

Such Great Heights

BY THE TIME JADE HAMEISTER WAS SIX YEARS OLD SHE HAD CLIMBED MT KOSCIUSZKO AND BY 12 CONQUERED MT EVEREST BASE CAMP. NOW 14 YEARS OLD, JADE IS ABOUT TO UNDERTAKE A MISSION TO BECOME THE YOUNGEST PERSON IN HISTORY TO COMPLETE THE POLAR HAT TRICK! WE CHAT TO JADE ABOUT HER EXPEDITIONS AND KEEPING FIT...



You're about to start your quest; can you briefly explain what it is?

My goal is to complete the Polar Hat Trick, which covers almost 2,000 km over three expeditions. It will take me about four months of dragging a sled on the ice in freezing conditions. I am attempting the North Pole first in April 2016, then the Greenland crossing this time next year and then the South Pole at the end of next year. If it all works out, I'll be the youngest person in history to complete these journeys.

Are you doing this quest solo or will you be with a team?

I will be doing each expedition with three others. Our guide, Eric Philips, who is a very famous polar adventurer and explorer, my dad and our camera man, Petter Nyquist from Norway, who is making a documentary of each trip for NatGeo.

Apart from being the youngest person in history to complete the Polar Hat Trick, what else do you

hope to achieve from your expeditions?

I want to inspire girls to chase their dreams and live fit and healthy lifestyles. I want to show them that anything is possible if you're passionate and work really hard for it.

How long have you been preparing and what sort of training have you had to do?

I first decided to see if it was possible for me to attempt this adventure at the end of 2014. My training has consisted of lots of strength work to make sure I can drag a heavy sled (like back squats and deadlifts plus work on my lower back and core), lots of CrossFit workouts, lots of endurance work (like dragging car tyres behind me for hours) and yoga to help with my flexibility and breathing. It's also really important to make time to allow my body to rest and recover. This has been the hardest part.

What do your friends think about your journey? Have you inspired any of them to become more

interested in fitness?

Up until around two months before the trip, I hadn't really told many of my friends about my plans just in case it didn't go ahead. My friends are excited for me, but I am not sure they really understand what it's all about and how hard it is going to be. It's not a holiday! Some of my friends have joined me in my training sessions, but they end up pretty sore afterwards. It's lots of fun to share my journey with them.

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What advice would you give to girls who hear your story and one day would like to try what you are doing? Can anyone do it or are there certain skills

or personality traits that you need to have?

Girls are capable of so much more than people think. We can do anything if we are passionate about it and are prepared to put in the work. The type of personality traits that would be good for adventures are determination, resilience, discipline and a tolerance for being very uncomfortable. Get started with some research about the adventure you have in mind. Find people who have done something similar before and try and speak to them about their experiences. Work backwards from the trip and find out all the steps you need to go through to be ready, including training, gear and cost and then commit to the process and make sure you are prepared for setbacks and enjoy the journey.

Are there any other sports or activities that you do?

Aside from the training I am doing for the expedition I do a yoga session once a week, compete in triathlons, am in the school rowing and cross country team and play netball with friends once a week. Outside of school, I do a lot of CrossFit all year round; it would have to be my favourite way to keep fit by far.

Do you have a motto that you live by?

"Courage expands possibilities; fear shrinks them." It's all about choosing to live with courage and that's why I decided the theme for my Polar Quest is #expandpossible.

INTERVIEW / ANGELA LEE

Jade's Top Fitness Tips

- 1 Set a goal to work towards that is important to you – it will help when you lose motivation.
- 2 Try a bunch of different types of exercise and sports and pick the ones that you find the most fun.
- 3 Don't worry about what others are doing, or what they think.
- 4 Measure your progress and try and get out of your comfort zone each time you train/play – don't just go through the motions or get into a boring routine.
- 5 Make sure you get enough sleep and eat and drink well to fuel your activity and ensure you can recover properly, but leave some room for treats like caramel slice!

