

Triathlons on schedule

By Bill Shaw

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Area school districts are in session, and the summer vacation time winds down in two weeks with the Labor Day weekend, the last opportunity to get out and frolic in the summer sun.

The Labor Day weekend also features what I hope will become a tradition in Freeport. As part of the Summertime Blues Festival, Freeport also hosts the inaugural Summertime Blues Sprint Triathlon.

The triathlon features physically-challenging race routes unavailable anywhere else. (I know; I charted the bike and run courses.)

The contest begins in Freeport Municipal Park at 7 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 3, with a 500-yard, open-water swim at the west end of the Old Brazos River.

Flat-land triathletes next meet an unexpected challenge on the 15-mile, out-and-back cycle route that starts at the park and goes over the Intracoastal Waterway Bridge to Quintana County Park. I've run and biked the "Quintanaroo" bridge several times; it is one killer hill, but the view from the top once there is spectacular going and coming.

Triathletes rack their bikes at the park and head out for the anchor three-mile run around the river to face more "hill" challenges. At about a mile and a quarter, the run route goes over the Old River Velasco Bridge. If

you have run the Flapjack 5K, you know this is a tough climb. Shortly after descending the bridge, triathletes face a climb onto the levee at the Community House, then up to the top of the levee on Locust before looping by the boat ramp and hitting the sidewalk around Old River and finishing next to the new Riverhouse.

The first overall male and female, the top male and female masters (40-plus) finishers and the top three male and female finishers in five-year age groups from 14-and-under to 70-and-older receive awards. In addition, the top three male Clydesdales (200-pounds plus) and the top three female Athenas (160-pounds plus) receive awards. Top relay teams receive awards.

Entry fees are \$65 for individuals and \$100 for teams. Online registration is available at www.eztoregister.com; entry forms are available at recreation centers and at the Freeport City Hall on Second Street.

For additional information, call Mary Lee Stottler at (979) 233-3526, Tri On the Run at (832) 673-0600 or e-mail [jana\(at\)triontherun.com](mailto:jana(at)triontherun.com).

Six days later, on Saturday, Sept. 9, the Lake Jackson Recreation Center hosts the 24th annual Brazosport Relay Triathlon, a local and, for many, a family tradition.

The four-member team of swimmer, two runners and a cyclist make a 1,000-meter pool swim, two 5K relay segments around MacLean Park and on the Bottomlands Trail and a 15-mile

cycle anchor leg out Highway 332 and back.

The top male, female and mixed (male and female) teams will receive awards, as well as the top three teams in four age groups determined by the total age of team members, 72-and-under, 73-160, 161-200 and 201-and-older. The top three corporate teams also receive trophies.

Entry forms are available at the Lake Jackson Recreation Center or online at brazosportrelaytriathlon.org.

Footnote: Thanks to Jose Garza of Lake Jackson who gave a cyclist with a flat tire and a sore hamstring a ride home and spared me the pain and embarrassment of limping alongside my bike three miles home in the Saturday morning heat.

Bill Shaw's running column appears every other Monday in *The Facts*.