

# Wingfoot Spotlight - February 2018 - We Are Atlanta Track Club

**By Marcus Budline**

At the conclusion of each year's Grand Prix Series presented by Piedmont Healthcare, Atlanta Track Club gives out the David Jordan Award to runners who complete every race of the series. 65 runners received the award this year. Five of them were in the same family.



Jadene Burgess and Brian Kelly, along with their three daughters, Ava (11), Elise (11), and Cate (14), set a family goal at the beginning of 2017 that they would run every race of the Grand Prix Series. They didn't just meet their goal, but Jadene and Cate won their respective age groups along the way.

## **How did this family goal come about?**

**Jadene:** Two years ago, Cate and I were doing a lot of running together. At one point we said, "Wouldn't it be cool if we ran the entire Grand Prix Series together as a mom and daughter duo?" So in 2016, it was just Cate and I that did it and it was just kind of a joint effort. This year we decided to do it as a family and Brian was definitely a champ and was up for it.

**Brian:** My wife hates to drive so I was driving them to all of these events and I was thinking, "Why am I driving here and just standing out here?" At [Hearts and Soles 5K] it was like -8 degrees and I just thought, "Why don't I just run it? That'd be a lot better than standing here freezing."

The twins [Ava and Elise], we started kind of dragging them along a little early. After the races we did have to bribe them a few times with donuts after the race. Think about the Thanksgiving Day race, it's "Earn your turkey," so for them it's "Earn your donuts."

### **What do you enjoy about running?**

**Cate:** How good you feel at the end. I like the fact that you don't have to think about the rest of the day. It's just being outdoors and it's just you and the road and sometimes Mom too.

**Brian:** I think it's a great chance to get a little bit of exercise. I am nowhere in the league with my wife so if you're wondering who won all the races, it was her. But it's still a way for me to get some exercise and spend some time with my family because we're all doing this together.

### **What do you gain from running together as a family?**

**Ava:** It feels better running if you have someone by you to be there and support you. And the person who supports me is my sister.

**Brian:** Her twin sister, she means.

### **Are the twins competitive?**

**Elise:** Yeah, I like to beat her. We run a lot with each other but then as we reach the finish line I try to beat her.

### **What is each of your favorite races?**

**Cate:** I like the Peachtree because I like the atmosphere and there are so many spectators. The heat kind of kills but it's so cool when you finish and it's just this big party. It's an indescribable event.

**Ava:** I think I like – Which one had the most snacks? – The Peachtree Health & Fitness Expo was fun! I really liked the tiny race at the Peachtree expo.

**Brian:** The shot put was fun because I did that many years ago in like 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade track so I actually could kind of do it.

**Jadene:** If I'm picking a Grand Prix race it's Resolution Run. There's something cool about it being on New Year's Day and starting your year off running. And it's not too early in the morning.

## **Do you have any goals for 2018? Running or otherwise?**

**Cate:** I want to win the Grand Prix series again. It's my last year in this age group and then I have to go against a ton of older people which is a bit frightening. So I want to finish out the current age group strong.

**Elise:** My goal is to beat Ava in every single race.

**Ava:** My goal is to beat Elise in every single race.

**Jadene:** Right now I've been running through some foot and ankle pain so I just want to get back out there and get healthy.

**Brian:** As the slowest member of the unit, I'd really like to shave a solid 10 percent off my time and break 30 minutes for a 5K sometime this year.

## **Do you have any recommendations, whether it's to kids or to parents, on how to get active and how to be an active family?**

**Elise:** You should always have a friend or someone to support you by your side – Someone to support you who you're close to and that's equally as experienced as you so then if you're miserable at least they're miserable too.

**Ava:** I agree with Elise, the miserable part and all.

**Cate:** I think you just have to get out there and do it. Sometimes I lean on mom for inspiration but once you get out there and start it gets easier.

**Jadene:** I think it's just having a goal and to enjoy it together no matter what. Put time on the calendar – we put all the races on our calendar and we scheduled around it and we made it happen.

**Brian:** I agree with that. We literally did put them on the calendar at the beginning of the year and we said we weren't going to schedule anything around it, because it was a commitment we were making together as a family. Not just to be active but to spend time together. It's important to have that sort of shared goal that we all can look at and see on our shared calendar that we know is something we can do together.

Photos courtesy of the Kelly Family