

Tom's Tryathlon



by **Kristine Hornblow**
photographs by **Peter Crawford**

*Ready
to Read*

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The Weet-Bix™ Tryathlon is an event for children from all around New Zealand.

Triathlon means “three contests”. Usually, a triathlon has swimming, cycling, and running.

The **Tryathlon** has three events too, but it’s also about getting moving and having a go.

Hi! I’m Tom. This year, for the first time, I took part in the Weet-Bix™ Kiwi Kids Tryathlon.

I got a pack in the mail telling me all about the Tryathlon. Dad said he would help me with my training.





For the Tryathlon, I would have to swim 100 metres, cycle 4 kilometres, and run 1.5 kilometres.

Dad and I went down to the 400-metre running track at the park near our house. We used the track to measure my training distances.

Ten times round the track – that's the bike ride.

Four times round the track – that's just a bit more than the run.

Sometimes we trained before school, and sometimes we trained in the evening.

The bike ride was always easy. I love biking. But the run was hard work. It got easier with practice, but it wasn't my favourite bit.

I also had to practise swimming. Mum took me and my sister to the pool after school.





Two weeks before the race, I got another pack in the mail. This had my swim cap and my Tryathlon T-shirt in it. SOOO cool!

The pack also showed a picture of the medals. Everyone who takes part gets a medal – a real metal one. That was one of the reasons I entered – so I could get a real medal.





I did the swim, then the ride, and then the run.
It was a hot day, and I got the **stitch** really badly.
It felt so good to stop at the end and have a rest.

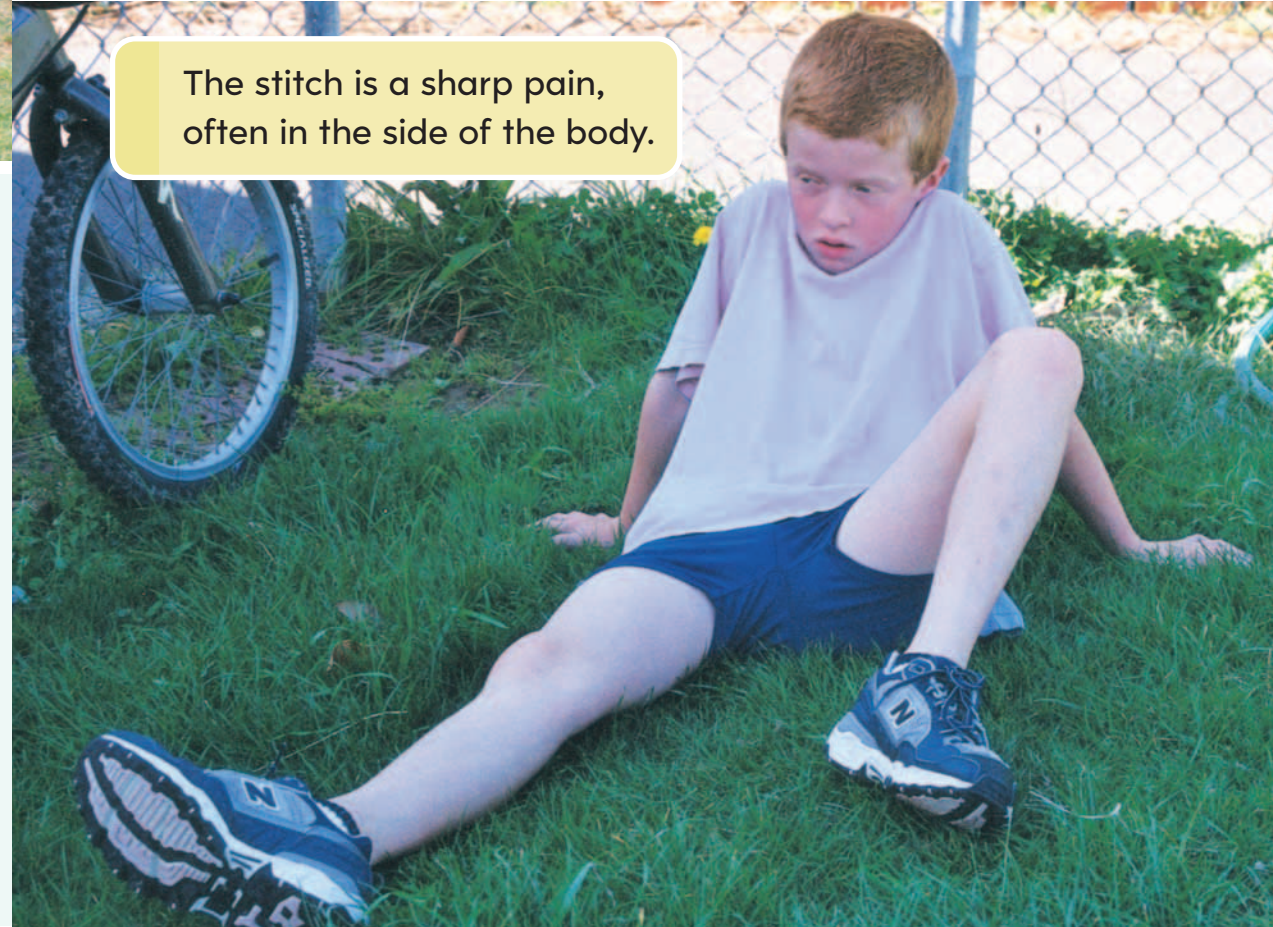
About a week before the Tryathlon, we went to the course where the event was going to be held so I could do a practice run.

I was pretty nervous when I saw the pool. It was really deep, but the people at the pool told me it wouldn't be so deep on race day.

In the Tryathlon, the water is shallow enough for most swimmers to touch the bottom with their feet. There are lifeguards in the water at all times.



The stitch is a sharp pain, often in the side of the body.





On race day, we arrive at around 7.30 a.m. That gives us plenty of time to put my bike in the **transition area** and to check out the pool. Mum writes my race number on my arms with a marker pen.

The transition area is where the racers keep their bikes, helmets, and other gear. The racers go there to change over from one part of the race to the next.



At last, I hear the loudspeakers.
“Would the eight- to eleven-year age groups please assemble by the cricket nets.”
I’m feeling really excited! I can’t stop grinning!





When I get to the transition area, I can't remember where my bike is! But the **marshal** helps me.

The marshals wear red T-shirts. Their job is to help the racers if they get lost or in trouble.

Off go my goggles and swim cap. On go my shoes and my helmet, and I'm out of the transition area on my bike. I can hear Dad yelling, "Go, mate!"

We line up at the edge of the pool. The hooter blows, and we're off! It's very splashy. I walk some of the way because it's hard to swim when there are so many arms and legs in the water.

The crowd claps. I hear Mum call out, "Come on, Tom! You're doing well!"





I'm feeling tired now, but I keep on running.
I can hear the crowd, and they're cheering.
I can see the finish line.
I can hear Mum calling out.
I speed up, and I'm over the line!
I've done it!

There are so many bikes, it's hard to go fast.

We have to do two laps of the course.

Then it's off with the helmet, down with the bike,
and on with the run.





I get my medal and some huge hugs
from my family. I'm feeling pretty pleased.
I can't wait to show off my medal at school!





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