

PEOPLE

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Ultra-marathon mum becomes a Wild Woman on Top

By Nahrain John

Suzy Cipollone spends her days running after four boys under seven and studying part-time for her masters in primary teaching, but at night she likes to put on her sneakers and chase the challenge of an ultra-marathon.

As the Strathfield resident gears up to take on her sixth event in February, the Sydney Coastrek 50-100km Challenge, Suzy, a 40-year-old mother of four, says there's nothing more thrilling than crossing the finish line. Her passion for long-distance running started seven years ago after the birth of her eldest son, Jamie.

With the intention of simply getting fit post-pregnancy, Suzy stepped onto a treadmill. Her exercise routine quickly became somewhat of an addiction, because as she clocked more kilometres the more eager she became to run further and faster. She said: "I was walking and then jogging and then walking and then I would get bored with my pace. I wanted to go quicker and push myself to run longer and found I really started to enjoy it."

But it wasn't until a conversation with a fellow mother, Jane Montgomery, at her son's daycare that Suzy decided to take her

running to the road and to the 10km Rebel Run for Fun event. After that, she upped the ante completing the Sydney Morning Herald Half-Marathon, North Face 100, Oxfam and now the Sydney Coastrek 50-100km Challenge. Suzy says marathons are a great way to raise money and get fit.

Sydney Coastrek 50-100km Challenge is on from 28 February to 1 March 2014 and takes challengers along the Sydney Coastline from Palm Beach to Coogee. Last year 2100 people participated in the challenge, 90 per cent of them women.

As part of the event, participants can choose to walk or run 50km or the full 100km. They also have to be part of a team of four with at least two women.

Ms Cipollone said she's excited to complete the ultra-marathon with a team of four. "It becomes less about times and finishing when you're with friends because you just have a laugh and encourage each other to keep going," she said.

The Sydney Coastrek 50-100km Challenge is organised by Wild Women On Top to inspire fitness and help raise funds for the Fred Hollows Foundation.

Registrations close on 13 October. To register visit www.coastrek.com.au.



Suzy Cipollone with her sons, from left, Jamie (7), Max (1), Riley (5) and Raffi (3)