

Party girl Lucy changes her life

Triathlon medal is reward for hard work

By **SAM CASEY** News Reporter
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IT'S like the plot from an inspirational film.

In 2005 self-confessed "endurance party girl" Lucy Williams was a 20-a-day smoker who liked a drink, couldn't swim and had no idea what a triathlon was.

Two years later, having ditched the fags and booze, the 34-year-old from Lascelles Hall completed the race of her life to win a bronze medal in an international competition.

The former pupil of King James School, Almondbury, fought off stiff competition to take third place in her section of the Long Distance Triathlon World Championships in France.

In a further twist, she achieved the feat for the New Zealand team – two years after she went there to work.

She said: "It was an unbelievable feeling.

"I knew I had done a really good personal time, but it wasn't until later on that I found out I had got the bronze.

"The adrenalin rush was like nothing I've ever felt before."

Lucy had to complete a three-kilometre swim, an 80km cycle ride and a 20km run to take the honour.

She won the bronze in the 30 to 34-year-old section of the championships after finishing in 4hr 45min.

It came just two years after she first heard about triathlons.

She said: "I was due to go to New Zealand to work in recruitment.

"A couple of months before I went my brother told me I had better get riding a bike, because he was entering me for a triathlon.

"I was more of an endurance party girl than an athlete and I didn't even know what a triathlon was.

"He told me it was a swim, bike ride and run. I couldn't even swim at the time and the first time I jumped in the pool I was so nervous my legs were shaking

"The first triathlon I did I swam doggy paddle. But I set about learning and training and really got into the sport."

While in New Zealand Lucy trained rigorously and entered a number of races.

After gaining residency status she qualified for the New Zealand team to compete in Brittany.

She said: "It was people in New Zealand who helped me train and achieve my goals, so I owe them a lot.

"But I'm still a Brit at heart and would like to compete for Great Britain at some point."

She is now back in Huddersfield and is training for the UK Iron Man event in August – a 3.8km swim, an 180km bike ride and a 42km run.

She said: "I train 30 to 35 hours a week, but I really enjoy it.

"It's a lifestyle thing. You meet so many amazing people and I love the racing. I'd recommend it to anyone."

Lucy is looking for sponsors for future events. Email her at lucy@lucywilliams.co.nz

For more information visit www.lucywilliams.co.nz



■ **SUCCESS:** Lucy just keeps on running, but it got her a medal (PW180707Atriathlon-34)

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