7:** What was your biggest disappointment in sport and why was that?

**A:** Training for two years to do the Powerman world duathlon championships and getting an Achilles injury four weeks before the race.

I got a cortisone injection as a last resort and travelled out to the race but could not start.

Going by the results, a top finish was definitely achievable.

**Q8:** Who are your sporting heroes?

**A:** That has changed over the years as I have been extremely disappointed to discover that athletes who would have been heroes were taking performance enhancing drugs.

However, I always admired Haile Gebrselassie, Chrissie Wellington and at the moment I cannot forget Tommy Hughes from my home town as he is such an inspiration to older athletes.

**Q9:** What has been the stupidest/funniest thing to happen to you while playing your sport?

**A:** We definitely has some good laughs over the years especially away on trips but I remember one in particular where we were out sussing the bike course in a city centre and the others didn't let on to me that there was a street sweeper truck coming behind.

Needless to say they were very amused when I eventually looked round and panicked that this thing was on my back wheel!

**Q10:** What is your favourite bit of sporting kit?

**A:** My heart rate monitor. It's the most basic model you can get as I am not too good with the fancy technical gadgets but this

tells me all I need to know.

**Q11:** What advice would you give to anyone thinking of trying your sport?

**A:** Just do it but start at the beginning and work your way up through the distances.

The journey will be so much more enjoyable and you are

much more likely to stick with it with less injuries and set backs.

**Q12:** Where to you see yourself in 10 years?

**A:** Swimming/biking/running of course and still enjoying this fabulous sport.

Maybe a bit slower but that's irrelevant!

