

Fitness challenge: Roll on until it hurts

By [Rachel Grunwell](#)

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Trigger Point Mobility

What is it? Self-massage class using tools such as rollers.

What's needed? Gym gear, socks. Massage tools provided.

The experience: This weekend, 5000-plus tough nuts will take part in New Zealand's first Tough Mudder, a military style obstacle course built at Hampton Downs, Te Kauwhata. They will no doubt be feeling sore (and some even sorry for themselves) and could probably do with a Trigger Point Mobility class after that mad, muddy mission as this is just the thing to ease aching muscles.

Meanwhile, I'll be needing a massage in six days after running the full Rotorua Marathon on May 3. A third of the 7000 participants taking part in different distances at this event are from Auckland so we'll be taking the place over.

I've run a marathon before so I know what my muscles will feel like after taking on 42.195km of tarmac – they will be crying out for something like a Trigger Point session.

The class I attended was run by Fitness Locker, which offers coaching for those training for triathlons and runners ranging from sprint to ironman distance, on-road and off-road. They also cater to clients doing duathlons, mountainbiking and open-water swimming, as well as offer training options that include swim clinics, group training, workshops and strength classes.

Their clients are beginners through to competitive athletes, says Ben Eitelberg, who has been competing for more than 20 years in triathlons, but also in aquathlons, duathlons, trail-running and mountainbiking. He has represented South Africa and New Zealand at age group level in sprint and Olympic distance triathlon world championship events.

Eitelberg takes the Trigger Point session I'm at in a Remuera home gym owned by fellow coach Paula Halford in a class of half a dozen. Eitelberg says this session helps with recovery after a hard week of training, restoring tissue elasticity and enhancing fluidity and function. The techniques are good to further incorporate into your daily routine for warming up, cooling down and managing niggles.

Eitelberg guides the class on where and how to use the massage rollers and balls that aren't as hard as golf balls, or soft like tennis balls, which athletes often use to self-massage.

He says the balls help iron out the knots and get the blood and oxygen flowing.

Everywhere I massage – including my feet, legs and chest – hurts because I've been training hard for the marathon. And everyone else also sounds as if they're in agony, too. Eitelberg reminds us all to relax "and



Ben Eitelberg takes Rachel Grunwell through a Trigger Point class. Photo / Doug Sherring

remember to breathe".

Midway through this self-administered deep tissue massage I'm blathering: Does anyone ever cry in these sessions or am I the first?

"Yes, people often feel pain, but it's good pain." Eitelberg says. Halford reassures me that I'll feel great once I'm finished and will reap the benefits.

This session is an equivalent of a human deep tissue sports massage, Eitelberg says, and afterwards I'd agree. I wince as much under the hands of my sports masseuse.

Eitelberg says "if you didn't feel in pain your body would be in good nick", so you can tell what state mine is in. However, I'm now in reduced exercise mode and my body feels great. I wish everyone luck at the 50th Rotorua Marathon. It's dubbed "the test of survival" by many, so it's going to be a decent challenge.

How much? \$20 for each Trigger Point class, or \$65 for a one-on-one session.

Worth it? Sore, but so beneficial.

Try it: Check out Fitness Locker hubs in Auckland, Hamilton and Rotorua at www.fitnesslocker.kiwi

Rating: 9/10

Rachel wears: WE'AR Yogi Tights \$68 www.wearyogaclothing.com; Jockey StayFit Performance Bra \$39.99 www.jockeynz.co.nz; adidas by Stella McCartney top; adidas.co.nz/stella.

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