

Overcoming challenges

Manama
“Who said that disability stops dreams and ambitions? A person with the desire to be a champion will become one when possessed with ambition and desire.”

These are the words by Shaikha Al Shaiba who is set to participate in the IRONMAN 70.3 Middle East Championship Bahrain to be held on November 25 in Bahrain.

Challenge is most prominent title of Shaikha Al Shaiba's athletic career.

When watching triathlon races, she dreamed of being a participant, but was always discouraged, especially because she has a handicapped right arm, which was amputated when she was just a year and a half old.

Shaikha Al Shaiba lived in a family that encouraged her to realise her dream, which grew bigger when His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, President of Bahrain Olympic Committee, presented her with full support.

Speaking of this support, she said: “When I met with His Highness

Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, I felt wonderful. His words of encouragement were the biggest incentive to me to participate in the Ironman Middle East Championship.”

Being the first Bahraini to participate in the race with one arm, she said that HH Shaikh Nasser gave her full support and said that he would encourage her to achieve her dream of reaching the finish line.

Shaikha related her story saying, “The challenge was initially between me and myself, especially since many people told me that I cannot achieve this dream because of my amputated arm. But this discouragement only encouraged me to realise this dream and participate in this championship.”

Shaikha is confident that her participation will be a message to all people, not only those with special needs or disabilities. She is trying to prove that disability does not kill desire, drive and determination.

She has participated on behalf of Bahrain earlier in an Olympic Championship in Kuwait.

She concluded saying that her ambition in this championship was to reach the finish line.

“I am confident that I can do it, no matter what the difficulties are, and whatever my outcome. I will aspire to achieve this goal and I hope that everyone will grant me their support and encouragement.”



Al Shaiba and HH Shaikh Nasser during an interview with MBC TV Channel

Shaikha Al Shaiba