

CHEW BING YI, DON

Profile & Accomplishments

TriZEN volunteers trained a group of physically-challenged athletes for the 70.3 in 2007. Among these athletes, a unique sign was created (with their sign language) to describe Don - it is holding up the hand showing the alphabet "d" and drawing a curved path across the face signifying a 'smile'. In sign language, the essence in the things described is captured and hence it is more efficient than voice language. And that unique sign does capture what is special about Don (or, Ah Don, as we all know him by). You almost never see Don without his trademark smile - a smile that radiates the warmth of his personality, genuineness of his intentions and willingness to contribute.

Don started off as a Team TriZEN member aiming to complete an Ironman in 2007. What sets him apart from most people is that amidst his busy schedule as a then-polytechnic student and part-time lifesaver, Don still found time to help the physically-challenged athletes in their cycling training sessions. Like Wei Ming, Don was ever ready to take on the role of cycling leader during these sessions and always gave us feedback on the conditions of the athletes as observed during the rides. He even managed to encourage his triathlon

buddies to join in and help out on these rides a few times. In his gentlemanly demeanor, Don never hesitated to bring up his views and opinion about training issues in which he has his doubts or reservations. However, he is not a person who guards his points irrationally; Don is willing to be open-minded for discussion, and that makes him an asset to all of us in the Team. For example, after his close monitoring of the progress of the physically-challenged athletes in their swimming training, he suggested to the Team coaches that we encourage these athletes to put in more time on their own in the pool. This view was also shared by Kelvin Low. The Team adopted their view and the Special Olympics later assisted in guiding a few of these swimmers in their additional swim sessions. You would want a person like Don as a coach! Oftentimes, you could spot Don cycling 40km from his house to Kallang where weekday's stationary trainer sessions for the athletes were held; after the athletes were held; after the session, he would cycle another 40km back home. This is what dedication is all about!

Although Don is considered the 'baby' in Team TriZEN, his race experience is also one of the richest. As an athlete, Don has one of the

fastest recovery rates from hard training amongst his peers. This makes him well suited for long or even ultra long distance training and racing. Recently, he completed his first Ironman triathlon in Malaysia with encouraging results. Before that milestone race, he completed an impressive string of races, ranging from sprint triathlons in Singapore to half Ironman races in Malaysia. Being an experienced swimmer, he even completed the famous Kapas-Marang 6.5km marathon swim held in Malaysia. Regardless of his successes or misses in these races, Don always returns from them with his trademark smile. He does not give excuses for his misses and is ready to chalk up every race as an important lesson for future races.

His attendance at all Team TriZEN events - outings, gatherings and training camp - has also been one of the most consistent. This goes to show that he really feels a strong sense of belonging to the Team, identifying himself with our values. Like Wei Ming, Don represents the young blood and future of the Team. His warmth and dedication to TriZEN and its values is contagious. We all believe future members of TriZEN will feel, and be motivated by, Don's spirit - the kind of spirit that creates the type of civic-minded triathletes TriZEN aspires to nurture.