



## **Sweaty She Monday (8/3/09): How Did I Get Here?**

**By Susan Farago**

*Weekly Sweaty She postings can be found on "Sweaty She" on Facebook.com.*

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The other day I was sitting on the bathroom floor, hunched over and applying honey to a saddle sore (yes you read this correctly). For those of you who don't know what a saddle sore is, it's a small bump or lesion that occurs from bike seat pressure and it's usually located... well...in the words of my friend Laurie, "on or near your pink parts". As I applied a small drop of the gooey substance to the very irritated bump, I had one of those moments where I sat up and thought, "How did I get here?"

I don't mean from a spiritual, ethereal, "meaning of life" sense. But from a, "why do I have a sore on my 'pink parts' and why am I putting honey on it?" If anyone were to have walked in on me at that moment, they would have probably thought I was involved with some kinky type of who knows what. But as I sat there, I reflected on how indeed I got here. The answer? I'm a triathlete and enjoy riding my bike long distances (luckily I've only had 2 saddle sores in my entire life and this just happens to be one of them). I am also a card carrying member of the Austin Herb Society and a few years ago I attended a lecture on the amazing healing properties of honey - and it really does work! So there you have it.

But how many times do we go through life, or even just within a workout, and find ourselves in funny, harrowing, or unforgettable situations and wonder how we got here?

Sometimes it's like the perfect storm – a string of small, seemingly unrelated events, culminate into something completely unexpected. Some people call this fate or destiny and believe we truly have no free will. Others (especially we Aquarians) believe we have complete control over our lives which supports our motto "freedom at all cost". This duality is known as determinism versus free will and has long been debated by philosophers throughout the ages. Throw God or religion into the mix and the discussions can get pretty interesting.

And then there's the French's' take on free will.

Milorad Cavic, a French swimmer who was "outreached" by Michael Phelps in the 2008 Olympic games and lost to Phelps by 1/100<sup>th</sup> of a second, believes that "Free will is a gift with a price tag, and whatever you choose to do you're going to pay, but how much you're going to pay is really dependent on you." This was in reference to his belief that Phelps sold his soul to Speedo in exchange for sponsorship and a lot of money, but the

Speedo speed suit Phelps was required to wear at one meet caused him to lose one of the events (because it wasn't as fast as other brand speed suits).

Something tells me that every time Michael Phelps gets into the pool for a swim workout, he is reminded of all the hard work and dedication that got him to where he is with his swimming success. Not just a speed suit or a sponsor.

In this “hurry up” world we live in, it is sometimes difficult to take time to stop and reflect on ourselves – who we are, what we are doing, and why we are doing it. But if we don't take time, we operate in a reactive (determinism) rather than proactive (free will) mode. And who doesn't like to have a choice? Maybe the French.

So the next time you find yourself treading water in the San Francisco Bay, throwing your pantyhose out of a car window, or having coffee with a great group of friends, take a moment and wonder, and even appreciate, how you got here.\*

\*These are all things I have done. I did the Escape from Alcatraz triathlon in 2003 because I thought it was time to get knocked out of my comfort zone – and that certainly did the trick! I threw my pantyhose out of a car window because my husband and I were late to a wedding, lost, it was hot outside, and I had had enough. It just seemed like the logical thing to do. After I chucked the pantyhose out the window, my husband backed the car up and made me get out and pick them up. We still laugh about it. As for coffee with good friends – that was this morning at the Sweaty She Monday "Work-Out" - the first Monday of each month. If you missed it, we'll have another one in September. So come join us for coffee, friendship, and good stories! And if you're not in Austin, arrange your own Sweaty She Monday Work Out!!

*Thoughts or comments? Go to the Discussion Board on Sweaty She Facebook to comment on this article OR to see more “Sweaty She Monday” postings.*