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## Lamorinda Kids 'Tri' New Sport

By Scott Wu



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

Vollmar has done a great job 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 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.

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 Burgemass, 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.

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