

7<sup>th</sup> November 2021, still feels like yesterday and the memory of the duathlon world championships will forever be etched in my mind. The weather was not so good when I arrived in Spain on the 4<sup>th</sup> November, 2021, it was pouring and I was just asking myself how on earth am I going to brave the elements. Luckily the awful weather did not last long it was over on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

The events leading up to the race included race registration, a run course recce and watching the elites and under 23 races. Watching some of my role models racing was a surreal experience, I also managed to have a picture taken with Emilio Martinez a Spanish Elite athlete whom I have watched race on a number of occasions on various sport channels and YouTube.

Race day finally arrived; this was a dream come true for me...; I quickly had a mental run through of all the sacrifices I had made leading up to this auspicious occasion. I was finally representing my beautiful country Zimbabwe at the world stage and writing my name in the history books an honour which I was not taking lightly. I was sure of one thing, that I was going to give my best and to finish the race. After the gun went everything went by so quickly, I have never pushed myself so hard on the run mainly because I was not sure I could, however I was able to push the envelope of my performance which I am happy about.



The bike ride was fast and the second run was when all the training paid off. I finished 20<sup>th</sup> out of the 21 athletes in my age group a result which I am very pleased with, for two reasons:

1. I had proved to myself that I can race at the world stage and finish the race.
2. I had learnt all the lessons necessary to thicken my resolve to go back to the drawing board and work on my weakness... mostly on the bike.

One major highlight of this whole race was that the adage “It takes a village to raise a child” came alive through the support that I received from Triathlon Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwean community and all the wonderful people who donated to my GoFund me page. I was racing for all these people who had put their trust and support in me and there was no way I was going to let them down. Not forgetting the friends that I managed to make at the event.



I am looking forward to next season and training for the next competitions, this was just the tip of the iceberg. I hope my story will inspire Zimbabweans to pursue their dreams unrelentingly particularly athletes to take challenges as crucibles that are moulding them to be the best version of themselves.

