

Bread for success – Emma goes bananas

■ TRIATHLON

Jessica Halloran

AT THE moment it's banana bread. All 49 kilograms of world champion triathlete Emma Snowsill is obsessed by it.

When a tray of banana bread topped with butter was waved in front of her face at breakfast yesterday, the 26-year-old's eyes became wide with excitement.

"Oh my god, yes," Snowsill said. "Can I take two pieces so you don't have to come back? Oh that rocks."

Later the waiter did come back and the Olympic gold medal favourite scoffed down another two pieces. For such a tiny woman, Snowsill's appetite is enormous. She polishes off rib-eye steaks and roasts in a jiffy. Butchers raise their eyebrows when Snowsill hits the counter asking for kilos of meat. Her dad jokingly checks under the family kitchen table to see if she's fed her meal to the dog.

But Snowsill's appetite has to be huge, considering the three-time world champion's huge Olympic training schedule, which consists of hundreds of kilometres of running, cycling and many laps in the pool.

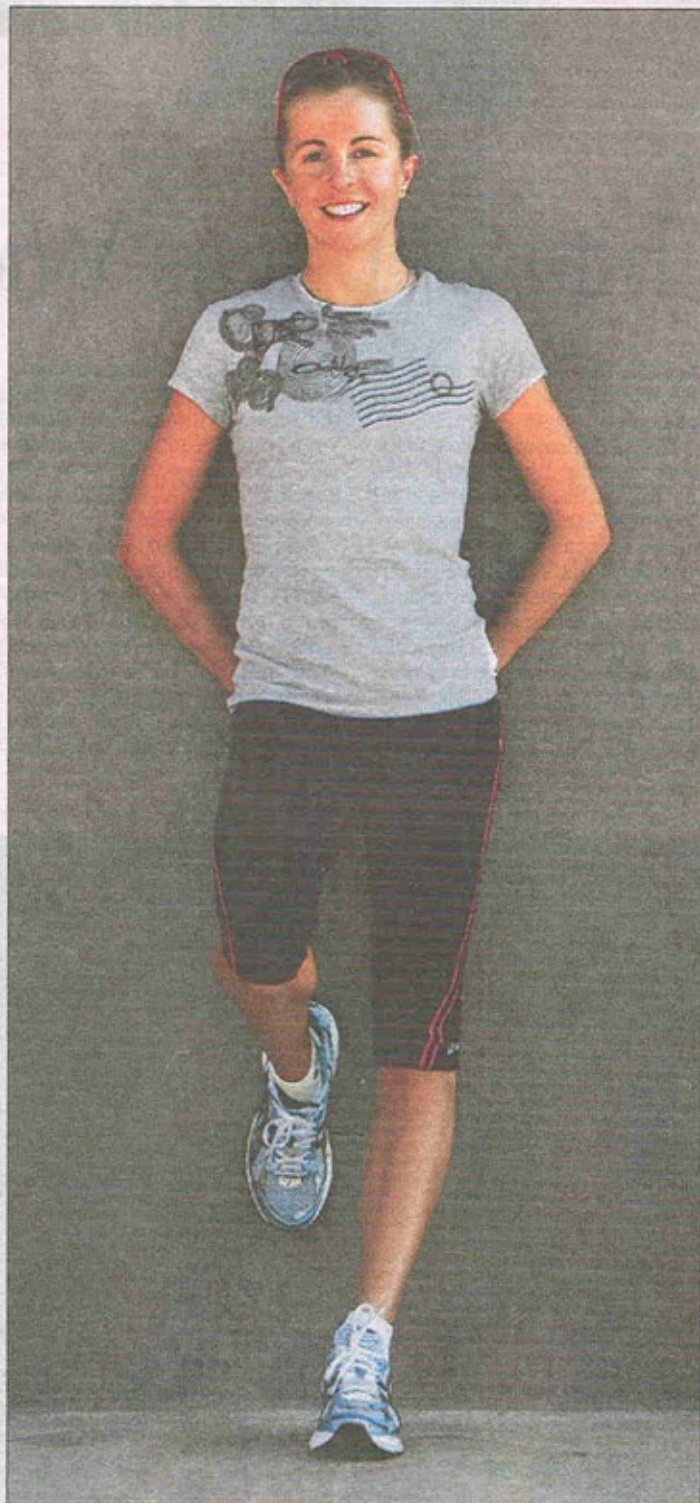
"I was always the one at school asking my friends for their sandwiches if they weren't going to eat it," she said. "I've always had this appetite but it's always been normal to me."

"I live to eat. It's about having a fine balance. We still need body fat, where a distance runner would need zilch, we still need that bit to get through a swim."

Snowsill and her boyfriend and coach, Craig Walton, are preparing on the Gold Coast for the Beijing Games. Like the rest of the triathlon team she plans to arrive in China just before her event to avoid contending with the grey air.

"The plan is to spend less time than more time in Beijing," Snowsill said. "There's a less chance of picking stuff up then ... we all meet in Singapore on the 14th of August and then we race on the 18th."

World champion surfer Layne Beachley, who was also at the breakfast and recently walked the Great Wall of China, remarked; "I was in the gym at my hotel and I couldn't breathe."



Healthy appetite ... world champion Emma Snowsill. Photo: Steve Christo

Far away from the smog, Snowsill has loved training at home in Queensland and with famed swim coach Denis Cotterell. She plans to return to her other training base in Boulder,

Colorado. She will compete in a world cup event in Iowa and another triathlon in Minneapolis; both have lucrative prize pools of more than \$100,000.

"I'm kind of hoping I'll be peak-

Suits kick in for Beijing

SYDNEY'S corporate community opened its wallet last night, raising about \$500,000 at the final – and flashy – fundraising event for the Olympic team.

The NSW State Olympic Council, headed by John Conde and Doug Donoghue, had already raised \$1.4 million before last night, bringing in a significant amount of the total \$6 million national fundraising drive. The AOC, which does not receive government funding, has also met its sponsorship and marketing target of \$33.8 million.

The AOC will also get a slice of the global marketing program run by the International Olympic Committee. Under this program, the AOC will get \$14 million to help offset costs for the 2012 London Games and \$9 million for the 2016 Games.

Jacquelin Magnay

ing for that as well," she said.

After hopefully pocketing a hefty pay cheque, she will stay in Australia for five weeks before heading to the triathlon team's Olympic holding camp in Singapore. The first-time Olympian is a favourite for gold after an unprecedented three world titles. If she wins she will be the first to become both a world and Olympic champion.

"I only feel my own expectations. I just want to put it together on the day. But if it doesn't work out, you know, it's been an awesome experience."

But back to the banana bread – her latest fuel for her tough sessions.

"We are forever talking about food and what we are going to eat next," Snowsill said. "My latest craze has been cooking banana bread. We make tins of it. When you get on to something that you feel you can train with, that's not going to come up, you go on this craze. I love my banana bread."