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Triathlon a bigger challenge

by Jamie Adams

(Photo caption) Jamie Adams/staff photo-Women's overall winner Hayley Piersol, left, and Matt Wisthoff emerge from the water during the first portion of the 10th Bandit's Challenge Triathlon, Saturday at W. Kerr Scott Reservoir.

A combination of cool air and warm water in W. Kerr Scott Reservoir Saturday made the Sagebrush Steakhouse Bandit's Challenge Triathlon even more challenging for this year's 235 competitors.

A haze of steam rose from the lake making visibility difficult as the first portion of the 10th annual competition, a 1.7-kilometer swim, started at 7 a.m. The event also included a 45-kilometer bike ride and a 10-K run.

Still, 2008 men's winner Justin Park of Chapel Hill and women's champ Hayley Piersol posted strong times in the overall results. Park finished with a time of 2:15:37, 38 seconds slower than last year's winner, Kevin Lisska. Ms. Piersol finished at 2:34:05, besting last year's winning time from Stacy Richardson by well over two minutes.

Lisska and Ms. Richardson, both two-time defending winners of the event, didn't participate Saturday.

"The swim was tough with all the steam. The air was 60 degrees when we started, and the water was 82," said Park, whose next completion is the prestigious Accenture Chicago Triathlon on Aug. 24. "I tried to stay with (Matthew) Wisthoff and (Paul) McCall, because those guys are the better swimmers in the competition, but I was having trouble seeing, and all of the sudden I looked up and the first turn buoy was behind me.

"After I saw that, I booked it. I'd say I lost about two minutes there," continued Park. "But the bike felt great. I lost my chain a couple of times on the course, but there's never a race where everything goes perfectly."

Park, who runs about 15 races a year across the United States, calls Bandit's Challenge, an international-length race "probably the second hardest race I've seen. There are some hills on this course that are so bad, even the downhill parts seem like uphill. On the other side of the dam, there's a hill where it feels like you can stand there, reach out and touch the road. We aren't setting any land speed records up that; we're



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just looking to hang on.”

He added, “But overall this was a great event. Bill (Scott, of race organizer Set-Up Events) always has a well-organized race, and the weather was great.”

Wisthoff, of Wilmington, was first out of the water but was overtaken by Park on the bike ride. Wisthoff finished second overall, at 2:19:49, while Charlotte’s Lance Leo took third.

Ms. Piersol, competing in just her second triathlon ever, beat her closest challenger, Chapel Hill’s Chris Tommerdahl, by almost two minutes.

Ms. Piersol was an accomplished swimmer who retired from international competition in 2007 after helping lead the powerful Auburn University swimming program to two straight women’s national titles.

Her brother, Aaron, won three gold medals at the 2004 Athens Olympics, and is a favorite to grab more gold in the 100M and 200M backstroke in Beijing. Aaron also holds at least a share of two swimming world records in both events.

“After I decided not to participate in the Olympic Trials, I took a year off and worked on finishing school,” said Ms. Piersol, an Orange County, California, native who will major in criminology. “But after a year away, I decided I still wanted to be an athlete. And I love being a triathlete; the triathlon is an amazing, tough sport that takes a lot of guts.”

Ms. Piersol, who raced in a Chattanooga triathlon three weeks ago, also remarked on the difficulty of the Bandit’s course.

“It was fun, but it was hilly. My goal was to not walk any of the hills, and I accomplished that,” smiled Ms. Piersol, who will next compete in the Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Triathlon on Sept. 7. “I’m not saying I didn’t think about it, though.”

Top 10 overall finishers Saturday included two 15-year olds: Mason Boyles of Wilmington and Matus Kriska from Mount Airy. Boyles finished eighth with a time of 2:23:47 and Kriska finished 10th at 2:27:00.

Boyles, nursing bleeding feet after the race’s completion, called Bandit’s “a great experience. I’m not happy that I failed to meet my goals for the splits, but this is the longest race of this type I’ve done so far.”

Boyles, a rising freshman at Hoggard High School this fall, started racing triathlons after an injury while running. “I started riding a bike after that injury for a while, and I had swum a little in a summer league in Wilmington. A guy at the local bike shop suggested I’d like triathlons, and now they’re my favorite races.”

Kriska bettered his 2007 time by over 10 minutes, and jumped seven spots in the final results from the previous year.

“I thought I did well last year, but I improved quite a bit, so I feel good about that,” said Kriska, who will attend Mount Airy High School this fall. Kriska plans to compete in “10 to 15 triathlons in all this year, and get ready for cross-country season” in high school.

The top Wilkes County finisher was Wade Laufenberg, who also finished first in the Men’s Masters category with a time of 2:29:53. That was good enough for 11th overall, and was an improvement of two-and-a-half minutes from 2007.

“It was absolutely perfect out there today for a race,” said Laufenberg. “It was a little chilly when you first got on the bike, but once you got going, it felt great.”

The Bandit’s Challenge, the 11th event in the 15-race North Carolina Triathlon Series, raises funds for the YMCA’s Partner with Youth Campaign, a scholarship fund for individuals unable to pay for but wishing to participate in YMCA-related programs.

The 2007 event raised over \$7,000 for the campaign, said race host Renee Pickard. Donations for the 2008 to Partner to Youth program be made at the YMCA by calling 838-3991.

“We had another great race this year, and we are hopeful that we will raise at least what we were able to last year, if not more,” said Ms. Pickard, health enhancement director at the Wilkes Family YMCA.

Ms. Pickard hopes to create “a true family weekend event” with Bandit’s Challenge. The Little Bandit’s Youth Triathlon was Friday evening for children 4-12 racing in one of two levels of competition. Level one featured a 50-yard swim, a two-mile bike ride and a .75 mile run, while level two extended the swim to 100 yards.

“We had 29 participants Friday night, and it was a lot of fun,” said Ms. Pickard. “Twelve of those kids were children of some of our athletes today. We’re constantly trying to think of new things we can do to make the event even better, and people are now coming from all over to be in this race.”

Ms. Pickard also thanked the race sponsors, saying they’re “a huge reason we have been so successful over the years in meeting and exceeding our fund-raising goals.”

Bandit’s Challenge sponsors this year were Sagebrush Steakhouse; Market Basket Stores; Sunnyside Ice; Partner with Youth Chairman of the Roundtable; Holiday Inn Express; the Corps of Engineers; the Highway Patrol; Wilkesboro Police Department; Eighth Street Surgical; Wilkes Regional Medical Center; participating EMS and fire departments, including the Wilkes Rescue Squad; Foothills HAM Radio; Be Active Appalachian Partnership; Pizza Hut; the U.S. Marine Recruiter’s Office; Wilkes Journal-Patriot; BMCC; Brushy Mountain Water; Coca-Cola; Pam Herring; Screen Printer’s Unlimited; Cook’s Sporting Goods; Twin City Lighting; Lowe’s and Sons; Payne Power Equipment; the Red Cross; Bandit’s Coordinators David Doyle, Patrick Benson, Tammy

Potts Rountree, John Willardson, Mark Cox, Barbara Wright, and Larry Sloop; and YMCA volunteers and staff.

Men's Overall Results

1. Justin Park, Chapel Hill, 2:15:37; 2. Matthew Wisthoff, Wilmington, 2:19:49; 3. Lance Leo, Charlotte, 2:20:51; 4. Paul McCall, Durham, 2:21:03; 5. John McGarva, Mechanicsville, Va., 2:21:21; 6. Tim Surface, Raleigh, 2:22:04; 7. Tom Clifford, Wilmington, 2:23:19; 8. Mason Boyles, Wilmington, 2:23:47; 9. Robert Ferris, Cary, 2:25:42; 10. Matus Kriska, Mount Airy, 2:27:00; 11. Wade Laufenberg, North Wilkesboro, 2:29:53; 12. Kit Phillips, Apex, 2:30:44; 13. Richard Fay, Raleigh, 2:32:34; 14. Scott Dewire, Hillsborough, 2:32:45; 15. Chris Kalberg, Cary, 2:33:34; 16. Greg Sheehan, Mooresville, 2:33:58; 17. Robert Cristman, Salisbury, 2:34:30; 18. Ken Younts, Chapel Hill, 2:34:34; 19. Michael Peters, Charlotte, 2:35:31; 20. David Greene, Greensboro, 2:35:45; 21. Wes Kessenich, Waxhaw, 2:36:12; 22. Nick Inabinet, Greenville, 2:36:23; 23. Taylor Shoulders, Spartanburg, S.C., 2:36:34; 24. Bobby Dixon, Apex, 2:36:54; 25. David Scott, Waxhaw, 2:37:13; 26. Robert Cole, Mooresville, 2:38:05; 27. Chris Rouisse, Pineville, 2:38:27; 28. Graham McGinnis, Chapel Hill, 2:39:00; 29. Jim Rhodes, Indian Trail, 2:39:18; 30. Jason Jacobs, Charlotte, 2:39:32; 31. Patrick Farwell, Wilmington, 2:39:43; 32. Jan Kriska, Mount Airy, 2:41:43; 33. Eric Gressman, Raleigh, 2:41:54; 34. Davis Peacock, Charlotte, 2:42:43; 35. Matt Willis, Wilmington, 2:44:12; 36. Scott Boyles, Wilmington, 2:44:21; 37. Ed Dixon, Greensboro, 2:44:26; 38. Mark Robbins, Charlottesville, Va., 2:44:28; 39. Ryan O'connor, Knoxville, Tenn., 2:45:10; 40. Brent Morris, Charlotte, 2:45:34; 41. Douglas Rockett, Chapel Hill, 2:45:46; 42. Matt McArthur, Raleigh, 2:45:55; 43. Joe Hallatschek, Harrisburg, 2:46:16; 44. Gerry Farris, Concord, 2:46:23; 45. John Litsas, Raleigh, 2:48:05; 46. Brendan Bull, Durham, 2:48:19; 47. John Austin, Wake Forest, 2:48:31; 48. Patrick Maguire, Wilmington, 2:49:23; 49. Mark Oghalai, Winston-Salem, 2:50:02; 50. David Hardy, Carrboro, 2:50:05;
51. Ryan Sauer, Winston-Salem, 2:50:39; 52. Tom Vasiliaskas, Chapel Hill, 2:51:00; 53. Craig Mitchell, Denver, 2:51:27; 54. John Hettiarachchi, North Wilkesboro, 2:51:29; 55. Taylor Ramirez, Durham, 2:51:59; 56. David Alyea, San Francisco, Calif., 2:52:20; 57. Steven Lindsey, Charlotte, 2:52:30; 58. W. David Wilkerson, Baltimore, Md., 2:52:59; 59. Ron Fitch, Sanford, 2:53:16; 60. Robert Glenn, Durham, 2:53:41; 61. David Kahler, Durham, 2:53:41; 62. Mark Conger, Winston-Salem, 2:53:43; 63. Tom Torkildsen, Matthews, 2:53:50; 64. Trent Johnson, Chapel Hill, 2:53:58; 65. Jim Urbec, Cameron, 2:53:58; 66. Jonathan Heigel, Charlotte, 2:55:44; 67. Christopher Salisbury, Charlotte, 2:55:56; 68. Kyle Shepard, Hampstead, 2:56:08; 69. Grady Knight, Raleigh, 2:56:10; 70. Patrick Turner, Cary, 2:56:37; 71. Shea Whittaker, Wilmington, 2:56:51; 72. Lee Allen, Albemarle, 2:57:08; 73. Jeremy O'Neal, Winston-Salem, 2:57:26; 74. Jim Molnar, Cary, 2:57:30; 75. Tim Scott, Columbia, S.C., 2:57:37; 76. Chris Underwood, Durham, 2:57:41; 77. Timothy Church, Charlotte, 2:57:50; 78. Tom Hughes, Durham, 2:57:52; 79. Lawrence Thompson, Hickory, 2:58:16; 80. Mark Redmond, Raleigh, 2:58:37; 81. Stephen Matson, Jacksonville, Fla., 2:58:48; 82. Nicholas Lepley, Winston-Salem, 2:59:09; 83. Jason Jones, Raleigh, 2:59:20; 84. Steffen Schairer, Raleigh, 3:00:44; 85. Brian Bohrer, Clemmons, 3:00:48; 86. Thomas Necessary, Concord, 3:01:03; 87. Harry Efird, Troutman, 3:01:06; 88. Carl Dunkin, Statesville, 3:01:29; 89. Michael Gressman, Raleigh, 3:01:44; 90. Clay Bruce, Jacksonville, Fla., 3:02:02; 91. Jeff Kern, Jackson Springs, 3:02:17; 92. Mike Monterusso, Charlotte, 3:03:08; 93. Justin Acciavatti, Durham, 3:03:39; 94. Wheeler Jervis, Charlotte, 3:03:52; 95. Dietrich Glas, Charlotte, 3:04:04; 96. Lowell Gould, Rocky Point, 3:04:04; 97. Will Chirico, Charlotte, 3:04:20; 98. Stephen Grenier, Wilmington, 3:04:33; 99. Gary Martin, Harrisburg, 3:04:41; 100. Alex Werden, Chapel Hill, 3:04:51;
101. Matt Rohden, Winston-Salem, 3:05:19; 102. Brad Boyland, Greensboro, 3:05:25; 103. Eric Byrd, Charlotte, 3:05:53; 104. David Naelon, Davidson, 3:06:01; 105. Gordon Radke, Granite Falls, 3:06:12; 106. Jason Doom, Clemmons, 3:06:43; 107. Brian Wilson, Charlotte, 3:06:57; 108. Robb Wannenburg, Lewisville, 3:07:00; 109. Steven Creek, Florence, S.C., 3:07:05; 110. Weider Silva, Raleigh, 3:07:07; 111. Wes Sisk, Durham, 3:07:43; 112. Eric Brown, Boone, 3:07:55; 113. Dan Wrona, Charlotte, 3:09:10; 114. Tom Wannenburg, Lewisville, 3:09:13; 115. Chris Mcauley, Winston-Salem, 3:09:33; 116. Jason Hoth, Winston-Salem, 3:10:06; 117. Brian Satz, Winnabow, 3:10:09; 118. Asa Beavers, Holly Springs, 3:10:38; 119. Mark Retherford, Chapel Hill, 3:10:42; 120. David Dupont, Wrightsville Beach, 3:10:43; 121. Ed Barron, Mocksville, 3:11:37; 122. Jerry Slaughter, Mooresville, 3:12:12; 123. Paul D'Englere, Climax, 3:12:26; 124. Stephen Dean, Cary, 3:12:46; 125. Ronnie Michael, Jacksonville, 3:13:23; 126. Mitchell Bumgarner, Maiden, 3:13:37; 127. Colin Botes, Matthews, 3:14:23; 128. Frank Armstrong, Raleigh, 3:14:50; 129. Andy Kidd, Kingsport, Tenn., 3:15:29; 130. Michael Baird, Charlotte, 3:15:34; 131. Mick Slattery, Davidson, 3:16:09; 132. Matthew McLamb, Coats, 3:17:36; 133. Damon Anagnos, Boone, 3:17:48; 134. Jason Lieb, Carrboro, 3:19:03; 135. Matthew Leach, Charlotte, 3:19:19; 136. Danny Derner, Fayetteville, 3:19:36; 137. Daniel Klinedinst, Deep Gap, 3:19:37; 138. Sean Green, Charlotte, 3:20:03; 139. Steven Anderson, Fayetteville, 3:20:58; 140. Glenn Crum, Wake Forest, 3:21:13; 141. Cary Wren, Greensboro, 3:21:18; 142. Jeb Helms, Winston-Salem, 3:22:06; 143. Thomas Sherwood, Biloxi, Miss., 3:22:22; 144. Chad Cooper, Apex, 3:23:08; 145. Cooper Willis, Charlotte, 3:23:14; 146. Christopher Murray, Raleigh, 3:23:48; 147. Don Hanna, Wilmington, 3:26:16; 148. Peter Liley,

Charlotte, 3:26:55; 149. Carlos Bueno, Cary, 3:27:43; 150. Tim Clark, Winston-Salem, 3:27:46;
 151. Raymond Morgan, Raleigh, 3:28:28; 152. Nils Fowler, Winston-Salem, 3:29:06;
 153. Stuart Macdonell, Advance, 3:29:15; 154. Todd Spain, Cary, 3:30:48; 155. Gregory Counts, Charlotte, 3:30:53; 156. Kenneth Wells, Elkin, 3:31:07; 157. Michael Kalb, Morganton, 3:31:54; 158. David Mason, Wilmington, 3:32:48; 159. Steven Erdmanczyk, Charlotte, 3:33:27; 160. Robert Connolly, Lillington, 3:33:32; 161. Joshua Long, Kernersville, 3:35:02; 162. David Craft, Concord, 3:35:34; 163. Patrick Reynolds, Lewisville, 3:36:05; 164. Danny Postell, Bessemer City, 3:39:26; 165. Peng Mok, Durham, 3:40:56; 166. Vincent Stone, Winston-Salem, 3:42:16; 167. Ray Locklear, Advance, 3:42:34; 168. Kurt Weide, Clemmons, 3:43:18 ; 169. Wayne Lopresti, Spring Lake, 3:43:52; 170. Vishak Das, Wilmington, 3:44:00 ; 171. David Sheedy, Pfafftown, 3:45:55; 172. Steve Haynie, Raleigh, 3:47:44; 173. Keith Rust, Wake Forest, 3:48:00 ; 174. Mark Bowman, Virginia Beach, Va., 3:48:34; 175. Alexander Rust, Wake Forest, 3:52:19; 176. Garren Maynard, Huntersville, 3:52:51; 177. Andrew Orphanoudakis, Kannapolis, 3:58:58 ; 178. Steve Handy, Hays, 4:01:54; 179. Sean Reidy, Davidson, 4:02:16; 180. Chuck Salisbury, Salisbury, 4:03:37; 181. Patrick Ide, Greensboro, 4:04:05; 182. Philip Buchy, Charlotte, 4:04:20; 183. Robbie Frackelton, Winston-Salem, 4:07:37; 184. John B. Mayer, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., 4:08:26; 185. Larry Jones, Winston-Salem, 4:11:50; 186. Steven Sprague, Chapel Hill, 2:15; 187. Scott Ray, Charlotte, 2:50; 188. Ed Harrison, Winston-Salem, 2:15:05 ; 189. David Sapienza, Holly Springs.

Women's Overall Results

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 3. Amie Krasnozou, Morrisville, 2:40:30; 4. Rebecca McKeever, Davidson, 2:44:56; 5. Joanna Younts, Chapel Hill, 2:47:16; 6. Ashley Naelon, Davidson, 2:49:51; 7. Melissa Davidian, Raleigh, 2:50:48; 8. Kari Wilkinson, Mebane, 2:53:18; 9. Stephanie Healey, Raleigh, 2:53:23; 10. Judy McCarter, Huntersville, 2:54:59; 11. Rachel Klein, Durham, 2:55:11; 12. Jamie White, Snellville, Ga., 2:55:23; 13. Christine Ray, Charlotte, 2:56:49;
 14. Julee Waldrop, Chapel Hill, 2:59:15; 15. Mary Beth Errington, Pleasant Garden, 2:59:29; 16. Joanna Tallon, Durham, 3:01:38; 17. Tanya Houghton, Weddington, 3:02:44; 18. Megan Lynam, Durham, 3:03:05; 19. Sara Davis, Raleigh, 3:04:44; 20. Meaghan Michael, Cary, 3:05:21; 21. Carol Scheible, Chapel Hill, 3:06:06; 22. Michelle Wells, Elkin, 3:06:18; 23. Paula Domermuth, Boone, 3:06:50; 24. Jenn George, Morrisville, 3:07:28; 25. Phyllis Mason, Wilmington, 3:11:26; 26. Lisa Heffron, Charlotte, 3:12:16; 27. Christine Hanning, Wake Forest, 3:12:54; 28. Annina Pope, Parkton, 3:14:07; 29. Kimberly Cruz, Tobaccoville, 3:17:46; 30. Beverly Hendrix, Norcross, Ga., 3:17:56; 31. Erin Bushey, Raleigh, 3:20:44; 32. Jennifer Starbuck, Charlotte, 3:25:43; 33. Karen White, Charlotte, 3:28:26; 34. Lisa Hanna, Wilmington, 3:29:29; 35. Janice Hirsch, Wake Forest, 3:31:04; 36. Monica Bremm, Charlotte, 3:36:08; 37. Cheryl Young, Norfolk, Va., 3:37:32; 38. Julie Marie Barry, Charlotte, 3:40:43; 39. Stephanie Evans, Oak Ridge, 3:53:09; 40. Christine Frackelton, Winston-Salem, 3:55:02; 41. Jacqueline McCloskey, Charlotte, 3:55:32; 42. Rebekah Borkowski, North Wilkesboro, 4:04:38; 43. Alyse Kelly-Jones, Charlotte, 4:12:06; 44. Tonya Mahaffey-Miles, Millers Creek, 4:13:00; 45. Alanna Adams, Greensboro; 46. Meredith Dolhare, Charlotte.

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