



TRIATHLETES

Aust, DiSabato-Aust trifecta at Wendy's Triathlon

By LENNY C. LEPOLA News Assistant Managing Editor

Summer family gatherings are fun. Burgers on the barbecue, toss a little Frisbee, backyard volleyball; watch a game or two on the tube. Nothing too strenuous because it's time to relax, right?

Now imagine a family weekend get-together that includes competing with hundreds of other athletes swimming, cycling and running against each other and the clock for an hour an 15 minutes during a demanding sprint distance triathlon.

That's what Trenton Township residents Jim Aust, Tracy DiSabato-Aust and their son Zach did when they competed in the USA Triathlon sanctioned Wendy's International Triathlon & Duathlon held on Sunday, June 12, at Alum Creek State Park.

At 1:17:10 Jim was fifth overall out of 528 competitors, and won the 50-54 male age group; Zach, who came in a minute behind his father at 1:18:10, was ninth overall and second in the highly competitive 20 to 24 male age group; and Tracy was 18th overall with a 1:21:10, was the

second female across the finish line, and placed first in the 50-54 female age group, over 19 minutes in front of the second place finisher in the 50-54 female age group.

To put that in a different perspective, father and son finished in the top 10 overall; the entire family, father, son and mother, finished in the top 20 for the one-half mile open water swim, 17-mile bicycle ride and 5K run.

Tracy, who is so competitive that she has eight sponsors, won the women's race, all ages, in 2009 and 2010; in 2008 she came in second overall.

"The lady who beat me three years ago came back," Tracy said. "She forgot her swimming goggles this year, so I loaned her a spare pair; but 29 year-old Renee Kunnen from Richmond, Virginia beat me by 31 seconds."

Jim and Tracy have been competing for years. Last year at the 2010 ITU Sprint World Championship race in Budapest, Hungary, Tracy finished first in the women's 50-54 age group; Jim came in 13th in the male 50-54 age group. Jim and Tracy have both qualified to

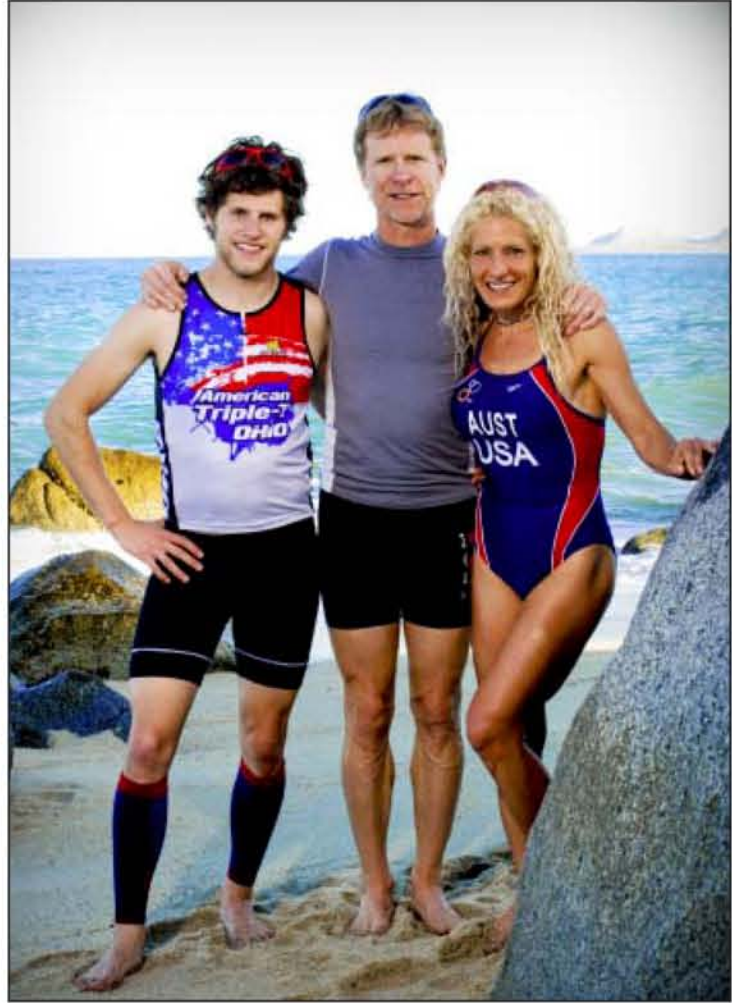


Photo djsmithphotography.blogspot.com

THE AUST FAMILY ZACH, JIM AUST, TRACY DISABATO-AUST

compete at this year's ITU Worlds in Beijing, China, in September.

Even more impressive, Zach, at 22 years old and a pre-med student at Eastern Kentucky University, is only in his

second year of competing in triathlon. Zach ran Cross County and Track while attending St. Francis DeSales High School, but Jim and

Tracy said they never pushed him to compete in triathlon; that it was Zach's personal decision to pick up the sport. Jim said with Zach on

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the course, racing has become more fun that it's ever been; that it's, in Jim's words, a blast to have him excited about it.

"Training for triathlon competition takes so much focus and determination," Jim said. "We're seeing the same focus and determination spill over into other areas of Zach's life."

Tracy said the two generations competing in the same sport and the same triathlons has become a great way to stay connected with their son.

"Racing takes good habits and so much energy and discipline, and to have our college age son come to us for training advice, and travel with us to races, is such a blessing," Tracy said. "We see that empowerment, the mental toughness that comes with the sport, becoming a part of his life."

Tracy said she believes that Zach has become infected with the triathlon bug; that once people become involved in the sport it's difficult to stop.

"Triathlon competitors come in

all ages, shapes and sizes; it's such a diverse community," Tracy explained. "That's one of the things Jim and I love about the sport; and that's one of the things that Zach has said to us, that he loves the people in the triathlon community."

What's next for Jim, Tracy and Zach?

"Zach wants to race with us at the USA Triathlon Age Group Nationals in Burlington, Vermont, in August," Tracy said. "He wants to make TeamUSA with us. They take the top 18 in each age group, so it's going to be a very competitive race for all of us."

With competitive races on the horizon, Jim, Tracy and Zach follow demanding training schedules. Jim and Tracy swim at the Westerville Recreation Center and bike and run along Trenton Township roadways near their home.

"We've got a good community around us," Jim said. "People wave to us when we're out training, they're courteous to us when we're on our bikes. Living in a supportive

community is so important to us as a family and as triathletes."

Tracy added that she and Jim acknowledge their eastern Delaware County roots wherever they race.

"We're so proud of our community," Tracy said. "Whether we race locally, nationally or internationally, when you look up on the race results board, right after our names is Sunbury, Ohio."

Jim Aust is a dentist with a Columbus practice; Tracy DiSabato-Aust is a horticulturalist and designer who has written gardening books and lectures internationally. Both Jim and Tracy are TeamUSA athletes.

To find out more about the work of Tracy DiSabato-Aust, go to < www.tracylive.com >; for information about their triathlon activities click the Triathlon link at they top of Tracy's home page.

For additional information about TeamUSA events and athletes go to < http://teamusa.org/ >.