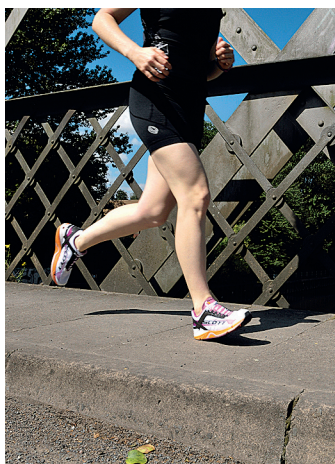


**TRI TRICK**

A LAP AT LUNCH

**Keeping up** with your training is hard in winter, especially if it's dark when you leave for work and dark when you arrive back home. But while squeezing in a few minutes of running at lunchtime might seem pointless, just getting out and exercising in the daylight can provide a huge morale boost for sun-deprived athletes. It can also help keep your exercise-induced endorphins topped up, which will make chugging away on the turbo in the evening seem more appealing.



Words Tom Ballard Photo Marathon-Photos

**ON A ROLL**

SECRETS OF AGE-GROUP SUCCESS



Cooney on his way to victory at the London Triathlon in 2012

**ALVIN COONEY**

THIS AWESOME AGE-GROUPER SMASHED THE LONDON TRIATHLON AND HAS HIS SIGHTS SET ON A RETURN TO KONA



**ALVIN COONEY**

Age 38

**Job** Director of Natural Cosmetic Company Alvin Conner Ltd  
**Career Highlights** 2nd in AG Ironman UK 2008; 11th in AG Perth ITU Long-Distance World Champs 2009; 1st AG Overall Virgin Active London Triathlon 2012

**I WAS** working in a gym in Dublin when I saw a poster for the London Triathlon. That was back in 2000. I entered the race and was hooked as soon as I crossed the finish line.

Our sport has so much going for it. Putting aside the love of tri, a big thing for me is the people. Being a triathlete is a lifestyle. I surround myself with great people who also love the sport. There's nothing but encouragement and support everywhere you turn, whether they're teammates or competitors – it doesn't matter.

I've been lucky enough to

race for Ireland as an age-grouper in Olympic and long-course European and world championships. I also raced in Hawaii at the Ironman World Championships in 2008.

The races I'm most proud of are the 2006 European Standard Distance Championships, which was the first time I raced for Ireland. At Ironman UK 2008, I was chasing a slot for Kona. There were only two and I came second in my age group – it was my third Ironman in three months and I cried! Then finally going to Hawaii 2008 –

what a race!

I like hard races; when things get tough I feel I excel. I also race better when I'm in front – running scared. Knowing I have more in me always motivates me and I have some great training partners who always push me to keep up or stay ahead.

This winter I'm aiming to build a big base of long bike and run miles. I've entered Challenge Roth again (my seventh time) and my goal is to go under nine hours. I'll also race another Ironman Event (UK or Wales) aiming to qualify for Kona. My big goal is to get back to Hawaii and race with fresh legs. Watching the pros and top age-groupers in this race inspires me to get back over there.

**> ALEXANDRE RIBEIRO AND AMBER MONFORTE WIN ULTRAMAN WORLD CHAMPS**