

# triathlon

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*Since narrowly missing out on selection for the 2004 Olympic team, Emma Snowsill has been on top of her game and was an automatic choice for Beijing. From the US Emma chatted to Outer Edge about...*

## THE SPORT

**Olympic pedigree:** Triathlon first featured as an Olympic sport in Sydney at the 2000 Games.

**Format:** 1.5km swim + 40km bike ride + 10km run

**Spots available:** Three

**Venue for 2008:** Ming Tomb Reservoir in Changping District of northern Beijing.

## THE ATHLETE

**Name:** Emma Snowsill

**Date of birth:** 15 June 1981

**Home state:** Queensland

**Previous Olympic appearances:** 0

**Current form:** Emma recently won the World Cup event in Des Moines, Iowa, and Olympic team-mate Emma Moffatt finished second.

**Getting into multisport:** I entered my first triathlon at 16 as a team member and raced the swim leg. I've been competing ever since.

**Busting a gut to get to the Games:** I get up at 5.30am and swim. Then I have breakfast and a nap, followed by a bike ride. Then it's lunch, another nap, a run, dinner and then I get to sleep.

**Conditions in China:** It will be very hot and humid. I've raced there twice before, but I hope the air is a bit cleaner. Last time I got a stomach bug from swimming in the reservoir. Usually you can get through the race without being ill - it gets you later. You need clean, fresh air to inhale when you're at maximum heart rate and that's a bit concerning. I don't expect that to change much.

**Triathlon as an Olympic sport:** More people are becoming interested. Statistics show it's the fastest growing outdoor sport in the world, and the Olympics is the pinnacle.

**Her strongest discipline:** The swim, because it's the most natural and familiar to me. It's what I grew up doing. But I really like all three, and that's the beauty of what I do.

**Adventure sports:** I'm very outdoor sports motivated. Other than surfing, which I love, I have a mountain bike and really enjoy riding trails on it for training, variation and excitement. I also ski, wake board and would consider adventure racing.

**Travel:** It takes a lot of everything out of you: time, money and energy. I compete in around 12 events per season but the distance and differences between races can be huge. You have to adjust to changing hemispheres, seasons, altitudes, food, lodgings, road rules,

race rules, locations and conditions. For the swim the water might be warm or cold; fresh or salty; clean or dirty; flowing or still; tidal, rough or calm; in a lake or a canal or a river or the ocean... The same applies to conditions for the bike and the run.

**The best place triathlon has taken her:** The annual Noosa Triathlon.

**And the worst:** Hmmm I don't want to start an international incident, but sometimes the streets you're racing along smell as bad as the local food, or you wear a wetsuit not to keep you warm in the swim but to protect you from the floating debris that bumps you and smears your goggles and the footpath is as slick as a banana skin...I'll leave it there.

**If she wasn't a triathlete:** Being a professional surfer would be pretty cool. I'd quite like to own a gourmet café, but I'd eat all the profits. As a kid I wanted to be a marine biologist, because I love dolphins.

**Career highs:** Representing Australia and winning gold at three World Championships and the Commonwealth Games.

**Sporting hero:** Lance Armstrong.

**After the Olympics:** Watch this space...



INSET: After winning the 2008 Triathlon World Cup event in Mooloolaba.

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