

Cricketer gives it a tri Jamie First

From baggy greens to budgie smugglers, retired cricketer Graham Manou's latest challenge may be his most difficult yet.

The man who sensationally replaced Brad Haddin on the eve of the Ashes Test at Edgbaston in 2009 will compete in the Ironman Asia-Pacific Championship in Melbourne later this month.

Manou said he was out to find a sporting outlet post cricket.

"Triathlon seemed a perfect fit for what I was craving ... both physically and mentally," he said.

While he has participated in a few local races, ranging from sprints to Olympic distance, this will be his longest to date.

The Melbourne ironman involves a 3.8km swim, 180km bike ride and a 42.2km run.

Manou said he is using what he has learned as a professional cricketer to help him prepare for the grueling ordeal.

"Much of it (cricket) is played between your ears and it is how you cope as an individual to different situations that ultimately determines how long you survive at an elite level."

But he admits that training for the triathlon has not always been comfortable.

"I found you spend so much time on your own that it would be easy, at times, to allow yourself to be talked out of doing the last rep or staying in bed on a cold, wet morning," Manou said.

The former Aussie keeper said he will be most nervous at the start.

"Cricket was natural for me ... this will be very foreign."

Manou's wife, former Australian middle distance athlete Tamsyn Lewis, has been helping him with his running, but he said his preferred leg will be the ride.

"Probably my least favourite part of the race will be the swim because it can be so chaotic."

Manou said he was simply looking to finish.

"That was the goal when I started. If I enjoy the experience, I will sit down ... and see what is achievable moving forward."