

Captiva's sprint triathlon

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South Seas Island Resort



Sanibel-Captiva Road bike path

IF YOU GO

- What: The inaugural Captiva Triathlon presented by Southwest Florida Events Inc. The group is presenting multisport events to promote fitness and raise funds for Community Cooperative Ministries Inc.
- When: Sept. 17-18

- Where: All events based at South Seas Island Resort on Captiva

CHILDREN'S TRIATHLON

- When: Sept. 17
- Cost: \$20 through Sept. 9, \$25 through Sept. 15; \$30 at the door; no refunds
- Distances: Ages 6-9: 100-yard swim, 1.5-mile bike ride, 0.5-mile run.
- Ages 10-13: 200-yard swim, 3-mile bike, 1-mile run
- Time: Swim start at 8 a.m. for ages 6-9; start at 8:30 a.m. for ages 10-13.
- Capacity: 125

ADULT SPRINT TRIATHLON

- When: Sept. 18
- Cost: \$75 through July 31, \$85 through Sept. 15, \$95 at the door; no refunds \$180 per team through July 31, \$195 through Sept. 15.
- Distances: Swim 400 yards (0.25 mile), bike 10 miles, run 3.1 miles (5K)
- Course: Swim in open water in Gulf of Mexico. Bike from South Seas Island Resort and Captiva Drive to Blind Pass. The roads will be closed to regular traffic during the race. Run two loops throughout South Seas golf course.
- Time: Swim start in waves at 7 a.m.; four different waves by age groups.
- Capacity: 500
- Qualifications: Open to everyone
- How to register: Go to active.com and type in Fort Myers. The Captiva triathlon is the first race that is listed. You can also register at gearedup.biz. Racers must be USA Triathlon members; one-day \$10 memberships are available when you register online.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call Kate Gooderham, race director, at 489-2616 or Angie Ferguson, race coordinator, at 246-2920.

Written by FRANCESCA DONLAN

Tori Losser, 34, couldn't swim a couple of months ago.

She can now.

She's learning how to swim and she's also working on running and biking better so she can participate in the first Captiva Triathlon in September.

"This is a totally new experience for me and it's scary and exciting," she said.

It's a new experience for everyone, including organizers Kate Gooderham, race director, and Angie Ferguson, race coordinator.

The sprint triathlon, which covers a 400-yard swim, 10-mile bike ride and 3-mile run, is the first of its kind on Captiva and in Southwest Florida.

"Triathlons are the fastest-growing participation sport in the country," said Ferguson, who is a personal trainer and coach. She's also a fitness columnist for The News-Press.

"People want to take the next step in their fitness level, and being able to offer something like this for children and adults is really fantastic."

News of the Sept. 18 triathlon has spread quickly and is generating a lot of excitement. Almost half of the 500 adult spots have been taken, Ferguson said.

"We have people flying from as far away as Illinois, Texas and Michigan," she said.

And all ages are signing up - from 6 to 70, she said.

The goal is to put on a race that is memorable and a good experience, said Gooderham, who got certified in a race director's school for the event. They also got the event sanctioned by USA Triathlon, which has stringent requirements.

Ferguson swam, ran and biked the course recently.

"It's a very simple swim," she said. "The water is beautiful and clear, the bike course is fast and runs right along the water and the run on the golf course is one of the prettiest I've ever done," she said.

Most people with the right training can complete the course, Gooderham said.

"This is not an Ironman that goes on forever," she said. "This takes a couple of hours and the vast majority of people are going to challenge themselves, have fun and really enjoy our community."

The triathlon also includes children ages 6 to 13 who can register for an abbreviated triathlon.

Adults and lifeguards will be lined up in the Gulf during the children's swimming portion, which will be in waist-deep water.

Ferguson and Gooderham will be cheering on all the participants.

"We expect this to be the first of many," Ferguson said. "We want to see this grow."