

## Independent, locally owned and operated!

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published September 6th, 2015

## Acts of Kindness at NorCal Kids Triathlon

By Jennifer Wake



From left: Colton Gibson, Grey Bennett, Dresden Gerber, William Andrews, Jane Andrews, Crew Bingham and Olivia Bates. Photo Lauren Bennett The NorCal Kids Triathlon, sponsored by the Orinda Community Foundation, notched another successful year of swimming, cycling, and running Aug. 27, with more than 320 kids ranging in age from 4 to 14 participating in the eighth annual event, which starts and ends at Miramonte High School.

"This event really strengthens community spirit and helps the young athletes burst with pride as they cross the finish line," said event co-chair and OCF president Sue Severson. "Over half the athletes every year are first-time participants in a triathlon."

There were a few tiny hiccups for a couple of the young triathletes, but fortunately, thanks to quick thinking and the kindness and support of others, the event ended positively for everyone.

Debbie Westover's 14-year-old daughter Maddy and three of her friends, Natalie Swanson, Ella Lewerenz and of the little 4 year old athletes same up to the station

Keily Sarica, were at Water Station No.1 when one of the little 4-year-old athletes came up to the station, crying, confused and wanting his mother.

According to Westover, Keily stayed back at the water table in case other kids came while Maddy, Natalie and Ella took the little boy by the hands and ran the rest of the way with him to the track and over the finish line

"I thought that was the cutest thing I had ever heard," said Victoria Carter, who later relayed the story to Severson.

Event co-chair Richard Stanaro described a different instance involving another triathlete in the 5-6 year range.

"We had a little chap that fell off his bike. His mother told one of our committee team members about it, and told [her son] that to get the medal, he must finish, encouraging him and teaching him the virtue of fortitude. His dad followed with him, but he came through in the end after the awards had started."

Stanaro told the event announcer, Scott Butler, about the young athlete and volunteers kept an eye out for him. "We saw him coming into the stadium area with his dad in the background, and we told Scott," Stanaro said.

The announcer told Steve Harwood, his "partner in crime," to key the theme music to "Rocky" while Butler made a special announcement, encouraging the crowd to cheer the boy on. "He really turned on the juice for this little boy," Stanaro said.

"The whole crowd cheered him on by name. He was wiping away tears as he entered the track and ended with a huge smile," Stanaro said. "That made my day."

Reach the reporter at: jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com

back

Copyright C Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA