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Orinda Triathlon for Fun and Health

By Lou Fancher



Photo Ohlen Alexander

website for the event includes ample information about nutrition, physical preparation and safety regulations for the race.

On Saturday, participants, families, and spectators cheered the young athletes. The Lamorinda Weekly asked the kids about their experience, what they did to prepare, and what they might change or repeat the next time they enter a triathlon. Here is what they had to say:

"It was tiring. I swam two laps, rode my bike, and I ran. And then, my dad poured water on my head. And then, I went to get ice cream."

Kathryn Park, 7, San Ramon

"Towards the end, I got tired on my bike on the really steep hills. Next time, I would not play a football game before [the triathlon]."

Jack Strong, 11, Moraga

"I had some trouble with my shoes, so that definitely slowed me down. I carbo-loaded: I ate pancakes and I ate 3-4 bananas an hour before to prevent cramps. I'd pace my swim next time, and train for the biking more. And I'd have a lot more water."

Pierce Haley, 18, Orinda

"This year, I tried it just for fun, but next year, I'm going to train for it. I was weak in the biking part. And my legs hurt now."

Kristen Hong, 13, Orinda

"Her legs hurt, but once she heard there were free cupcakes, she could run again."

Hong's friend, Marie-Claire Schillinger, 13, Orinda

"I ran the course with my dad and I went to bed at 7 o'clock to get ready. What was fun? Everything was fun!"

Elouise Engs, 8, Orinda

The second annual NorCal Kids Triathlon, Tri 4 Health, was a sweaty affair. With temperatures on September 25th soaring into the high 80's, participants were wet from start to finish.

The triathlon, organized to benefit the Orinda Community Foundation's youth programs, offers a safe, positive atmosphere for elementary-through-high school age athletes. For many of the kids, this was their first triathlon.

The competition is structured to encourage young children to participate; allowing training wheels, flotation devices and the option to form a relay team composed of three same-age children.

At the same time, the triathlon offered middle and high school athletes a serious challenge. A quick look at the stats - swim 200-300 yards, bike 3.4-4.6 miles, and run 1.25-2 miles - leaves no doubt the event was rigorous.

Sue Severson, a coordinator of this year's race, emphasizes the triathlon's dual goals: structured fun, and lifelong health. Teams of volunteers worked as course marshals along the bike route and a medical team was on hand in case of an emergency. The NorCal



Photo Ohlen Alexander



Arden Creson Orinda, age 11



Team Jack Matt Ryan in the transition Photos Ohlen Alexander



Benjamin Delange Orinda, age 10

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