The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it’s Olympic triathlete Alistair Brownlee

The prized possession you value above all others... My health and my two Olympic gold medals – for London 2012 and Rio last year. I keep them in my sock drawer or a safe, depending on how organised I am.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Running in the World Series in 2013 when my left ankle was already injured. It was a cold day in London and the joint ended up really knackered, which set me back six months and resulted in surgery in 2015. I was lucky to be fit for Rio.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Chocolate, especially Dairy Milk. I’m lucky because I don’t have to watch what I eat. I train for 35 hours a week and burn it all off.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Gregory David Roberts’s novel Shantaram, about an Aussie bank robber who escapes prison and hides in India. It’s full of drama and escapes prison and bank robber who ram, about an Aussie erst’s novel Shanta.

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The priority activity if you were the invisible Man for a day... I’d find out how much Putin knows about doping in Russian sport.

The film you can watch time and time again... Home Alone. I first saw it aged nine and spent ages trying to devise traps like Kevin – played by Macaulay Culkin – to catch out my parents and two brothers [Jonny, 26, and Ed, 21].

The figure from history for whom you’d most like to buy a pie and a pint... William Wilberforce, a fine Yorkshireman like me! I’d love to know how he managed to maintain his determination to abolish slavery in the face of so much opposition.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Being beaten by Jonny at Monopoly. It should be fun but I still like to win.

The person who has influenced you most... My father Keith. He took me everywhere for my running when I was a child without ever complaining. And my brother Jonny is very different.

The unending quest that drives you... To keep pushing myself to my limit. I enjoy hurting myself in training so I could focus on triathlon.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Leaving Cambridge after one term of a medicine degree.

The one thing that would be your ultimate souvenir... I’d find it hard to choose when I was a child without a rose for your sweetheart on Valentine’s Day.

The misapprehension about yourself... That I’m stand-offish. I’m really friendly, but I never complain... There are no winners, only the losers.

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The person who has influenced you most... My father Keith. He took me everywhere for my running when I was a child without ever complaining. And my brother Jonny is very important. We’re super-competitive but always look out for each other, like when I carried him over the line in Mexico last year.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Enjoy what you do for a living and you’ll never have to do a day’s work in your life.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Steam engines. My dad even bought me a big model engine this Christmas.

The unending quest that drives you on... To keep pushing myself to my limit. I enjoy hurting myself in training because it’s the only way you improve.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Leaving Cambridge after one term of a medicine degree so I could focus on triathlon. It had taken so much to get there, but a month before I started I won the World Junior title and I knew I had to pursue the sport full-time. I took a different degree at Leeds because it was closer to the training facilities I needed.

The poem that touches your soul... If by Rudyard Kipling. My headmaster used to read it to the school at the end of every year and it struck a nerve.

The misapprehension about yourself... You wish you could erase... That I’m stand-offish. I’m really friendly, but I never complain... There are no winners, only the losers.

The song that means most to you... Wonderwall by Oasis takes me back to my teenage years and lifts my spirits.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I’d borrow the Flying Scotsman steam engine and drive it from London to Edinburgh.

The order of service at your funeral... I’d just like my family and friends to burn me on a bonfire on Great Whernside then scatter my ashes at the summit.

The way you want to be remembered... As a kind and respectful person who was also a fierce competitor.

The end of a day in a local pub with friends and family for some Black Sheep beer and a steak and ale pie with chips. The fitness of every year and it struck a nerve.

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