



“Seize the Day” to do a Relay

Story by Elizabeth Howard

In 2022 the Chisago Lakes Triathlon became a very memorable family experience. My husband and sister-in-law committed to the race first. Both compete regularly in triathlons. Since my in-laws also planned to be in the town at the same time, we chatted about competing together as a relay team. This was a rather spontaneous decision. None of us was up to it on our own—I was six months pregnant with my fourth, my mother-in-law was having heart trouble and my father-in-law was dealing with a hip/knee injury. Yet we still decided it was worth a go do together. We chose the Olympic Distance as a relay: my mother-in-law swam, I biked and my father-in-law ran.

For a beginner competitor like me, a relay felt more welcoming, because the whole race wasn't riding on me. The transition was so much more personal. We could greet each in the transition, send each other out on each leg, and then one of our team mates could meet us at the end of our leg. That was motivating. In addition to this convenience, right next to the transition at Paradies Park is an excellent kid's play area. So, it became a “multi-layered relay.” Our oldest three kids played together on the swing set while each of us on our relay team took turns competing... and watching the kids.

Not only was it super special to race three generations together on the same team (grandparents down to baby-in-utero), but the summer after the race, nearly to the day, my father-in-law had a serious stroke that has significantly limited his movement.

I am so glad now we made the impromptu decision to do a relay that year. This has made the race in Chisago summer of 2022 special to us and made us glad we decided to “seize the day” as a relay team.