

IN RECESS

HEALTH & FITNESS

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YOUR STORY

What are you doing to stay healthy? How are you balancing work and fitness? Contact Mary Smith Judd at 404.419.2841 or Mary.Judd@incisivemedia.com.

From trails to triathlons



STITES & HARBISON LAWYER just finished a trail race and is now training for a half Ironman

BY TAMMY LLOYD CLABBY

WHEN ROBERT H. TURNER III graduated from college, he picked up more than a college diploma: He also carried about 40 pounds in additional body weight.

"I was a runner for fitness in high school. But I did not compete in college, and so when I went to law school, I decided to start again to be in shape," says the Stites & Harbison associate.

"Being in shape helps you with mental focus and stamina, whether it's in your studies or in business.

"If I can do a triathlon, or run 13 miles on a course that has an ascent and descent of several thousand feet, I can focus on a major business transaction."

Turner talked about his training for an upcoming half Ironman triathlon, just a couple of days after completing a grueling half marathon (13.1 miles) in North Georgia, The Twisted Ankle Trail Run.

The Twisted Ankle is considered a pretty tough trail race and has that spectacular climb early on known as Becky's Bluff; it's almost straight up. Give us an idea of how you trained for this?

It's a really enjoyable trail run even with those significant ascents and descents. It was very muddy this year. And as tough as Becky's Bluff is, I've had to do one that was even a little tougher where I had to use my hands as well as my feet to pull myself up.

I do use trail running shoes. I think they help with the grip and give you confidence to plant your foot and not end up splayed out on your back. I have a pretty good base of running as I approach the Twisted Ankle. So about six weeks before, I bump up the trail runs to a longer distance of about 10 miles, once I'm re-acclimated to running on the trails. And with the biking and swimming, I train five days a week.

Do you train primarily or prefer trails for running?

I love running on the trails and would do so exclusively if I could. I work downtown in a high rise, with 30 stories where I breathe in reprocessed air all day. On the trails, you can go back to nature. You're with the trees and wildlife. You might see deer or even a coyote.

Now you are preparing to train for a more complex event. How long have you been doing triathlons, and what kind?



PHOTOS BY ALISON CHURCH

For about the last seven years I've done four or five sprint triathlons. [Commonly several hundred yards swimming, followed by a 12-mile bike race and a 5-kilometer foot race] I found them to be a nice break from just running, which I do primarily in my neighborhood. In triathlons, you add the swimming and biking, and I think you don't get as many repetitive injuries to the knees and hips. You also build up your stamina. You can do some resistance training to build your upper body, and with your legs you feel as though you are pulled right through the water (in the swimming) rather than fighting your way through.

Are you competitive?

I'm only competing against myself. I have a

list of things I want to do before I drop dead—one is a full Ironman. I don't want to get to the end of the line and have a wish list.

Which half Ironman are you going to work on and when will the training for that begin?

It's the inaugural Half Ironman in August in late September. The distances will be a swim of 1.2 miles, a bike ride of 56 miles, followed by a half marathon. Starting in late May or early June I'll begin to follow one of several really good training programs I've found online. I have the base, now I'm building on top of it. On certain days I might swim an hour, followed by two hours of cycling and I plan on a minimum of training of 10 to 20 hours a week.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT H. TURNER III

Above: Robert Turner competes in the Twisted Ankle Trail Run in North Georgia in May. Top and left: His next competition is a half Ironman in September.

What about your equipment? Is it expensive?

It was when it was new. But I ended up getting a used triathlon bike and did not spend the usual \$2,000 to \$4,000. I got a Quintana Roo bike, shoes and all the training gear for about \$1,000 from a guy who was getting out of it. He'd ridden the bike in two Ironman's. I found it all on Craig's List.

I really researched what I wanted and had to decide if I wanted a road bike or a tri bike and kept looking for about two and a half months until I found it. I could have gone with a couple of others but with this I even got his wet suit, which I'll probably need for this event. I'll wear Nike road shoes which cost between \$100 and \$120.

Are you in good shape and do you watch what you eat?

I'm in good shape. I don't diet other than I try to be conscious about what I eat. I won't sit down and eat two bags of chips every night. I'll balance it out—all things in moderation. I'll have a cocktail, but not overindulge, and pizza has a special place in my heart. So far so good, and I want to keep it that way. I have seen family reunion pictures, and I know what I'll look like if I don't exercise. And that is added incentive. ☺

Are you a *Daily Report* reader running the 2009 Peachtree Road Race? Look for the *Daily Report's* photographer and our sign at the top of Cardiac Hill (the heart-pounding ascent to Piedmont Hospital), on the right side of Peachtree Street near Collier Road. Give us just a few seconds and we'll post your photo after the race on DailyReportOnline. You may also submit your own race or post-race photo (hi-res jpegs only please) to special projects editor Mary Judd at mary.judd@incisivemedia.com.