

Emma's little secret

Athletes in drug test blitz

by **Amanda Lulham**



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in Lausanne

POISED to become the greatest female Olympic distance triathlete in history, dual world champion Emma Snowsill has revealed the secret of her success is a pre-race diet of chocolate, "nanna naps" and a healthy dose of self doubt.

The petite triathlete's recipe for success involves either brownies, cakes, biscuits and bars of chocolate in tiny quantities prior to racing and as many daytime naps she can fit in during the lead-up to Sunday's world championships.

Another key for Snowsill is the fact that, despite her domination of the sport since 2003, the Australian never goes into a race confident she will win it.

"I never go into a race thinking I can win it. I know it must sound strange but I don't," said the Commonwealth Games champion.

"I never think about the final result. I think instead about the progress of the race.

"It's like visualisation. The only thing I don't think about is crossing the line until I actually see it."

And while Snowsill's chocolate cravings may have nutritionists screaming in horror, it is a recipe that has worked for the 25-year-old in hundreds of races including the 2003 and 2005 world titles. Prior to her bid to become the first female in history to win three world Olympic distance triathlon crowns, Snowsill will breakfast on a small portion of chocolate four hours before the race and then top herself



Sweet taste of success... chocolate will fuel Emma Snowsill's title defence.

Picture: DELLY CARR

up with another tiny dose just prior to the start.

It will provide Snowsill, a convert to the sport just seven years ago, with the fuel she requires to continue Australia's long domination of world triathlons while writing her name in the history books with a trifecta of crowns.

"It doesn't matter what form it is in as long as it's chocolate," Snowsill said. "I like to sleep too. When I get to a race I sleep more, go into

hibernation because my body is slowing down.

"There are times when I have slept 12 hours and had little nanna naps of one hour during the day. My body tells me when I need them."

Even if Snowsill fails to defend her world crown in Lausanne, many believe the Gold Coast athlete is well on her way to becoming the greatest female triathlete the sport has ever seen.

On Sunday Snowsill faces her

toughest task to date with an in-form Vanessa Fernandes of Portugal favoured by many to deliver Europe its first world triathlon champion and the Australian going into the race with a bullseye on her back courtesy of her two previous world titles.

"I could be targeted [in the swim] but I don't like to think about it too much, just be prepared for it," she said. "It's going to be an interesting race."

AUSTRALIA'S triathlon team has undergone a deluge of drug testing in the lead-up to Sunday's world championships with four athletes — including world champion Peter Robertson — tested on multiple occasions.

Most members of the team have been tested in recent weeks with 20-year-old Felicity Abram tested six times in just 14 days while Greg Bennett, 34, has been tested four times in the past 17 days in the US and France.

"Off the top of my head I think I've been tested 15 times this year," Robertson said. "I don't have a problem with it."

Robertson, who has won three gold and two silver at the past five world championships, said he is well aware he has been the victim of "whispers" over the years concerning his extraordinary performances.

"I guess there is talk about any top athlete nowadays," he said. "It just comes with the territory."

Thompson, who will race on Sunday with broken ribs after a training accident in France two weeks ago, said he was happy to submit to any drug tests.

"I think its good Australia has such a high standard and such rigorous testing," he said.

Australia will bid to repeat its feat of winning both the men's and women's world crowns on Sunday.