

3/GO

TRIATHLON



Scott P. Tinley: Haven't We Met?
Three Rookies: Journey to Kona.
The Black Hole: Go Hard & Go Easy.

.04

NOV-DEC 2011 | \$7.99



3GOMAGAZINE.COM

AWAITING THE FINISH LINE

December 17th will be a monumental day. There are only a handful of days in our lives when transitions clearly occur, and this may be the single most important transition we ever face. We're having a baby girl.

I met Tim on an airplane in 1995. We were married one year later. We spent the last 15 years pursuing passions of the heart, mind and body. Tim pursued the sport of triathlon, and is still successfully pursuing it 15 years later, with two Ironman Hawaii wins under his belt. I enjoyed a six-year professional racing career, with lots of impressive results and one Ironman title (2004 IM Wisconsin). In 2005, I launched a really cool "project" called Skirt Sports. I had a dream to bring inspiration to women around the world through feminine, fashion-driven, performance clothing. As the CEO of Skirt Sports, I have been consumed with the business for the last six years—with no sign of slowing down.

No matter how fulfilling life can be, there is only one thing that is certain: change happens. Careers progress. Passions evolve. People change. Even

if we try as hard as possible to keep things exactly the same, they will eventually move along. Our very nature implores us to improve. In everything we do. And so Tim and I found ourselves, after 15 years together, considering our future as we hovered around our mid-lives. We were both almost 40 years old.

Age is relevant here. For many women who consider having children in the latter phase of their fertile lives, age can be an insidious reminder that they need to get with the program. Imagine if our eggs never expired. Would women still be having children in their 60s and 70s? But like it or not, that's not the case. We have a window of opportunity in our lives to bear children. This is a fact.

Tim and I were adamantly against having kids for at least the first ten years of our marriage. We would look

around at all the screaming, whining children and their frustrated, exhausted parents, and say, "Why on earth would we do that? It looks miserable!" At the time, we needed to pursue our personal ambitions and experience both great successes and serious disappointments before we could step back and realize that winning a bunch of races and creating a skirt revolution did not make our lives more complete. Don't get me wrong, those are incredible accomplishments, but it became very clear that true happiness came from deep inside.

In the summer of 2010, we were watching a movie called *Away We Go*. There is a heart-wrenching scene where the main couple is visiting 40-something friends in Montreal. Their friends have adopted many children and give the impression of a very happy, very full life. It is later revealed that the wife has had

numerous miscarriages and it seems as though the couple may have missed their chance. The husband said something like, "We were careless with our youth. We just waited too long." When the movie ended, I looked at Tim and asked, "What are we waiting for? What are we still trying to accomplish?" That was the moment we opened our eyes and both agreed: it was time.

Some people get pregnant without even trying. Others spend money on every possible technique, test and procedure. We were lucky. It didn't happen the

first month, but we didn't have to spend too much money trying. At age 38, I was officially categorized as "of advanced maternal age." This basically means that I waited a long time to get pregnant; no one wanted to get my hopes up, and I was going to be an old mom.

I immediately began to do my homework. Getting pregnant



Nicole at 17 weeks. Photo | Bobbie Turner

Words | Nicole DeBoom
Photos | Bobbie Turner & Ironman

“The biggest change I’ve made so far is that I have no ego out there on the trails, the roads and in the pool. I get passed by everyone I see. I’m just happy to be giving our baby her first lessons in fitness.”

would be just like any other challenge, right? I would do my research, figure out the right timing and then make sure that Tim and I were in the same place at the same time.

And so it began. September passed. Then October. It didn’t help that the perfect timing that month was during the Hawaii Ironman. I wasn’t about to force Tim off the course to fulfill his husbandly duties! November didn’t work. December was a bust. This was proving tougher than we thought.

I talked to my doctor and she said, “You’re healthy. Your problem will not be you; it will be your husband’s bike riding.” When I shared this with Tim, he was more determined than ever! In January, I visited an acupuncturist who specializes in fertility. I was ready to dig a little deeper. In addition to acupuncture treatments, he sent me home with bags of herbs to cook. This was getting serious!

In March, we decided to give it one more try before we underwent the standard tests to determine if we were, in fact, both fertile. I think that’s all it took. The word “PREGNANT” was unmistakably evident on our in-home pregnancy test.

I’m going to be totally honest here. Our first reaction was not one of celebration and joy. It was more along the lines of shock and disbelief, followed by the question, “What have we done?” There



Photo | Eric Wynn

was laughter and some happy tears, but we were both numb. This was real. It happened. At that moment life didn’t feel any different, but we both knew it would change, very soon.

On the advice of my doctor, I continued to exercise throughout the process of trying to get pregnant, but I purposely did not pursue any serious athletic goals in case the hard training would be detrimental. At almost 40, I didn’t want to look back and think that I may have gotten pregnant if I just didn’t train for that fall marathon. So it had already been almost a year since my last real athletic goal and I was feeling it.

In my heart I was ready to have a baby. But in my head, I was starting this pregnancy with a few extra pounds and at least another year before I would have a true athletic goal again. Fitness is part of my nature. My happiness and

well-being hinge upon my ability to set athletic goals and pursue them.

I needed to reframe my life. I needed some help.

I started talking to people—nonstop. The first thing I learned about was delivery. Whoa! Way too much information, way too soon. I couldn’t go there yet. In fact, I’m still procrastinating on that point (as of this article, I am 24 weeks pregnant). I wanted to hear from all sorts of active women about how pregnancy changed their bodies and what I could expect while expecting.

What I found is that there is very little literature about exercising during pregnancy. The best resources were ultimately friends and family who have gone before me. I don’t know what I was hoping to find,

Nicole at 22 weeks. Photo | Babette Turner

but it was something along the lines of “The General Rules for Pregnant Women Athletes.” Let me tell you, it doesn’t exist.

My body started changing first. That little bulge under my belly button didn’t go away that month. In fact, it hunkered down and created a little fortress. Eventually, it recruited my butt and thighs and finally my breasts. I like to call it the Triple B, or “Butt, Boobs & Belly” syndrome. My body needed to create some “happy places” filled with fat stores so the little creature would have plenty of fuel.

While I understand the inevitable body changes from a physiological standpoint, I still had to deal with the unavoidable emotional issues tied to gaining lots of weight in areas I didn’t expect. I had this image of the typical woman athlete as someone whose body would change only in the belly area. I was exercising daily, sometimes twice a day, and I wasn’t eating astronomically differently than before. So the fact that my butt and thighs increased before anything else (I probably wouldn’t have complained so much if my bust was the first to grow!), was cause for some major due diligence on the matter.

What I found in interviewing all my friends and family was that every woman goes through this same process, in one way or another.

I have happily accepted the fact that my body is continuing to change, and that my job is to be as healthy as possible. So the other day when I noticed my arms were starting to look softer, and Tim confirmed that yes, they looked “different,” I only freaked out for a minute. Don’t get me wrong, Tim has been wildly supportive of my changing physique. The goal is to embrace it together, not to pretend it isn’t happening! I called my best friend and asked her if I should switch my exercises to focus more on the gym and arm sculpting. She laughed and said that there was nothing I could do halt

this process. Like everyone else, she reiterated the fact that my body would eventually revert back to something resembling its “old self.”

At five months pregnant, I continue to exercise daily. I still run, hike, swim, lift weights, and ride my bike, although I had to switch to my mountain bike on the road because the upright position alleviates bladder pressure. I went to my first prenatal yoga class, which will be a great activity for the third trimester. My body has been really cooperative by telling me when I need to make changes.

The biggest change I’ve made so far is that I have no ego out there on the trails, the roads and in the pool. I get passed by everyone I see. I’m just happy to be giving our baby her first lessons in fitness. She may not be an athlete, and that’s okay, but she’s sure getting her fair share of prenatal exercise.

The other day, Tim and I looked at each other and said, “What if our little girl has no interest in sports? What if she becomes a thespian? How on earth do we raise her?” Then we smiled and realized that it doesn’t really matter. We just need to be the best parents we can be. **360**

