

# All eyes on Ironman Todd Turner

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Krista Goodman/ Index  
Senior Todd Turner raised several hundred dollars for the charity Living Water International by entering in the Ironman Triathlon last summer in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

BY ANNE REBAR  
Staff Reporter

Forget Robert Downey Jr. — Truman State University has its own, real-life Iron Man.

Senior Todd Turner entered the Ironman Triathlon last summer in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, finishing a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run in just under 14 hours. It was a feat that took months of hard training.

"The last seven months beforehand were strictly dedicated to Ironman, Coeur d'Alene, which entailed anywhere from 15 to 25 hours a week of training," Turner said. "I think I topped out at about 60 miles of running a week, and I think that week I also still rode about 200 miles and swam about six to eight miles."

Turner was able to do an independent study with Alex Koch, professor of exercise science, which gave him access to performance testing, including VO2 max testing (see story on page 13), lactate threshold testing and hydrostatic weighing, which he said would have cost him a substantial amount of money had he not been a Truman student.

"It was really great to train while I was at Truman because I had so much latitude in getting access to resources," Turner said. "At another school I wouldn't have been able to just do an independent study ... but because Alex Koch was just like, 'Yeah. Sure. Why not? I have some students who would love to be able to learn to test on you,' I was able to do so much more and learn so much more about the process."

Turner said the testing really put into perspective how hard training was and all the changes it was causing to his body.

"I did hydrostatic weighing and skin fold testing at the beginning and end of the semester," Turner said. "At the end of the semester I discovered that even though I'd only lost a few pounds in real terms ... I'd lost 30 pounds of fat and put on 18 pounds of muscles, which explains why I was so hungry all the time!"

Turner said it was a succession of events that led to his decision to put himself through 140.6 miles of continuous, strenuous exercise. He had extra free time when he decided to quit debate after his sophomore year, he said.



Then he heard from a friend about the NEMO Triathlon in Kirksville. Having just bought a new road bike, he decided at the last minute to go for it.

"I didn't know anything about tapering at the time, so I actually did all the individual distances like the day before," Turner said. "Now I know it's a terrible idea — wouldn't do it again. That was actually the tougher of the triathlons that I have done, even now, just because I wasn't prepared for it."

Then he saw a documentary on the Ironman, "140.6," and he started thinking about training for the real thing, he said.

"I think back then the words I used to describe the Ironman were an 'active pursuit of idiocy,' but then I got to thinking, 'I'm kind of an idiot,' so it works out," Turner said, laughing.

Although the documentary planted the seed, Turner said he still was not completely convinced — until he found out there was an Ironman held in Coeur d'Alene, which is only half an hour from where many of his relatives live, making it somewhat easier for him to get to the race. Still not sure if he wanted to dedicate so much time to himself, he decided if somehow he could help out a charity by doing the triathlon, his decision would be made, he said.

"Then I found out there was this thing called Janus Charity Challenge, and my church at the time was helping out a charity called Living Water International, so that was what actually sold me," Turner said.

Janus Charity Challenge helps Ironman participants raise money for their favorite charity by providing them with tools and tips for their fundraising.

Turner raised several hundred dollars for Living Water International, a charity that helps provide clean drinking water for those in need by digging wells.

"My goal for next time will be somewhere around \$5,000 to \$10,000, because if I do it with Living Water again, I'd like to raise enough to be able to dig an entire well — to make that whole operation happen — and I'd like to be able to go with and help drill it," Turner said.

Before actually becoming a participant in the Ironman, Turner volunteered as a catcher at the finish line to see what it's like for others to finish it, and finished a half Ironman to get a feel for the race. When it came time for him to complete the Ironman for himself, Turner said he was ready and determined.

"The first 130 miles were pretty easy, and the last ten were terrible," Turner said, "I was having a lot of problems with my right knee, and by the last half of the run it was really bad."

Despite the knee problems, Turner said that the triathlon didn't leave him with any other injuries or health issues.

"The only problem I had was that my stomach would not settle for like 12 or 14 hours," Turner said. "When I stopped I got really cold and really hungry in about five minutes. I went to eat pizza right after, and I just started feeling horrible. The next day I felt fine, though — I wasn't even sore, which really boggled my mind."

Turner doesn't intend for this to be his last race, although he's not sure when he will be able to do another one because it was very costly, with the entrance fee, airfare and lodging. For the moment, he said he is focused on graduating with his degree in communication, which he said he hopes will lead to working with a small business, preferably a sports-related company. He has even applied for an internship with Ironman, hoping to combine work with something he loves to do. This also will make it easier for him to participate in another race in the future.

Turner gives this advice to anyone who is thinking about participating in an Ironman:

"The training is easily the hardest part, without question," Turner said. "The training is not going to get easier, and once you can be OK with that and know that you just have to back off sometimes, you'll do fine."

## Cooking with Julia: Orzo with tomatoes



Julia Hansen

Pasta, pasta, pasta! How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. With all of the types of pasta available in grocery stores — penne, fettuccine, farfalle, macaroni, gigli, gnocchi, cavatappi, ditalini, gemelli, ziti, manicotti, linguini, cavatelli, mafalda, angel hair, rotini and many many others — one will never run out of ways to cook pasta.

I was browsing around the National Pasta Association Web site and picked up a few helpful tips for cooking and eating pasta.

1. When you put sauce on pasta, it is good to remember thin pastas are

better served with light, thin sauces, and thicker pasta shapes, like fettuccine, work well with heavier sauces. Pasta with holes or ridges, like mostaccioli, are good for chunky sauces.

2. Add salt to the water you boil pasta in. This is the only time you can season the actual pasta because as it cooks it soaks in the salt flavoring.

3. You should only rinse pasta after draining it if you will be using it in a cold salad. Otherwise, rinsing pasta takes away some of its taste.

4. Do not overcook your pasta. It should be cooked al dente, which literally means "to the tooth." Follow package directions, but test the pasta to see if it's done on the lower end of the time recommended.

After years of being a big pasta fan, I've cooked many of these types of pasta, but I never have cooked orzo. Lately I have seen Giada De Laurentiis on the Food Network cook orzo and have become intrigued by this type of noodle. The word means "barley" in Italian, and orzo most commonly is used in soups, but can also be cooked as a main dish or a side dish to a meat like grilled chicken.

In the world of pasta, you might feel stuck eating the same old spaghetti with pasta sauce and parmesan cheese. I encourage you to buy a different style of pasta and experiment with new toppings.

### Ingredients:

- 1 pound orzo
- 5 cups chicken broth
- 14.5-ounce can petite diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled

### Directions:

1. Put chicken broth in pot and bring to boil. Cook orzo in chicken broth, drain and add butter.
2. While orzo is cooking, sauté onion in olive oil in separate pan until softened. After draining tomatoes, mix them in with the sautéed onion.
3. Mix the tomato and onion in with the orzo. Serve with crumbled feta on top.



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