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Lamorinda Kids 'Tri' New Sport

Sixth annual NorCal Kids Triathlon a success

By Scott Wu

Many of the first-time competitors at the 2014 NorCal Kids Triathlon created fun memories while participating in a new sport.

With competitors ranging from as young as 5 to as old as high school age, this year's event was a success. The race was held at Miramonte High School on Aug. 30, a sunny Saturday, where kids first swam, then biked, and finished with a run.

Although initially a local event, this year's race attracted competitors from as far away as Sunnyvale and American Canyon. Sophia Burge-mass, a Sunnyvale triathlete, had a very straightforward reason as to why she decided to register for this year's competition. "My mom wanted me to do it, and I just thought it'd be fun," said Sophia.

Event director Charlie Vollmar has always been impressed with the attitudes and determination of the

participants. "This event gets bigger every year, and it's amazing to see the enthusiasm from the kids involved," Vollmar said.

Vollmar has done a great job of offering young athletes the opportunity to get a taste of a popular, yet strenuous race. The triathlon, which has existed as an Olympic sport since 1920, is often reserved for older competitors. This event is one of the few opportunities for kids to participate in the entire Bay Area.

In addition to the new racers, there were also many athletes returning. Ryan and Norah Thompson, both 9 years old, have competed before, and they enjoyed it so much they decided to come back. "We've done it in previous years, and have had a very fun, great time with the competition," said their mother, Sarah.

Young participants echo the

same sentiment. "I've done the event for two years, and I really love each of the different events," said 7-year-old Carter McAfee.

For many triathletes, there are stronger legs of the race than others. Many swimmers enter the triathlon, which includes a 200-yard swim.

"My favorite event is definitely the biking, but I like everything, especially the competition as a whole," said Charlie Bliss, who finished second in the 9-10 age group.

At the finish line, staff members helped kids recover with fresh fruit, water, and Gatorade. Anxious parents and friends waited to take pictures of the competitors' achievements. All finishers were given medals to validate their hard work and effort. The top three finishers from each age group were given special medals in recognition of their excellence.

Campo Coach Departs After 16 Years

By Nick Marnell

After 16 years with the Campolindo High School baseball program, head coach Max Luckhurst resigned on Aug. 22.

"I just felt like I needed to make a change," said Luckhurst. "It was time for me to turn the program over to someone else." He did not elaborate, saying that he felt uncomfortable drawing attention from the team onto himself. Luckhurst confirmed that he is not leaving to take another coaching position; he will remain at the school as an instructional assistant in the special education department.

"It's a blow to our program," said athletic director Tom Renno. "You talk about successful. Max ran one of the most successful programs in California."

In his 14 years as head coach, Luckhurst's Cougars won four North Coast Section II championships. The team also won a title in 2000 while he was assistant coach.

Luckhurst noted that to date, 42 of his players went on to play college baseball, including 19 players

awarded college scholarships. Two players made it to the major leagues: Jeff Stevens, who pitched for the Chicago Cubs in 2009, and Aaron Poreda, on the Texas Rangers' current 40-man roster.

"I was really sorry to hear this," said Poreda. "Max was a class act. He brought us up from nothing, and he taught us how to be good teammates. He turned even the tedium of our conditioning drills into team bonding events."

UC Berkeley's Matt Ladrech, who pitched Campolindo to its 2012 and 2013 championships, remembered Luckhurst as a mentor. "He wasn't just a coach," he said. "Max always looked after us, and it was great to always have him available on campus."

"We were fortunate to have him," said Campolindo principal John Walker. "Max did an outstanding job of developing teams and players of great character. He'll continue to fill that important role with us in special education."

Submitted by Rebecca Metz

Team "KMO" won the relay event for 5-6 year olds at the 2014 NorCal Kids Triathlon.

From left: Milla Ohrbach, Kaia Kelly, and Olivia Metz



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