

# Rudy Garcia-Tolson

*at a glance...*

Hometown: Bloomington, CA

Resides: US Olympic Training Center, Chula Vista, CA

Birth date: 9-14-88

**5x Paralympic Medalist  
4x Paralympian  
Swimmer, Runner, Triathlete - IRONMAN**

- 2016 Paralympic Silver Medalist – Swimming – 200IM
- 2013 Silver Medal – Long Jump – IPC Athletic World Championships
- 2012 Paralympic Silver Medalist – Swimming – 200IM
- 2008 & 2004 Paralympic Gold Medalist – Swimming – 200IM
- World Record Holder – 200 meter IM
- 10-time American Record Holder

## *Points of Interest...*

- At the Rio Paralympic Games, Rudy led the charge for the U.S. Paralympic Swimming Team as co-captain of the team.
- Already a two-time Paralympic gold medalist in swimming, at the London 2012 Games Rudy competed in the 100 meter and 200 meter sprint event on the track.
- In 2009, Rudy became the first bilateral, above the knee amputee to complete an Ironman distance triathlon (Arizona).
- Rudy has twice been featured on Oprah and was named by People Magazine as one of “20 Teens Who Will Change the World”.
- When not training/competing, Rudy tours the country as a professional motivational speaker sharing his message: ***"A Brave Heart is a Powerful Weapon."***



# Rudy Garcia-Tolson

*in depth...*

While Rudy Garcia-Tolson was born with rare, multiple birth defects – a combination of crippling Pterygium Syndrom, a club foot, webbed fingers and a cleft lip and palate - he was also born with an extraordinarily courageous heart and an unbreakable will to endure.

At age five, after 15 corrective operations with limited results, he told his parents he wanted to move on; he would rather be a double amputee than continue to put up with what his life had become. Shortly thereafter he had both legs removed above the knee.

At eight years old, he told all who would listen that he would swim in the Paralympics. At 10, he became the youngest bilateral amputee to complete a triathlon on his own. The same year, he set his first national record in swimming.

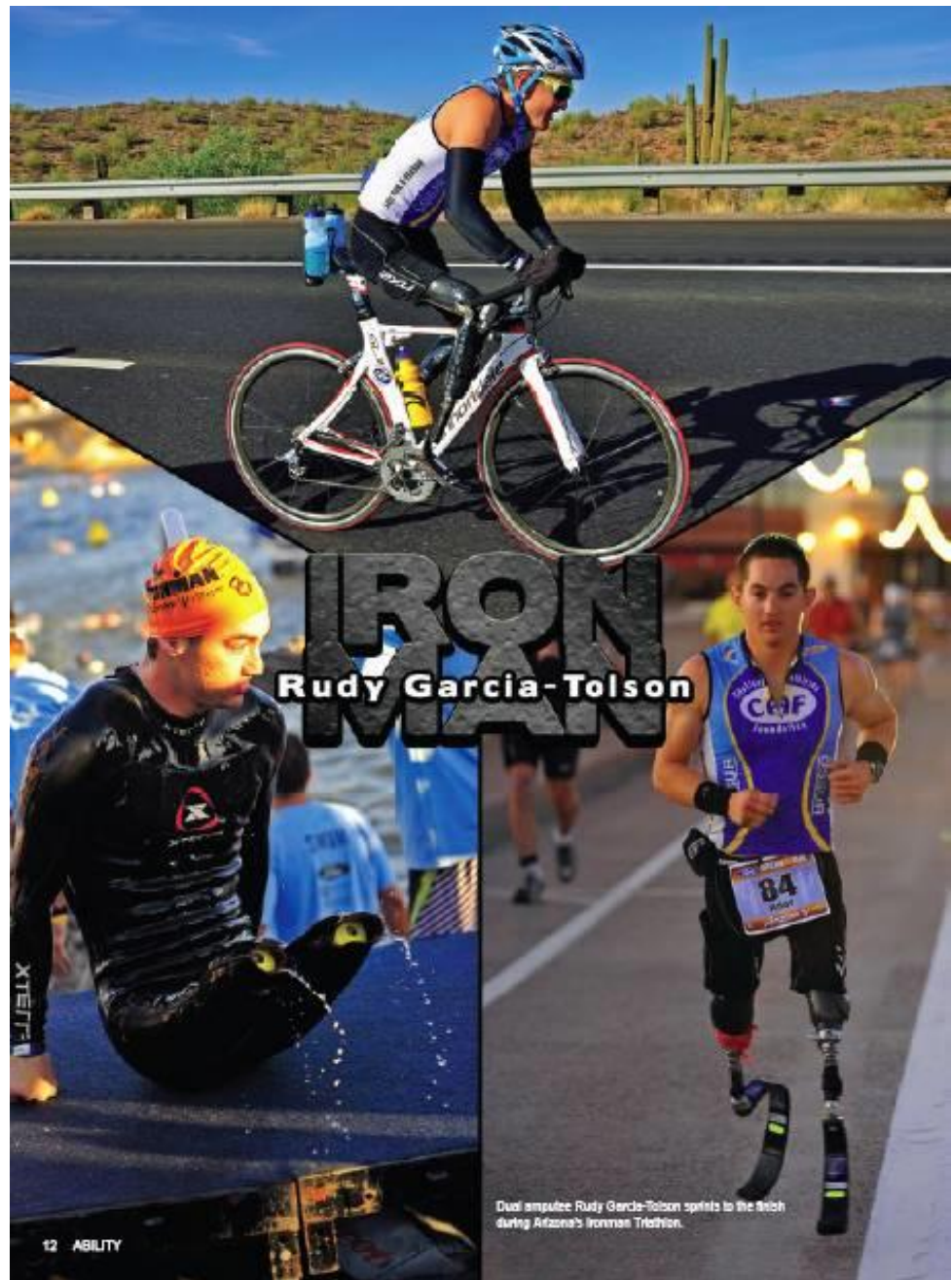
In 2004 he made good on his Paralympic promise, coming home from Athens with a gold medal and a world record. Four years later in Beijing he did the same; another gold medal and another world record.

Seeking an even greater challenge, in 2009 he became the first ever bilateral above the knee amputee to complete an Ironman (2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike, 26.2 mile run).

At the London Paralympics in 2012 Rudy brought home a swimming silver medal and competed on the track as well, in both the 100 and 200 meter sprints.

At the Rio Paralympic Games in 2016, Rudy broke the American record in the 200IM en route to capturing the Silver Medal.

Though only 26, Rudy is already a polished public speaker and regularly shares his inspiring message of, “A Brave Heart is a Powerful Weapon” to groups, corporations and fellow athletes across the country. He has received both the Arte Courage in Sports Award and Nike’s Casey Martin Award, and has helped the Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) raise more the \$50 million to help support the athletic dreams of other disabled athletes.



Dual amputee Rudy Garcia-Tolson sprints to the finish during Arizona's Ironman Triathlon.