

Teams waxing poetic at triathlon

By Bill Shaw

The Facts

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I started this column in my head in the third mile of a 4-miler about 8:30 a.m. Thursday on the Freeport Intermediate School track in a light rain, a remnant of Tropical Storm Erin. I love to run in the rain — it's invigorating.

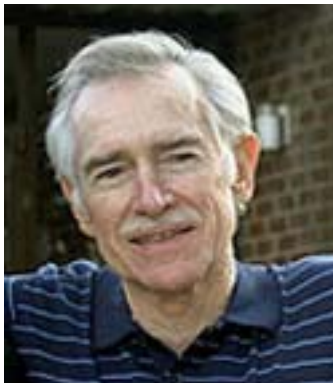
I thought about recruiting my team for the Brazosport Relay Triathlon on Sept. 8. In this event, four-member male, female and mixed teams of a swimmer, two runners and a cyclist begin the contest with a 1,000-meter swim in the Lake Jackson Recreation Center pool, continue with two 5K runs (3.1 miles) around the recreation center onto the Bottomlands Trail and back, and finish with an anchor cycle leg of 15 miles on Lake Road and FM 2004 and back.

This year, the BRT celebrates its silver anniversary. I did not participate last year because of an injury, but I volunteered, which marks my 22nd consecutive year as a participant or volunteer in the event's 25-year history. I have reported on the event for *The Facts* since 1991.

As I ran in the rain, I thought of these lines from "Romeo and Juliet": "What's in a name? that

which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet; / So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd" (Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 42-45).

For a number of years, I have named my team "sumus quod sumus," translated from the Latin, "we are what we are." I borrowed the name from the



town crest of Lake Wobegone, Minn., the mythical community created by Garrison Keillor on his radio show "Prairie Home Companion" and noted in his book "Lake Wobegon Days" (Viking,

1985). Sumus quod sumus makes no excuses for our abilities or lack of abilities; the name acknowledges we accept who and what we are.

Throughout the 25 years of the Brazosport Relay Triathlon, teams attempted to establish their identities in some common and unusual ways: Lake Jackson Elders, Four Cool People, The Educators, Teachers from Hell, Boomers from Bellaire, Kickbox Ladies of the Lake Jackson Recreation Center, Rowdy Recreation Center Instructors, Rusty Ironmen, Aged to Perfection, Well Aged, Three Moms and a Grandma, Three Men and a Babe, Whippersnapper and the Three Geezers, Stainless Steel Studs from the Sixth Dimension, Estrogen Connection, Not Over-the-Hill Gang, Athletic Dolls, and Beauty and the Beast.

Last year's top mixed team, Ooops! I Poop My Pants, seemed overexcited and nervous.

Others, uncertain of their athletic prowess, called their teams Just Throw in the Towel and Walk Away, Hope'n to Finish, Slim Hope, Are We Done Yet, Heaven Help Us and Roadkill.

Intentionally, Left Blank and No Name Team suffered an identity crisis.

Naming the team almost is as much fun as participating in the contest. Perhaps there should be a special award for the team with the most creative name.

The triathlon creates camaraderie and encourages competition among serious athletes, recreational athletes and first-timers. Registration remains open until Sept. 7, but to avoid a late registration fee, register online at www.active.com, print an entry form from brazosportrelaytriathlon.org or pick up an entry form at an area recreation center and submit it by Saturday.

Give your team name some thought. Remember, however, a team by any other name will smell like sweat.

Footnote: The BRT accepts individual entries, but for a greater individual challenge, the Summertime Blues Triathlon in Freeport on Sept. 2 includes a 500-yard open-water swim in the Old Brazos River, a 15-mile cycle route out to Quintana County Park and back via the Intracoastal Waterway Bridge, and a 5K run around the Old Brazos. For information and registration, go to www.eztoregister.com/events or call 979-233-3526.