

# Ironman triathlon not a healthy race: Meyer

Benjamin Oliver Meyer holds forth on his fitness mantras and what keeps him going



Benjamin Oliver Meyer

by S S Shreekumar

**Queen's Road:** The Ironman Triathlon is considered to be the most difficult one-day sports event in the world. There are a series of long distance triathlon races organised by the World Triathlon Corporation.

It consists of 2.4-mile (3.86 km) swimming, 112-mile (180.25 km) bicycle riding and a marathon 26.2-mile (42.2 km) run to be done in that order without a break. Germany's Benjamin Oliver Meyer, 33, analyst relations manager with Wipro Ltd. (Germany), entered and won the Frankfurt event in June this year. But he feels that the race itself is not good for health.

In an exclusive e-mail interview with the *Express*, Meyer went through the event and his future goals.

**Excerpts:**

**How did you enter the event and where was it held?**

I wanted to see if I can handle the distances, coming from a completely non-sports focused childhood.

I watched the Ironman in Frankfurt four times and always asked myself if I would be able to do this as well.

**What was your timing in the end?**

Well, I clocked 12:43:44  
**How did you see the competition?**

Doing my first IronMan I didn't care about other competitors, I only executed my regime (food intake, fluid intake and salt) plus maintaining a steady heart-rate in certain ranges for the bike and run.

**What was your expectation?**

I wanted to finish. Up till a few weeks before the race I wanted to finish under 12 hours. But as the race day came closer, I realised that the 40 degrees temperature of the hottest day in Germany this summer, will not allow me to go after that goal. But I did.

**Ironman is a gruelling event, how did you practice?**

A lot of training is required for this event. Only few hours of training does not help, one requires consistency I had to learn more than just hammering hours on the bike. Consistency means 2 - 3 swims per week, 1 - 3 runs and similar bike sessions, all in various lengths. I gave myself nine months and 993 kms of running; 5,210 km of biking and 174 km of swimming.

**What is your basic strength, swimming, running or cycling?**

Biking. I started off with

friends in an indoor cycling class, did everything that my cycling instructor dictated and then found out that riding outside is even more fun.

**Apart from this event, any other sport that you take part in?**

Yoga (my wife is a yoga teacher), TRX strength training, some hiking (and yes, that is a sport if you do it right)

**Any heroes for you in the sport?**

Two Germans who are currently fighting over the Ironman in Hawaii (October) and Sebastian Kienle and Jan Frodeno. Jan overtook me on the bike during my Ironman in Frankfurt. He was followed by a helicopter, which was pretty cool.

**What are your other interests?**

I'm interested in many things (food and cooking). I also enjoy reading and attending live music concerts.

**What is your ambition?**

From a sports perspective, I will try to chase down the 12 hours mark in 2017 and do long distance triathlons in 2016 for building speed in short races. This is to make sure I keep myself healthy, because it's for sure not healthy to do an Ironman race. (The training might be but not the race).