

## Everything I Learned About Triathlons, I Learned from My Parents

Parents know more about life and sports than given credit by their kids. I didn't realize their knowledge and wisdom of triathloning until reflecting back on their contributions to my sports career.



Not sure your parents ever heard of a triathlon? They probably know more than we think they should be given credit for in the sport of triathloning. I'll share my parents' insights so you can quiz your parents for additional details.

Don't be surprised if parents don't speak the lingo of the sport but don't discount their knowledge on improving your results.

### Here's a sampling of what my parents taught me about triathloning:

- Respect others.
- Never go swimming by yourself or in a public place without a lifeguard.
- Wear a helmet.
- Don't be afraid of getting back on the bike any time after a fall.
- How to tell time. Triathloning is not a judgmental sport.
- "You just need to run faster." Sometimes great coaching is simple and painful. Didn't help that a stopwatch couldn't stop earlier in measuring elapsed time.
- It's great to have someone push you forward even it is a shout out or mental motivation instead of a well-placed parental hand on your back.
- How to be disciplined in preparing for a race through practice (training).
- Assume responsibility for knowing race requirements including: start time, what to pack to be race ready, and the course directions.
- Sportsmanship. How to shake hands and carry on conversations with other competitors after the race.
- Tough love. When meeting tough patches in a race or in life, we learned life continues on afterwards.
- How to strive to be the best to our capabilities.
- Stay at it. Difficult accomplishments are remembered long afterwards and they're more rewarding than we think at the time of the event.
- Capture the moments in pictures.

I often thought of Dad during multi-hour bike rides. He met me at a race in Shelbyville, Indiana a couple of years before he passed away. I experienced continual problems with a faulty rim strip that caused flat tires.

Went through three inner tubes before the race started when pumping air back into the tire. Each time the tube got pinched between the rim strip and the spoke hole.

Each pinch punctured the tube which resulted in a flat tire. With my lack of bike maintenance knowledge, I didn't understand the cause, only the effect. Now out of spare tubes, I put away my biking equipment and running gear and decided to do the swim leg, then call it a day. When coming out of the lake Dad yelled at me to get on my bike. He paid someone to fix the flat tire including re-positioning the rim strip over the spoke hole. I ran to the car, pulled out my helmet and shoes, and ran to the bike and took off. Here was my dad still helping out his youngest son, age 38, because that's what dads do. Just one example of many valuable lessons learned from him.

Reach out to your parents about their wisdom and what you could implement into your triathlon tool kit. Think about how to pass your knowledge on to kids in a manner they would be open to adopting in their sports of choice, and transferable to other aspect of life.