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## Festival triathlon tests endurance of its participants

By **MATT ANDERSON**/Index-Journal sports writer  
 Sunday, June 8, 2008 11:53 PM EDT

**NINETY SIX** -- After completing Sunday's Festival of Flowers triathlon at the Lake Greenwood State Recreation Area with the temperature near 90 degrees, Daniel Moss referred to the conditions as "pancake hot."

Even that extreme heat, however, wasn't enough to slow Moss.

Moss, of Simpsonville, won the men's race in a course-record 1:55:16. Michelle Shoup, of Buford, Ga., completed the 1.5 kilometer swim, 24-mile bike ride and 10-kilometer run race in 2:13:15 to win the women's title.

Moss finished more three minutes in front of Spartanburg's Chris Olson, the men's second-place finisher in 1:58:20. Gail Koutoff, of Greenville, placed second in the women's race with a time of 2:14:03.



Daniel Moss, of Simpsonville, runs during the Festival of Flowers triathlon. Moss won the men's race in a course-record 1:55:16. (Staff photo by T.M. James)

"The run's just brutal," Moss said. "There's a good bit of shade, but still by mile two or three or fourish, it's in the sun. ... It's just ridiculous."

On the men's side, defending champion Peter Kotland, of Moore, placed third (2:00:15), Atlanta's Dylan Rist finished fourth (2:03:36) and former Greenwood resident Derick Williamson, now of Austin, Texas, was fifth (2:05:00).

Kristine Kester, of Duluth, Ga., was third in the women's race (2:15:08), Greenville's Ashley Long took fourth (2:19:12), and Jennifer Walz, of Savannah, rounded out the top five (2:20:21).

With the weather playing such a big factor Sunday, Moss prepared for the finishing run during the bicycle portion of the race.

"Normally, I don't drink as much fluids as I did on the bike (Sunday)," Moss said. "Normally, I have a third of a bottle, and I drank a whole bottle (Sunday), trying to prepare for the run."

"Unfortunately, they didn't have a water station right off transition. That would have been a big help to most of the athletes, but other than that, it was a great race."

Sunday's race served as the USA Triathlon Southeast Regional Championship, with the top 33 percent of each age group's finishers qualifying for the USAT Age Group National Championships on Sept. 20 in Portland.

Among those who qualified was Juan Adritico, of Greenwood, the top area finisher in the race. Adritico placed 32nd in 2:19:57.

Fourth among area finishers was Greenwood's David Bridges, who was 71st in 2:29:48. Like most every other competitor in the triathlon, Bridges said the heat played a factor in his race.

"It's hard to breathe; it's hard to run," Bridges said. "Every time I hit the sun, I slowed down. It's good to have it done."

Walz, 17, fifth overall in the women's race, repeated as the event's girls junior champion.

She led the junior competitors from the swim-bike transition through the end of the race. While she said there was some pressure being chased over the final two portions of the triathlon, being in the

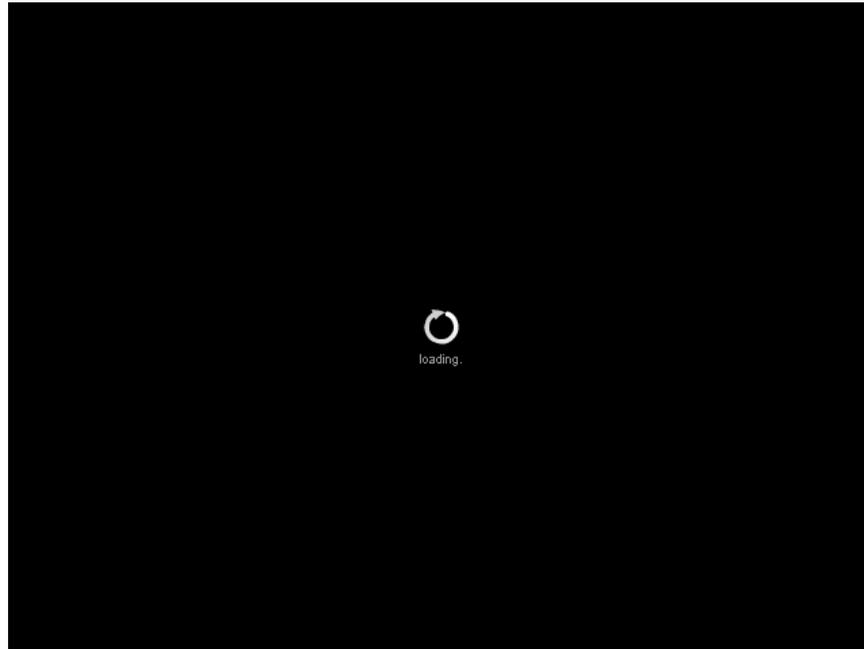
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lead helped with the hot weather.

"The run was really hot," Walz said. "I really tried to push it on the run, to keep the lead."

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