

'HOW I
BUILD MY
BODY'

FLORA DUFFY

MEET THE ELITE

Dame Flora Duffy DBE is a Bermudian triathlete who competed in the Olympics in Beijing, London and Rio de Janeiro, before winning a gold medal at the 2020 Tokyo games. In 2016, she became the first person to win three world titles in one year: the World Triathlon championship race, the Xterra world championships and the ITU Cross world championships. She is the first woman ever to have won an Olympic and World title in the same year, and the first ever Bermudian Olympic gold medallist.

CARDIO

'I swim and cycle six days a week, run five days a week, and do two strength sessions in the gym, typically training for around 25 hours a week. Everything else is about recovery (eating, napping, massage and physio), although I do get little pockets of time carved out so I can spend time with family or go on a date with my husband. A little bit of "me time" is super important when I am following a very intense training regime. I pretty much wake up at 6.15am, eat, train, eat, train, nap, train, eat and sleep, then get up to do it all again! The goal is always to get faster and stronger by working in specific periodised training chunks that build upon each other to get me in the shape I need to be race ready. Typically, I keep things balanced by training for the swim, bike and run fairly evenly, but I have definitely put more emphasis into my running over the past few years – not by running more, which can lead to injury, but by working on my biomechanics and running form, and working in the gym to get stronger, which I can then translate into my running.'

STRENGTH

'I'm trying to build strength by lifting heavier weights – as my racing picks up, the intensity will back off – and I also focus on injury prevention with prehab and rehab exercises that are specific

to any weaknesses I have. Triathlon is a full-body sport, so I train my upper body, shoulders, back and core for swimming. Plus, I do lots of deadlifts because they work the glutes, hips, hamstrings and the posterior chain for cycling. I also do plyometrics for running, so I really mix things up, which I enjoy as I find swimming, cycling and running quite one dimensional.'

NUTRITION

'Nutrition is something I've learnt about over time, and it's a crucial part of performing and recovering well because I do train a lot. Also, training at altitude in Boulder, Colorado [Duffy splits her time between Stellenbosch, South Africa, and Colorado to avoid winter weather] puts another level of demand on my body, so I need to fuel adequately and understand the load my body is undergoing. My coach often messages me before a big training day to remind me to eat enough carbs. I can struggle to eat the amount of protein I need per day, which is quite a lot, so protein shakes are vital, and I also use energy gels and bars while I'm out training on three-to-four-hour bike rides.'

RECOVERY

'I might not be completely "off" on my one rest day, but it's definitely far easier. I'll do an easy swim for an hour, focusing

on stroke work and technique, followed by an easy 20-minute run. That might sound like a lot to some people, but I find it really nice. I'm done early and can have the rest of the day to do something for myself – have a long nap, get a sports massage and focus on hydrating and getting enough food in. Napping is my biggest recovery tool, alongside getting eight-to-nine hours of sleep every night.'

VITAL KIT

'Triathlon involves a lot of kit and gadgets but, most importantly, I could never ride my beautiful

Specialized bike without wearing a helmet. I also have a Hammerhead Karoo 2 bike computer (£359; uk.hammerhead.io), which tracks my heart rate, distance, speed and power. I hate riding without my power meter, which is connected to the Hammerhead unit so I can see my numbers, and I can't imagine going for a ride without being able to see all my stats. You can also set up a route so a map will appear, and you can go off on an adventure. It's a really cool piece of tech.'

Flora Duffy is an ambassador for Hammerhead cycling computers. Find out more at hammerhead.io



'My greatest achievement...'

'Taking gold in Tokyo to win Bermuda's first-ever gold medal, and being a woman to do that, was incredibly special. Races can come and go, but to leave that kind of legacy at that moment in time was pretty powerful, especially when everyone has watched me grow up and do every little race in Bermuda, and then I'm suddenly at the Olympics winning a medal. It's incredible, what it's meant to the community in Bermuda. I've always been a big believer that sport can really open doors and provide opportunities for people at any level, not just on a world-class level, so it's pretty cool to see the kids be inspired.'

Words: Joanna Ebsworth