



Ilana Frenkel Kearns

IRONMAN Foundation (Team IMF) Athlete



**"Being relentless means
demanding more of
yourself than anyone else
could ever demand of
you."**



— *Tim S. Grover*



This year, I am proudly joining a select group of athletes from around the world on **TEAM IMF to support the mission of the IRONMAN Foundation**. Together, we share a passion for creating positive, tangible change in our race communities and proving that "Anything Is Possible" as I train for my first 140.6-mile triathlon scheduled for October 23, 2022, in CA. In 2021 alone, the IRONMAN Foundation distributed more than \$2.1 million to 1,500 organizations worldwide. \$100 could mean bikes for several kids, money that helps keep a community center pool open, or supporting diversity in sport through initiatives like Women For Tri.

And my "WHY" is simple. I want to demonstrate to other aspiring athletes and triathletes who may not know where to start or are an underdog such as myself, that through hard work, discipline, perseverance, and showing up for yourself every single day, #anythingispossible. Just take it one step at a time.

If you would like to give back, please consider donating **to the IRONMAN Foundation**; however small, every dollar counts! Checkout my link here" <https://ironmanfoundation.donordrive.com/participant/ilana-kearns>

I would be grateful for any support you can offer.

Thanks for reading.

Ilana



Storytime

Why IRONMAN Foundation | Women For Tri

On March 30, 2022, in the midst of a 9-mile run, I was hit by a car that knocked me to the ground. The world spun for a few seconds as I managed to stand up, looked at my Garmin watch which read 8.5 miles, paused it, found my phone thrown to the side of the road, told the driver where to go and finished my run home. Because I was wearing a long sleeve black shirt, I assumed I was wet because of sweat. Only when I changed clothes did I realize my left elbow was clipped by the car.

I cleaned up, said hi to my dog and drove myself to the ER where I got stitches and a splint and headed home the same day. Despite road rash on my right hip, my wrists a mess and hitting the concrete with my head, I walked away with nothing but an elbow injury. ** tip for road rash: unrefined coconut oil is antimicrobial, perfect for road rash!

The next morning, I hopped on my indoor trainer for an easy ride. On day four, I returned to running. 11 days post elbow break, I was back to running nine miles at 9:16 split with a full elbow splint.

Eight weeks later, I was running 17 miles at 9:06 pace. The night I got my splint off, I returned to the pool, which also serves as my main PT as I incorporate different swim strokes to improve my range of motion in my elbow.

Thanks to my hours of swimming, the mobility I gained allowed for me to get dressed and continue living without assistance on my own as my elbow healed up for the next 8 weeks.

Here are some stats to think about:

43 Million Americans suffer from low bone density

21.3 Million hip fractures are projected by 2050

Women are more than 2X likely than men to have Osteoporosis

Less than half of American adults can even swim 25M!

50% of Americans are **diabetic or prediabetic**

It doesn't have to be this way; I bucked these eye-opening trends by choosing a healthy way of life. Yes, IRONMAN gives you bragging rights for life, but it also empowers you to live on your own terms.

The car accident wasn't the first time exercise saved my life. In 2015, I had a double mastectomy with reconstruction when I learned I was a carrier of the deadly BRCA1 mutation following the sudden death of my young cousin from ovarian cancer, whose mother (my aunt) was receiving treatment for breast cancer at the exact time at the exact same hospital.

Following my cousin's death in 2013, Angelina Jolie was making headlines with an inherited breast cancer gene called BRCA 1 and her story captured my attention. I immediately began working with my insurance company to get a BRCA gene sequencing test done through blood work through a company called Myriad Genetics. And sure enough, it was confirmed I am a carrier of the faulty BRCA 1 gene with a specific sequencing common in Eastern European Jewish women like myself called a "founders mutation".

With no screening available for Ovarian Cancer and knowing I was done having children, I took steps in late 2013 to remove my ovaries to avoid the same fate as my cousin.

Only after my own breast care doctor's sudden death from breast cancer at age 46 did I finally take steps to prevent breast cancer.

Knowing the mastectomy would require three surgeries total, with the first lasting approximately four hours and two young boys at home with a disjointed family, I didn't have the luxury of being bedridden for weeks. My doctor at Emory warned me my lungs would take the worst grunt of the surgery, with a machine breathing for me for nearly four hours. After researching Dr. Google for how to build up lung capacity, I determined running was going to be my best defense.

Meanwhile, at work, I had just finished writing up an article for my monthly newsletter about my colleague who recently completed an IRONMAN (my first exposure to the sport) so I picked his brain on how to become a runner; I had been an off and on injury prone runner until that point. I had eight months to get into the best shape possible ahead of my surgery. He introduced me to his running coach, Kyle, and also suggested I try Newtons, the presenting sponsor for IRONMAN at the time. I picked up a pair of Newtons, began the painful transition to minimal drop shoes, which force you to land mid-foot vs. on my heel as I was doing, and immediately hired Kyle and a personal trainer from Onelife Fitness to get me in the best shape possible ahead of the grueling surgeries.

A week before my surgery, I ran the Atlanta 10 miler in 1:37:49. As my doctor promised, my lungs were on fire after the first surgery that lasted nearly four hours. He and his team had no mercy and had me walking the hospital floor within hours of surgery, along with immediate exercises to get mobility back quickly in my arms and upper body. After 48 hours (I earned an extra night at the hospital due to a fever) I was released to go home.

While most women struggle to even sit up, with my doctor's blessing, two weeks post mastectomy, with my chest taped up, I returned to treadmill running. 11 weeks later, I ran a 15K in 1:30:12 with tissue expanders in my chest. And one year later, I quietly celebrated my year of surgeries with the Las Vegas Rock N Roll Half Marathon with a time of 2:03:09 in November of 2016 followed by a massage. And I haven't stopped running since.

While the surgeries were successful with no immediate complications, that all changed in 2017 when I had a ministroke I struggled to recover from that left me exhausted that led to a terrible coffee habit of 6 to 8 cups per day while fighting very high levels of inflammation in my body. My doctors weren't much help, who told me I was fine. But I wasn't. In 2018, I abruptly left corporate to get my health in order.

With the help of a Holistic Doctor versed in nutrition, I overhauled my diet, eliminating nearly all corn syrup, ultraprocessed foods, refined sugar, and most dairy. I went from eating out to cooking nearly 95% of all my meals with one ingredient foods. As a result, I lost nearly 40lbs, which I continue to sustain today. I slashed my cholesterol by nearly 40% without a single pill, and the days of annual sinus infections are behind me. Today I am 100% coffee free. I also haven't touched alcohol in over two years.

The **idea of IRONMAN** still lingered, so I began to slowly take steps to make it a reality once my diet and health were once again under control.

I transitioned from being an almost exclusive treadmill runner to an exclusive outdoor roadrunner, I haven't been on a treadmill in years.

In 2019, I completed my first marathon. While it wasn't the experience I trained for, I ran it with a sinus infection, I was so proud I finished!

In April 2020, newly divorced with everything closed around me, I began road cycling. It was a humbling start with 100 miles. In 2021, I learned how to clip into my pedals. By April 2022, I had cycled 10,000 miles without a single group ride.

In June 2020, I returned to the pool for the first time since I was a kid. I have since swum 544,395 yards!

And running continues to be my first love. In 2021, I ran 1,900 miles. So far in 2022, I have covered 880 miles!

Journey to IRONMAN

Through these experiences, I learned just how **intertwined mindset, nutrition and exercise are**. I went on to earn my certifications in Personal Training, Nutrition, and Wellness through the National Academy of Sports Medicine, in addition to earning my **coaching certification through IRONMAN University** to help others in Corporate America who, for too long, have put their jobs, family, and everything else ahead of their health. It is never too late to start or to turn your health around. And now I am actively training for my first full IRONMAN at 44 years old.

Professional Credentials + Affiliations

IRONMAN Certified Coach | NASM Certified Personal Trainer | NASM Certified Nutrition Coach
NASM Certified Wellness Coach | Certified in TrainingPeaks Essentials





**"When your mind is
telling you you're
done, you're really
only 40% done."**



— David Goggins

June 2022 Training Summary

Swim

Frequent 1.2 & 1.5 mile training sessions to work on muscle memory post elbow break. Fastest swim of the month was 1.2 miles @ 1:49/100yds

42,706 yards

Run

14 miles @ a pace of 9:14 was long run of month. Ran a Half-marathon at 8:42 pace. Fastest run of the month was 8 miles @ a pace of 7:52!

140.3 miles

Bike

76.61 miles at a pace of 18.3 was my longest ride of the month. Several 3-hour cycling sessions and a NEW FTP of 178!

703 miles

Walking

63.6 miles of walking with Mico. Total steps for June: 423,800

63.6 miles



May 2022 Training Summary

Swim

Returned to the pool on May 17; now my main form of PT to regain ROM on left elbow

15,268 yards



Bike

100KM at 19.3 mph was long ride of month. Level 21 on Zwift + ROUVY. Zwift FTP 173

728.6 miles



98.5 Hours

Run

17 miles at 9:07 pace was long run of month, almost 10 minutes faster than pre elbow break. Also ran a 15 miler and 14 miler. VO2 max now 55

150.4 miles



Walking

60.2 miles of walking with Mico. Total steps for May: 418,334, an average of 13,318 per day

61.3 miles



April 2022 Training Summary

Swim

No Swimming due to broken elbow

0



Bike

766+ miles with my long ride at 55 miles along with several 30 to 50 mile rides.

766+



Run

138.9 miles of running despite broken elbow. including half marathon at 8:45 pace

138+



Walking

68.8 miles of recovery walks with my pup, Mr. Mico

68+



103+ Hours

March 2022 Training Summary

Swim

19,525+ yards of swimming, including first 2.5 mile nonstop freestyle swim!

19,525+



Bike

540+ miles with my long ride at 60 miles with several 50+ mile rides.

540+

Run

143+ running miles, including half marathon at 8:51 pace and a 17 mile run at a pace of 9:38

143+



Walking

62.6 miles of recovery walks with my foster pup, Mr. Mico

62.6+

90+ Hours

February 2022 Training Summary

Swim

23,375+ yards of swimming, including several 3,000 yards nonstop swims.

23,000+



Bike

514+ miles. Now a ROUVY Ambassador

514+



87+ Hours

Run

137+ running miles, including two half-marathons and one 15-mile run

137+



Walking

50 miles of recovery walks with my foster pup, Mr. Mico

50+



January 2022 Training Summary

Swim

20,000+ yards of swimming and my first continuous 4,000 yards of freestyle!

20,000+



Bike

435+ miles. Purchased a Wahoo KICKR and now active on ZWIFT and Rouvy.

435+

Run

150+ running miles including my monthly half marathon in 2:04

150+



Strength Training

9+ hours of METCON, Injury Prevention and Weight training

9+

69+ Hours

Strava Profile: <https://www.strava.com/athletes/33225294>



**"You can have results
or excuses but not
both"**



Arnold
Schwarzenegger



#fastfacts

Consistently place in the **top 5%** for road race distances ranging from 5K to Marathons based on race results in last three years. Personal Best(s) races from 2019 to Current:

5K: 23:56

10K: 48:46

15K: 1:16:38

10 Miler: 1:26:18

Half Marathon: 1:53

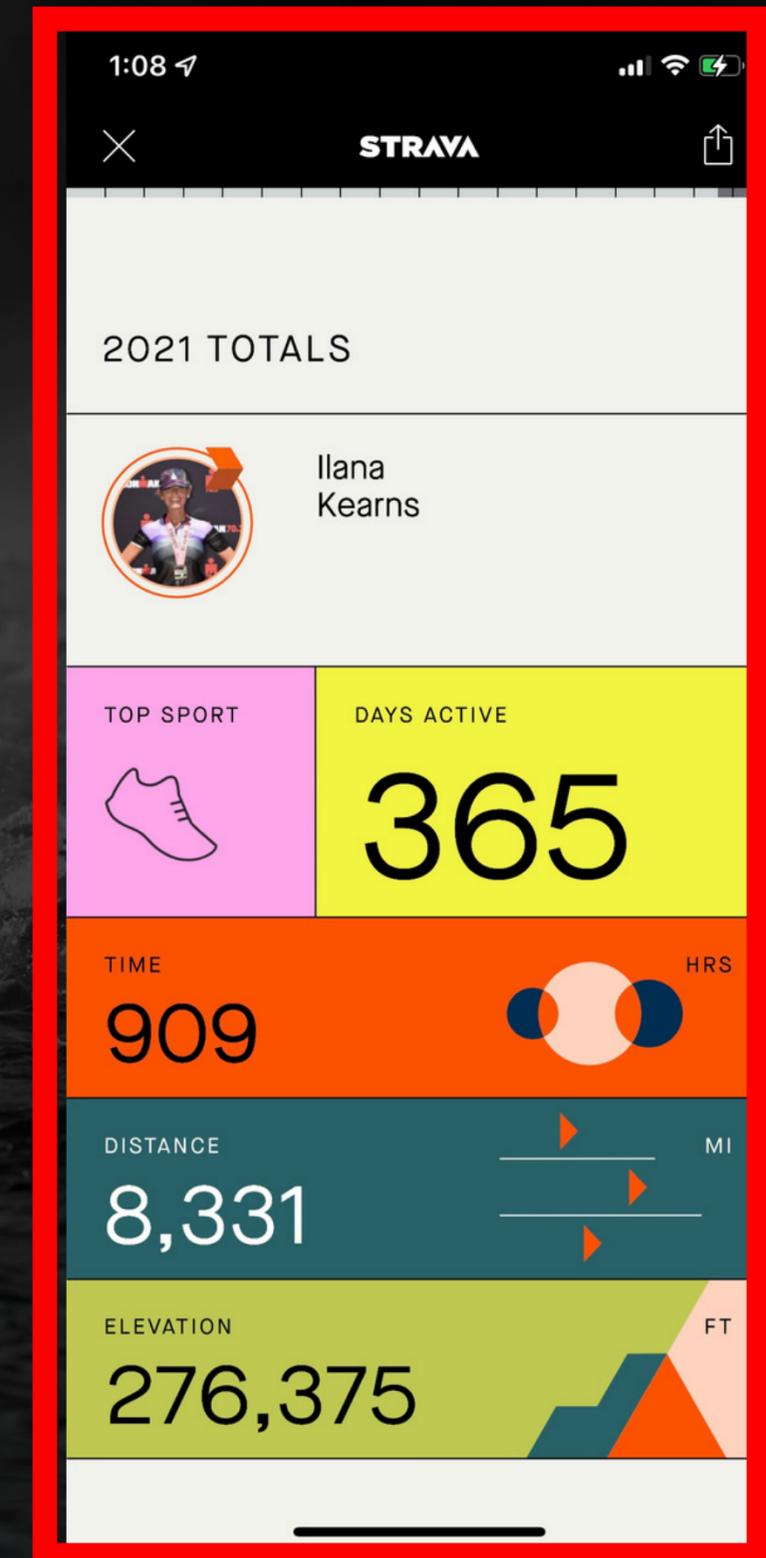
Marathon: 5:02:39 (Raced while sick with a sinus infection)

70.3 Ironman: 6:24:35 (top 45% finish for all women for my first ever triathlon)

140.6 Ironman: ?

Top 1% Strava user, in 2021 alone, I ran **1,902 +** miles, swam **329,000+** yards and cycled **6,000+** miles.

VO2 Max places me in top 1% of age group; fitness age of 20





MDJ GOBBLE JOG

ILANA KEARNS

November 28, 2019 | 5K Run

24:30

7:53

FINISH TIME

PACE MIN/MI



LABOR DAY DONUT DASH 5K & HALF MARATHON

ILANA KEARNS

September 7, 2020 | 5K Run

23:56

7:42

FINISH TIME

PACE MIN/MI



2020 ALLSTATE HOT CHOCOLATE 15K/5K - ATLANTA

ILANA KEARNS

February 2, 2020 | 15K

1:16:38

8:13

FINISH TIME

PACE MIN/MI



ROCK 'N' ROLL SAVANNAH

ILANA KEARNS

November 2, 2019 | Half Marathon

1:53:00

8:38

FINISH TIME

PACE MIN/MI



IRONMAN 70.3 AUGUSTA

ILANA KEARNS

September 26, 2021 | 70.3 Triathlon-1.2 miles Swim, 56 miles Bike, 13.1 miles Run

6:24:35

FINISH TIME



2020 RESOLUTION RUN

ILANA KEARNS

January 1, 2020 | 5K

24:07

7:45

FINISH TIME

PACE MIN/MI



POSSUM TROT 10K ROAD RACE

ILANA KEARNS

June 15, 2019 | 10K Run

48:46

7:51

FINISH TIME

PACE MIN/MI



2019 PNC ATLANTA 10 MILER & 5K

ILANA KEARNS

October 20, 2019 | PNC Atlanta 10 Miler

1:26:18

8:38

FINISH TIME

PACE MIN/MI



2019 PUBLIX ATLANTA MARATHON, HALF MARATHON & 5K

ILANA KEARNS

March 17, 2019 | Marathon

5:02:39

11:33

FINISH TIME

PACE MIN/MI

#giveback

Cherokee County School District

Helped institutionalize **1st lunch bunch program** to help children born on Autism spectrum have quiet place to eat lunch while they worked on social skills

StandUp for Kids

Spearheaded an event for StandUp for Kids, which is working to end the cycle of youth homelessness and coordinated event with SUFK staff, managed participation of IHG team, secured donations of boxes of clothing and supplies for these kids to ensure every homeless child received a holiday gift and warm meal, soliciting donations from Chick-fil-A, Corner Bakery and Communicorp

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

Managed participation of the IHG team and coordinated with the CHOA team as we divided & conquered to clean the "Zone" and serve breakfast to the parents and doctors

Movember

Drove awareness for Men's health through an engaging **digital-first campaign**

Atlanta Ronald McDonald House

Organized **12+ meals to feed 50+ families** of Atlanta Ronald McDonald House

Winship Cancer Institute of Emory

Led a coloring book drive to support the **patients receiving chemo**



#forever needing a home

Angels Among Us Foster Fail Volunteer

I am a foster fail owner of Mico, whom I started off fostering through an organization called Angels Among Us. Angels Among Us is a Pet Rescue is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to saving dogs and cats from shelters and high-risk situations in Georgia. Many of the animals who come into the program are over-bred, ill, injured, neglected, or abused. Sadly, without rescue, many of these precious animals would be euthanized or end up in even worse circumstances than before. It's their right to get a helping hand, and it's our privilege to offer one. Please consider Angels Among Us for your next furry friend!

Certificate of Completion

Maddie's Fund

Bringing a New Dog Home

Awarded To:
Ilana kearns

Date:
January 20, 2022

Location:
MaddiesUniversity.org

This course has been pre-approved for **100** hours of Certified Animal Welfare Administrator continuing education credits by the Association for Animal Welfare Advancement and continuing education units by the National Animal Care & Control Association.



6150 Stoneridge Mall Rd., Suite 125
Pleasanton, CA 94588 Phone: (925) 310-5450
Info@maddiesfund.org www.maddiesfund.org



NATIONAL ANIMAL
CARE & CONTROL ASSOCIATION

The Association for
Animal Welfare
Advancement

Certificate of Completion

Maddie's Fund

Canine Body Language in the Shelter

Awarded To:
Ilana kearns

Date:
January 20, 2022

Location:
MaddiesUniversity.org

This course has been pre-approved for **100** hours of Certified Animal Welfare Administrator continuing education credits by the Association for Animal Welfare Advancement and continuing education units by the National Animal Care & Control Association.



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NATIONAL ANIMAL
CARE & CONTROL ASSOCIATION

The Association for
Animal Welfare
Advancement

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Portfolio

<https://goatmatters.com/>

Strava

<https://www.strava.com/athletes/33225294>

Athlinks

<https://www.athlinks.com/athletes/362323434>

Ironman Foundation

<https://ironmanfoundation.donordrive.com/participant/Ilana-kearns>

