

Fast Women at Holiday Lake

by David Horton, R.D.

This was the ninth year that ultrarunners convened on the banks of Holiday Lake at the 4-H Educational Center. We started this race at the suggestion of the center's staff eight years ago. Bryan Branch and his crew are very cordial and accommodating in supporting this race, as are Christine Glover and her kitchen staff, who prepared great meals on Friday and Saturday.

Of the four races that we have in the Lynchburg area, this is the flattest and easiest of them all. Because of this, we usually attract many first-time ultrarunners, and this year was no different. Also, because of the time of year, and with the course so flat and on forest service roads, conditions tend to be very muddy. As it turned out, the trails were in pretty good shape this year, unlike last year, which was extremely wet, muddy and frigid.

Unfortunately, this year's race fell on Valentine's Day weekend. It couldn't be helped, as it was the only date available at the 4-H Center. But it also proved to be a weekend for the women to shine. I knew the field included some very talented ladies. Anne Riddle was making her first appearance at Holiday Lake; she holds many records and has been a member of the national 100-km team. Local runner Cat Phillips made quite a debut in her first ultra at the December 2003 Hellgate 100 Km, winning and coming in fourth overall. Laura Nelson, Melissa Mast, and Kim Martin were also in the field. The real dark horse, however, was Kristen Eddy, competing in her first ultra. Kristen is an occupational therapist who has an impressive resume in adventure racing. In the fall of 2003, she won the Beast of the East Off Road Triathlon, beating all of the men as well.

In the men's division, Clark Zealand, Aaron Swartzbard, and veteran Tom Nielson were aiming for the win. Just a few nights before the race I received a call from Rainer Koch (from Schillerstr, Germany) asking if it was too late for

him to register, although he would not be able to make it to the race until Saturday morning. I didn't recognize the name and thought he might not even show, but he was insistent.

As expected, the women's race was tight. Phillips went right to the front, but several others were right on her heels. By 22 miles, Phillips had a six-minute lead, with ultra rookie Eddy running a close second. Riddle and Nelson were another minute back, with Mast also close. It stayed pretty much that way until the last aid station (27.8 miles), where Riddle and Eddy checked in together, three minutes behind Phillips.

One of the problems with being the leader is never knowing if someone is catching up. Phillips cruised to finish in a course record of 4:34:39, breaking local runner Bethany Hunter's mark of 4:42, set in 2002. As Cat crossed the finish line we told her to turn around. Finishing just seven seconds later was Eddy! Phillips had no idea anyone was that close to her, and Eddy did not see Phillips until a quarter-mile from the finish. This was the closest finish we have ever had. Riddle finished four minutes later for third place, in 4:38:41. The top five women were all under the old course record, and six broke five hours.

The first time I saw the top men was around six miles. The leaders were Alex Kahl and the late-entrant Koch. By 25.1 miles, Swartzbard had assumed the lead, with Koch a minute back. Swartzbard cruised to the victory in 4:14:34, with Nielsen closing the gap to less than two minutes to take second place in 4:16:27. Koch was third in 4:17:00.

The biggest surprise of the day came from Andrew Ponder, an 18-year-old freshman at Liberty University taking my advanced running class. One of the requirements of the class is to complete an ultra, and Andrew had never raced beyond 10 miles. His plan was to take it easy on the first loop and run hard on the second loop, if he could. He finished the first loop in 2:18 and then blitzed the

second loop in 2:11, the fastest split of anyone in the race. Ponder's time of 4:28:28 placed him sixth of 178 starters. What an ultra debut!

Perhaps the results offered a glimpse into the future of ultrarunning. There was only one male in the top 10 over 32 (Nielsen, 44), and only one woman in the top 10 women over 40 (Hosni Haghghan, 45). Three men that completed the race had undergone heart surgery. With the first race in the Lynchburg Ultra Series behind us, we are anxiously looking forward to the second race in the series, the Promise Land 50 Km on April 24. It is the "toughest 50-km you will ever love."

Holiday Lake 50 Km

Holiday Lake Center, Virginia
February 14

Trails

1. Aaron Schwartzbard, 26	4:14:34
2. Tom Nielsen, 44	4:16:27
3. Rainer Koch, 23, GER	4:17:00
4. Jonathan Basham, 26	4:19:38
5. Alex Kahl, 24, NJ	4:27:29
6. Andrew Ponder, 18	4:29:28
7. Larry Bullock, 26	4:29:48
8. Corey Handelsman, 25, MD	4:32:54
9. Christopher Palladino, 32	4:33:38
10. Cat Phillips, 28	4:34:39!
11. Kristin Eddy, 33	4:34:46
12. Byron Backer, 39, SC	4:38:30
13. Annie Riddle, 37, NC	4:38:41
14. Dave Drach, 46, FL	4:39:41
15. Gregg Geerdes, 34	4:40:04
16. Laura Nelson, 38	4:41:21
17. Melissa Mast, 31, PA	4:41:33
18. Christopher Calfee, 36	4:43:00
19. Ken Bower, 44, PA	4:49:45
20. Jeffrey Wilbur, 44	4:50:00
21. Paul Carrasco, 33	4:52:40
22. Jennifer Flint, 33, PA	4:54:23
23. Andy Earl, 19	4:56:09
24. Michael Stratton, 20	4:57:57
25. Josh Longbrake, 20	5:03:50
26. Adam Hill, 27, NC	5:03:50
27. Annette Bednosky, 37, NC	5:04:34
28. Chris Scott, 34	5:07:54
29. Stewart Staton, 26	5:09:06
30. Vince Decker, 40	5:10:07
31. Hosni Haghghanian, 45	5:11:45
32. Hernan Garbini, 42	5:12:11
33. Jeff Fedorko, 32	5:12:25

34. Kevin Bligan, 44, PA	5:12:57	102. Frederick Dummar, 35, NC	6:14:26	Rob Apple, 42, TN	6:49:01
Thomas Tyler, 22	5:12:57	103. Steve Burns, 51	6:15:27	135. Darin Dunham, 35	6:51:55
36. John Bridges, 27	5:13:39	104. Matt Zealand, 25	6:15:58	136. <u>Dorothy Fyock</u> , 30, NC	6:52:12
37. <u>Jenny Anderson</u> , 29	5:15:04	105. Bob Anderson, 57	6:17:33	137. Michael Holland, 48, MD	6:52:19
38. Chase Tunnell, 36	5:17:46	106. Bill Farnoff, 60, MD	6:18:22	138. Johnny Raney, 42	6:53:59
39. <u>Kim Martin</u> , 38, OH	5:18:18	107. Tom Smith, 51	6:18:28	139. <u>Caroline Leean-Stearns</u> , 41	6:54:14
40. Herman Richards, 50, NJ	5:18:22	108. Peter York, 51	6:19:12	140. Craig Penrose, 39	6:54:47
41. Joe Novak, 41	5:21:22	109. <u>Denise Kehoe</u> , 38, NC	6:20:02	141. Walker Williams, 66	6:56:07
42. Mark Lawrence, 45, MD	5:22:02	110. Andrew Pinger, 28, DC	6:20:28	142. Brian Radgowski, 24	6:57:53
43. <u>Sophie Speidel</u> , 41	5:24:45	111. Gordon Thomson, 45	6:21:56	143. Mike Weirich, 52	6:58:45
44. Kevin Black, 44	5:27:18	112. Mike Bouscaren, 56, MA	6:25:48	<u>Peggy Frederick</u> , 53	6:58:45
45. <u>Amy Thompson</u> , 27, NC	5:28:00	113. Joshua Alonzo, 34, NC	6:26:26	145. Joey Anderson, 48, NC	6:59:25
46. Mark Prescott, 44	5:28:36	114. David Crawford, 38	6:26:45	146. Phil Halapin, 53	7:01:05
47. <u>Sonia Rodriguez</u> , 20	5:29:26	115. <u>Michelle Lancaster</u> , 23, NC	6:30:23	147. <u>Ann Townsend</u> , 29	7:02:43
Chris Faigle, 36	5:29:26	116. Edward Hill, 37	6:30:26	Kevin Townsend, 31	7:02:43
49. Calvin Milam, 44	5:30:41	117. <u>Laura Falsone</u> , 41, MD	6:31:22	149. Jair Acevedo, 25, NC	7:03:07
50. Josh Gilbert, 28	5:31:38	118. Eric Fromm, 58, MD	6:31:27	150. Charles Miles, 54, KY	7:04:02
51. John Price, 49	5:31:43	119. Jim Lovell, 46	6:32:55	151. Andrew Wortley, 24	7:04:19
52. Van Phillips, 34	5:31:55	120. David Lowry, 49	6:33:34	152. Tom O'Donnell, 41	7:09:14
53. Konrad Gannon, 37, NC	5:32:27	121. Jay Delancy, 46, NC	6:33:59	153. Jim Bath, 59, PA	7:11:01
54. Blanks Blankinship, 47	5:32:42	122. John Owensby, 58, NC	6:34:34	John Read, 15	7:11:01
55. <u>Jennifer Dick</u> , 28, ON	5:33:11	123. Frederick Hindman, 43, OH	6:34:54	Josh Read, 22	7:11:01
56. Clark Zealand, 30, ON	5:33:12	124. <u>Loreen Hewitt</u> , 47, PA	6:38:40	156. Frank Guler, 53	7:13:52
Ryne Melcher, 25, ON	5:33:12	125. Farouk Elkassed, 54	6:40:11	Ricky Scott, 45	7:13:52
58. John Farmer, 40	5:33:28	126. <u>Camille Rabon</u> , 27	6:41:51	158. Gene Potter, 59	7:17:30
59. Al DeFazio, 42	5:37:04	127. Tom Green, 53, MD	6:41:58	159. <u>Kari Collignon</u> , 42	7:18:10
60. Bill Scoggins, 39	5:38:03	128. Miles Lilly, 37, NC	6:42:22	160. <u>Domenica Hottenstein</u> , 38, PA	7:35:18
61. Alton Martin, 38	5:38:53	Stan Neumann, 65, MD	6:42:22	161. Charles Hottenstein, 37, PA	7:35:22
62. Tony Smith, 50, NC	5:41:25	130. Raymond Abell, 63	6:44:52	162. <u>Christa Petersen</u> , 26	7:36:13
63. Robert Morey, 42	5:41:34	131. Robert Phillips, 48	6:47:34	163. Harry Donati, 49	7:37:09
64. Bob Combs, 36, OH	5:41:35	132. Daniel Todd, 30, WV	6:47:39	164. <u>Joyce Fendley</u> , 38	7:41:54
65. Henry Christner, 26	5:43:39	133. Wesley Fenton, 43, OH	6:49:01	165. <u>Dave Solliday</u> , 49	8:07:51
66. Mark Freeman, 29	5:44:40			178 starters	
67. Neal Bryant, 33	5:45:07				
68. Scott Ferrari, 45, PA	5:46:00				
69. Darrell Wargo, 35	5:47:56				
70. Mike Price, 44, PA	5:47:59				
71. David Snipes, 36	5:49:20				
72. Greg Snowman, 38	5:49:23				
73. Roger Claussen, 51	5:49:41				
74. Kevin Willis, 37	5:51:55				
75. Harry Placide, 44, MD	5:51:55				
76. <u>Tanya Cady</u> , 50, OH	5:51:43				
77. Adam Matheson, 24	5:52:09				
78. Joel Sweigart, 34, PA	5:52:32				
79. David Stuckey, 38	5:53:40				
80. David King, 57, NC	5:55:29				
81. Michael Flynn, 41	5:55:54				
82. Piers Newbery, 39	5:57:54				
83. Roy Heger, 49, OH	6:03:18				
84. Dan Lehmann, 53, WV	6:04:10				
85. Bill Losey, 32, OH	6:04:31				
86. <u>Denise Wagner</u> , 41, CT	6:05:08				
Brian Loose, 38, CT	6:05:08				
88. Michael Ott, 19, PA	6:05:48				
89. Tony Rouse, 39, NC	6:06:05				
90. James Howton, 29	6:06:36				
91. <u>Linda Poteate</u> , 40	6:07:28				
92. Nelson Stritehoff, 52, MD	6:07:42				
93. Christian Carrillo, 26, NC	6:10:55				
94. <u>Rebekah Trittipoe</u> , 46	6:12:10				
Seth Trittipoe, 12	6:12:10				
<u>Deb Duryea</u> , 22	6:12:10				
Cody Post, 27, NY	6:12:10				
98. <u>Nancy Ferris</u> , 48	6:12:51				
Wilbert Hooper, 45	6:12:51				
<u>Terri Ripley</u> , 41	6:12:51				
101. Paul Arnett, 33	6:14:05				

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