



This month, Panama is host to athletes arriving from around the world to participate in the Ironman Triathlon, on February 12th. While this competition has professional athletes participating for a \$75,000 prize pool, which will be paid out to the first 8 positions in the male and female category, the majority of the athletes entering the Ironman competition are doing so to challenge themselves personally.

[Rick Yazwinski](#) a software engineer from Toronto, is relatively new to the world of triathlons. He ran his first ever triathlon just 9 months ago in May of 2011. It was a sprint distance, which is considered as an entry level event for athletes just starting out in the triathlon world. Since then he has done 3 Sprints, 1 Olympic length and 1 Half Iron - and he is hooked to the challenge.

Panama's Ironman distances are as follows: Swim, 1.9K in the Pacific Ocean at the entrance to the Panama Canal. Bike, 90 km across the Bridge of the Americas. Run, 21 km through Amador Causeway. The event must be completed within 8 hours. Ideally Rick hopes to complete within 5 hours and 15 minutes, climate and weather permitting. Here in Panama, his biggest challenge will be the heat and humidity. Rick is hoping the unseasonably cool weather we have been experiencing at the beaches, stays long enough and makes its way to the city next week.

At the Ironman event on the 12th, Rick hopes to win a position for the Half Iron World Championships in Las Vegas in September. Even though, his sights are set on entering his very first Full Iron event in August.

Today, Rick has 8% body fat, but he has not always been this fit. Two years ago, he was 90 pounds heavier. Rick's journey began as a goal to get in shape. He started watching what he ate and his exercise routines regularly included swimming, biking and running. He entered his first triathlon at the suggestion of a friend.

More than anything else, pushing himself to new limits has taught Rick one thing clearly, "If you believe that you can do something, you can do it. If you think you can't you wont be able to. It's amazing how far you can push yourself."

Rick keeps family, friends and fans updated on his training journey and event participation through his blog www.internalmonoblog.com . His story is there, his experiences at Panama's Ironman will be there, and any encouragement you want to pass on through the internet can be posted there. If you are in the city on Feb 12th, head on to the end of Amador Causeway, to offer a congratulatory wave to Rick and the rest of the finishing runners of Panama's Ironman Triathlon.

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