

Mother's testing journey

Jamie First

It's a challenge that brings grown men to tears and professional athletes to exhaustion, but for one Melbourne woman it's a long-held ambition.

Amanda Thompson is taking part in one of the world's most demanding endurance races, the 226km Asia-Pacific Ironman Championship.

Having dreamt of participating since she was 15, the mum-of-two said being diagnosed with a melanoma last year motivated her to sign up.

"In March 2013, two days before the Ironman, I was sent to Peter Mac as a priority," she said.

"When I went down to watch the race, I walked past the Tour de Cure stand ... and said to my friend 'I have cancer, so I should donate'. That was the first time I admitted it.

"Then, in a moment of possible stupidity, I agreed to enter (next year). So Ironman coincided with the journey I was about to go on."

The 37-year-old financial planner and business strategist said she wanted to prove she could overcome all that she had dealt with.

"I wanted to compete in something and make my girls proud of me. I will be thankful for every stroke, cadence and step that I take."

Training 20 hours a week, Ms Thompson said her goal was to stand tall as she crossed the line, but hoped to finish in less than 12 hours.

Already setting her sights on next year, she said she would love to do it again if she's lucky enough to get the opportunity.

"I'm goal-orientated, so I like to keep myself busy and have a go."

The race will be held on Sunday, March 23 and includes a 3.8km swim, 180km bike ride and 42.2km run.