

# News Release



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## Story Ideas

The St. Anthony's Triathlon is considered to be one of the sport's leading events in the U.S. Thousands of professional and amateur athletes of all ages and abilities will be in downtown St. Petersburg April 28 – 30, 2017 to attend the two-day Sports and Fitness Expo and compete in one of three events: the Meek & Mighty Triathlon, Sprint Triathlon and the Olympic distance St. Anthony's Triathlon.

The Olympic distance Triathlon and the Sprint Triathlon will be **Sunday, April 30**, while the **Meek & Mighty Triathlon** will be **Saturday, April 29, 2017**.

### Unique Participants and Stories:

#### **Michael Poole**

This athlete is Epileptic and is coming back after a bad bike crash last year with a car. You can learn more about Michael through his blog.

<http://www.michaelpooletri.com/blog/2016/12/3/im-back>

Michael was diagnosed with epilepsy when he began having seizures at the age of 18, the first being while he was out cycle training. Triathlon was very popular at his high school and Michael had friends doing it, so he gave the sport a try during his junior year of high school.



The hardest thing for Michael in living with epilepsy is that his triggers include: Being short on sleep, getting overly tired, and/or having bad nutrition. As an athlete, Michael pushes his body everyday in training and racing, making his condition difficult to control. It can be difficult for him to tell if he is exhausted from training or is about to have a seizure. Sometimes it can be necessary to cut workouts short to address for this issue.

If Michael doesn't sleep well the night before a race, he has to withdraw myself from the race, as he has had seizures during races before from not attaining enough rest (a very dangerous situation).

Michael has given some advice regarding training and others with epilepsy, "My best piece of advice to give to others living with epilepsy is that it doesn't need to stop you from doing things. But you must make, with the help of your doctor, the right protocols and systems (checklists on how you are feeling, letting people know about your condition etc.) to ensure you aren't putting yourself in danger. What I would want people to learn from my story is that, it is possible to do things you love while having epilepsy. But that you must make strict protocols with yourself and get help from others. I have made mistakes and put myself in serious danger by not following protocols so I want other people to not make those same mistakes. I have thought many times about quitting but have figured out ways to keep going and have had great support, especially from my mentor - Jose Beltran."

### **Erin Cosgrove**

Erin is a well-known singer and actor, who will be singing the national anthem at this year's St. Anthony's Triathlon, before she participates in the Olympic distance event. In addition, Erin has been participating in the St. Anthony's Triathlon since the age of 7, starting with the kids race, and started competing in the full distance starting at the age of 16.

[http://www.imdb.com/name/nm3375136/?ref\\_=nmbio\\_bio\\_nm](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm3375136/?ref_=nmbio_bio_nm)

### **Dr. Michael Reilly**

Dr. Reilly is one of the physicians from St. Anthony's Hospital who has competed in every St. Anthony's Triathlon, except for one of the races for a total of 33 St. Anthony's Triathlons. Dr. Reilly will work the medical tent on the Saturday before the race for Meek & Mighty and then compete in the Olympic distance on Sunday. In addition, all six of Dr. Reilly's children will be competing in this year's race! His wife, Jennifer, cheers everyone on. Chris, 16, is a high school junior. His brothers are Andrew, 15, ninth grade; Tim, 13, eighth grade; Joseph, 12, sixth grade; John, 10, fourth grade; and David, 7, first grade.

They get in bike training by riding their bikes to school with dad. Dr. Reilly said the kids look at it as a nice challenge. "They aren't really happy just to participate; they work to come in with a good time in the race."

### **Volunteer Youth Inspired to Tri**

For the last couple of years, a group youngsters ages 8--18 with Delta Omicron Sigma have volunteered at the St. Anthony's Triathlon. Chris Lampley, who works with the kids, has brought different groups to the Triathlon.

Last year while volunteering at the Triathlon, some of the kids said that it looked like fun and they wondered if they could do it in 2017. Chris Lampley, who coordinates the youth volunteers, says he told them "sure."

With registration fees sponsored by the Sigma's Crescent Foundation, a group of kids have been training for St. Anthony's Meek & Mighty Triathlon for a couple of months – swimming, biking and running. All of the kids know how to swim (some do competitively on parks and rec teams). A track coach is helping them on the running.

Also, the medical director for the Triathlon, John Gross, MD, would be happy to discuss how triathlon is an offshoot of how kids play and helps build lifelong healthy fitness habits.

**<http://www.stpetesigmas.com/stpetesigmas>**

### **TRI-KIDS, INC. Youth Non-Profit**

TRI-KIDS, INC. is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization in the Atlanta area providing training, equipment and financial support to kids interested in competing in triathlons and learning valuable lessons that they can take with them through life. The kids are typically from low-income families and do not have these resources available otherwise.

The program was developed to expose kids to a sport that requires commitment, dedication and discipline while stressing the importance of training as a team and yet competing as an individual and how to apply that concept in their daily lives.

The group has brought kids down for the St. Anthony's Triathlon several times and this year is bringing nine kids to race – six for the Meek & Mighty and three for the Sprint. One mom is racing with her child as well.

Two of the kids are twins and one of the twins is a leukemia survivor. Another is a 13-year-old boy who was afraid to even put a toe in the water a few years ago. This year he'll be competing in his second open water swim in the Sprint event.

## **Page 4/Story Ideas**

Last year during the NBA playoffs, Turner Broadcasting spotlighted the Tri-Kids program. You can see the short PSAs at this link:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q\\_2P0UUF3qI&list=PLTPr3EJiq48iFmUbn7eYDuMTNXsw2oCoe](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_2P0UUF3qI&list=PLTPr3EJiq48iFmUbn7eYDuMTNXsw2oCoe)

TRI-KIDS web site is: <http://trikidsinc.com>

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