

# NEXT STEP: EVEREST



STEPHEN BOCK IS DIRECTOR OF RAY WHITE TEAM BOCK IN MANLY, NSW AND HAS BEEN WORKING IN REAL ESTATE FOR JUST OVER TEN YEARS. LIKE MOST REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS, STEPHEN LOVES TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF THE INDUSTRY BUT HE IS PREPARING TO FACE A VERY UNIQUE CHALLENGE - CLIMBING MT. EVEREST. SOLD MAGAZINE ASKED STEPHEN ABOUT HIS NEXT STEPS.

**Stephen's enthusiasm** for Real Estate is contagious. Commenting on what he loves about his job, he said, "I love the freedom of being in my own business and setting my own course. I love the opportunities and challenges alike that I see day to day in this business. I have a real passion to help people. It's an industry that anyone can be successful within so long as they have a clear vision, strong determination and most importantly, lots of energy. No one can stop you succeeding - you just need to keep standing up and dusting yourself off each time you get knocked over and keep pushing forward."

**Sold:** Stephen, tell us about your next challenge and what made you decide to do it?

**Stephen:** Climbing Mt. Everest has been a focus of mine since my primary school days. Since I first saw a photo of her I was awestruck and held a deep passion for climbing her slopes. It is hard to explain to people when you have this calling but I have

**Much work is put into risk assessment, looking at the logistics and weather. This is the same as formulating your own business plan and setting key targets.**

always known I would climb her. As a kid growing up scared of heights I guess I have always seen it personally as the ultimate test of courage and belief in myself. I was planning on climbing her in the next five years and this amazing opportunity 'dropped' into my lap with a great mate only a few months ago. The very minute he suggested the opportunity I just knew it was my time. It's true what they say in life, the most

important thing is to commit and then tie up the loose ends around you as you go - instead of coming up with all the rationalisations as to why you can't do something!

We are raising money for bowel cancer research. I am very passionate about this cause as I lost my father to the disease last year at a young age. We had only just celebrated his 60th birthday with him and in a few weeks he was gone.

Our target to raise is \$200,000. Our focus is to raise awareness for bowel cancer and provide much needed funds for bowel cancer research in Australia. One of our team members, Sandy Hoby was diagnosed at 28 years of age and they had to operate quickly. She recovered and commenced 'living' and started climbing mountains. She is now 38 and on our expedition climbing team next year - awesome!

After losing my father I am hoping in some way what we are doing will really raise awareness of this terrible disease. The fear and embarrassment factor is what stops a lot of people (men particularly) in going to their doctor when they have symptoms. We are hoping that us facing fears on many levels by climbing Mt. Everest will serve as an inspiration for people to overcome their own fears and see their doctor if they have symptoms.

**What does the preparation involve?**

My main focus is building strength in my legs, lungs, heart and head. At the moment I train daily in the gym



from 5.30am to 8am. This involves a weights routine and I train with my pack (which has 20kg of rice in it) for an hour of hill work each second day. Every other day I do a one hour cycle routine. In addition I am doing a 50 to 60km training session in the bush every two weeks which normally runs for 10 to 12 hours and once a week I do a 25 to 30km night training session in the bush as well. During these sessions I am most focused on pushing through my pain threshold to increase mental stamina. The mental game is the hardest of all to train for. I often compete in 24 hour 100km events and I find the first 50km is physical fitness and the second 50km is mental toughness.

**Are there any parallels between mountain climbing and working in Real Estate?**

Absolutely. In fact, the whole way in which you approach an expedition is the same as running a business. I must say here as a side note, that the key here is to never think of yourself as a salesperson – real growth happens when you become responsible for your destiny and you run your business like a business (even if you're a team of one at the moment!)

The planning for a climbing expedition is very thorough. Much work is put into risk assessment, looking at the



logistics, weather etc. This is the same as formulating your own business plan and setting key targets.

The physical preparation and mental preparation is intense as it should be in business. What I have learnt from high achieving people is that they are continually training, learning and assessing themselves. They are also focused on being fit – fitness and energy go hand in hand. I am constantly amazed

These are just some brief points but you would find a direct link into business for each stage of a climb, whether it be the early preparations, the eventual summit bid or planning for your next climb based on previous experiences.

**You're obviously a highly motivated person, how do you keep your team motivated too?**

I have a very simple philosophy – lead from the front! I guess I always set the energy

Our buyer specialist, Brian Fairweather is also fantastic. He has been with me for a couple of years now and is literally my right hand. Brian runs all of our buyer contact, buyer appointments and conducts many of our negotiations. He is incredibly efficient and great at coming up with new business solutions. I am really fortunate to have this team of great people around me as we take this business to the next level.

**My experience is that unless you can take real mental ownership of an objective you will not achieve it.**

at the lack of training that sales people do and yet they expect to just turn up and 'perform' because they know it 'all' and have heard it 'all.'

During an expedition the climb is broken down into manageable stages. This enables you to assess the immediate risks – weather and potential for avalanches etc. In business I always break it down into monthly targets. The other important part of doing this is it is much easier to take mental 'ownership' of smaller goals whether in business or climbing. My experience is that unless you can take real mental ownership of an objective you will not achieve it.

level and squeeze as much out of every day as possible. I believe energy and passion are infectious and people feed off that.

**Tell us about your Real Estate team.**

Put simply, they are the reason for our success. Cheryl Dawson, my administration manager has been with me for over a year and is quite amazing. Cheryl runs all of our marketing, database administration and my personal schedule. I am sure I am hard to work for and very demanding but she keeps me on track and keeps me on top of my hectic schedule. I hope she stays with me (and can put up with me) for a long time!

**How can other people support your fundraising efforts?**

People can donate online at our official website [www.everest2010.com.au](http://www.everest2010.com.au). One of the most exciting aspects of this climb is that we will be live web streaming it! This will be amazing as people will be able to share in the climb with us. We also have a limited number of spots available for trekkers to come into base camp and visit us and the support team whilst we are there.

You can join the international team of climbers in April/May 2010, including Stephen Bock, Peter Wells and Darren Robertson for the opportunity of a lifetime. Make your dream a reality, put on those boots and set off on an adventure to the Base Camp of the world's highest mountain. Cost: US\$ 2 750 per person. For information contact Steve on 0417 014 442.

**LIVING THE DREAM... AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

**YOU DON'T NEED TO CLIMB MOUNTAINS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY, BUT SOMETIMES YOU NEED THE SAME LEVEL OF DETERMINATION, COMMITMENT AND ENERGY!**

**John Hickey** is Principal of Bacon & Co Real Estate, the oldest continuously run business in Gunnedah. He is an iconic person in the local area; respected for his business acumen and esteemed for his perpetual commitment to the community. His passion is coaching kids and adults in triathlon, completely voluntarily, and he is particularly dedicated to helping kids, who may have not

otherwise had the opportunity, to become among the best triathletes in Australia. He is also involved in organising community sporting events where proceeds go to charities like Ronald McDonald House.

John says that having a career in Real Estate has enabled him to pursue coaching and also to spend as much time as possible with his family. From Monday to Thursday,

before starting work, John begins coaching in the pool at 5.30am. After work, he heads down to the oval to coach until 7.30pm, and much of his weekend time is spent coaching and competing.

**Sold: John, tell us about Gunnedah and some of the unique aspects of its property market.**

**John:** Gunnedah is a strong rural community with an excellent record of crop and stock production even in times of drought and floods. Artesian water supplies underpin the area as well as being regarded as a safe rainfall proposition with a combination of soil types to suit almost any product that can be grown for a profit. Backing this strong position is the coal mines which have at least a 30 year lifespan and the ancillary jobs that come with mines. We operate as a service centre for rail and road transport. Gunnedah has the second largest numbers of cattle sold in NSW through its stock yards, has a large successful tannery and a large flour mill, an organic flour mill and a maize flour mill and a husking mill. On top of the jobs this creates, we also have a strong sporting and cultural emphasis in our community.

**How did you get involved in triathlon coaching?**

I began coaching my mates at basketball and rugby league as a teenager and always saw myself becoming a player coach until I was too old, but I suffered an injury and began triathlon as a method of rehabilitation and fitness. It was of interest in a small town like Gunnedah and naturally kids would want to beat me after seeing my picture in the local paper. I invited them to train with me and the rest is a graduation and learning process. Over the years my squad has just grown with my development as a coach.

**All your coaching is done voluntarily and much of the equipment is provided through sponsorships and fundraising. How do you go about sourcing sponsors and raising funds?**

Firstly I offer free coaching so all kids can come and some poorer kids have benefited from this. Good people find you when you need money for a good cause. Sponsors rarely give money to sport at this level for an investment. It's because they wish to give to a good and worthy cause first of all and secondly because they have seen a direct benefit to the individual and the community

**My aims are simple, to get a kid to think about the long term and work to the best of their ability at every training session.**

as well. Naturally I ask the odd business if they would like to contribute but mostly they find me these days through our club structure.

**What are some of the goals you're working towards with triathlon?**

Right from the start I wanted to produce high level competitive juniors, but I wanted to make sure they would end up good people in the long run with the right balance between dedication and fun as well as having an education or a strong work ethic. Results come from work and talent combined and I try not to be the judge of talent. Therefore my aims are simple, to get a kid to think about the long term and work to the best of their ability at every training session. My immediate goal is to look for the next kid that should be training with me.



**Your whole family competed in the World Triathlon Championships on the Gold Coast in September. How did you go?**

Donna, my wife became the world champion in her age group, my son Jack came second in his age group, my daughter Sarah finished twenty sixth and I finished ninth. It was great to do it as a family above everything else. It was a unique experience that we may never get the chance to repeat.

Are you or your colleagues making a difference in your community? Tell us about it. Send an e-mail to [jaayne@sold-magazine.com.au](mailto:jaayne@sold-magazine.com.au)