

34TH GREENFIELD LIGHTLIFE TRIATHLON



RECORDER STAFF/MATT BURKHARTT

Above, Jennifer Boucher, of Somers, Connecticut, races down Colrain Road during the bike leg of last year's Greenfield Lightlife Triathlon. Below, swimmers navigate the first leg of last year's triathlon. The 34th running of the annual event takes place Sunday morning at 8 a.m. at the Green River Swimming & Recreation Area.

Champs return for Greenfield Triathlon

By JASON BUTYNSKI
Recorder Staff

Dan Bensen, JoEllen Reino and Madeline Nagy will all be looking to go down in the Greenfield Lightlife Triathlon history books Sunday morning during the 34th running of the annual event.

The trio will each be vying for their fourth-ever crowns, which would tie a record set by Don Dwight when he won four International races in the 1990s. The Triathlon kicks off at 8 a.m. on Sunday morning at the Green River Swimming & Recreation Area on Nash's Mill Road in Greenfield. The first heat of competitors will hit the waters of the Green River and subsequent heats will follow.

The triathlon features two races: the Sprint and International. The Sprint is the shorter of the two races and consists of a .31-mile swim, 15.14-mile bike and 3.09-mile run, while the International course includes a .63-mile swim, 30.28-mile bike and 7.09-mile run.

Bensen and Reino join Carson Poe for another run at history as each of the three will vie for their third straight wins.

Bensen is a Greenfield native who captured his first Greenfield Triathlon men's Sprint title in 2012. The University of Vermont graduate, who competed on the triathlon team while in school, has also won each of the past two men's Sprint crowns, including



last year's victory in 1 hour, 10 minutes, 24.8 seconds. Reino is also a two-time defending women's Sprint champion, although all three of her crowns came as JoEllen Cameron, including last year's title which came in 1:17:11.4, putting her sixth overall.

Two weeks after her crown, Cameron married fellow triathlete John Reino (who won the men's 50-54 division last year in 1:19:49.2) so JoEllen will now try for her fourth title, but first-ever as Reino.

Poe is the two-time reigning men's International champion after completing last year's course in 2:25:07.1, which was over eight minutes faster than anyone else in the field. The Northampton resident has used the Greenfield Triathlon as a warmup for an upcoming Ironman competition in September each of the past two seasons and he returns for his third straight year. Poe is currently nursing a cold but should be the person to beat once again.

The women's International

field will feature a new champion this season as defending champ Katie Mason from Brooklyn, N.Y. had not signed up for the race as of Friday afternoon. One person who will look to take her place at the front of the field is Hatfield's Nagy, who has won three previous Greenfield Triathlons. Nagy captured her first crown in 2001 and then won again in 2013. Her most recent title came in 2015, which was also the last time she has run the event, missing last

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SPORTS



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Above, competitors make their way up Nash's Mill Road in Greenfield during the running portion of the Greenfield Lightlife Triathlon last season. Below, light reflects off the goggles of swimmer during last year's event.

Triathlon

FROM D1

year's due to an injury.

Sunday's race marks the third year since the return of the covered bridge on Eunice Williams Drive in Greenfield after it was rebuilt following its destruction during Hurricane Irene in 2011. Unfortunately, race officials got a bit of bad news, because this will mark the final year that the usual course will be able to be used due to scheduled construction on the one-lane bridge on Nash's Mill Road. That bridge, which has been a thorn in the side to plenty of people in town, is scheduled to be rebuilt, but it looks like the race will need to reroute competitors each of the next two summers. The Greenfield Triathlon Committee has yet to figure out a new route but rest assured it will get done.

The current course sees competitors hit the water near the dam at the Swimming & Recreation Area and swim upstream. Competitors emerge from the water on the western side of the playground and hit the bicycle transition area. From there, competitors head out onto Nash's Mill Road and pedal up the steep hill toward Leyden Road. Competitors take a left onto Leyden Road and begin the long trek out to Eunice Williams Drive. A left onto Eunice Williams takes competitors over the covered bridge and up another steep climb, where they emerge

onto Green River Road. Participants head south on Green River Road, which merges with Plain Road, which competitors take back towards the Swimming Area. The Sprint competitors do two laps, while the International competitors bike four laps.

After hopping off the bikes, competitors gear up for the final portion of the race, the run. The running course is different for the two divisions. The International competitors run one loop that is the same as the bike course. The Sprint Division actually sends runners west onto Nash's Mill Road, where they take a right onto Colrain Road. Runners go right at the fork, onto Plain Road, and then take a left onto Meadow Lane, and another left back onto Colrain Road for the return stretch to the Greenfield pool.

Organizers ask that anyone living along any of the

courses please make sure to have dogs on leashes that day so as to not interfere with the race.

Anyone who has not yet registered but is interested can do so on Saturday from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Greenfield pool.

As always, Nash's Mill Road and Eunice Williams Drive will be closed Sunday morning from 8 a.m. until noon. All other roads on the course will be open but motorists are asked to use extreme caution. Spectators who arrive before the race begins will be able to park at the Swimming & Recreation Area, but will not be allowed to leave until the event is over. Spectator parking is also available at Murphy Field on Leyden Road as well as at the Academy of Early Learning, and Valley Medical Center. For a map of parking go to www.greenfield-triathlon.com.

