

GREENFIELD TRIATHLON



PHOTO BY DAN LITTLE

Competitors start out on the sprint course during the 38th Greenfield Triathlon in 2022 on Nash's Mill Road in Greenfield.

Tri reaches milestone

Popular Greenfield event celebrating 40th edition on Sunday; swim portion status still TBD

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The Greenfield Triathlon is hitting a major milestone on Sunday.

The triathlon began in 1983 and has run nearly every year since, the only exception being 2020 due to COVID-19. That makes it the longest-running triathlon in New England.

Sunday marks the 40th running of the race, as it gets underway at 8 a.m. at the Green River Swimming and Recreation Area.

"It's always one of my favorite events," Greenfield Recreation Department Director Christy Moore said. "Being our 40th race, it'll be an extraordinary celebration. That's a long time. We had to delay the celebration a year because of Covid. I'm extremely proud of this event and more so, the committee members who, to this day, are heavily involved in the event."

The Greenfield Triathlon attracts athletes from all over the country.

People from throughout New England participate in the race each year while athletes from California, Alaska,

Quebec, Utah and Florida have also participated.

"Being the 40th year, it's overwhelming to think about how many athletes have been through Greenfield and participated on this beautiful course," Moore said. "They come from all over. We are known across the country for this event."

With rain coming down this week, the race was forced to wait to test the water in the Green River to determine if the swim portion of the triathlon would take place. A sample was taken on Friday, though the results weren't expected to be available until Saturday afternoon. Stay tuned to the race website (greenfield-triathlon.com) for up to date information on whether the swim portion of the race will be contested.

"It's a struggle to manage with Mother Nature," Moore said. "We've been down there testing every day and we're continuing to monitor it."

As always the race features two distances: the international course and the sprint course.

The international course begins with a 0.63-mile swim down the Green

River, with racers exiting at the transition area located at the Recreation Area.

After exiting the transition area, athletes will mount their bikes and proceed to go on a 30.28-mile bike ride. The course begins by taking a left onto Nash's Mill Road before taking another left onto Leyden Road. Next is a turn onto Eunice Williams Drive, after a turn onto Green River Road followed by turning onto Colrain Road. Finally, racers turn back onto Nash's Mill Road toward the transition area.

For the international course, that bike route is repeated four times.

After exiting the bike, the run portion of the triathlon begins. The run for the international race measures at 6.5-miles long, beginning on Nash's Mill Road before turning onto Plain Road. The route proceeds to Greenfield Road before turning onto Eunice Williams Drive. The route continues onto Green River Road, turns onto Colrain Road and ends back on Nash's Mill Road in the transition area to the finish line.

The sprint course is the more popular distance. It starts with a 0.31-mile

swim down the Green River and follows with the same bike course, except the sprint course is only two bike laps compared to the four for the international route. The sprint bike ride is 15.14 miles.

The run follows, which is 3.08 miles. Athletes head down Nash's Mill Road, turn onto Colrain Road and follows that into Plain Road. Athletes then run left onto Meadow Road, turn back onto Colrain Road before making their way back to Nash's Mill Road and to the finish line.

"Nothing has changed as far as the course itself," Moore said. "It's the same route as it was last year."

As of Monday, 207 athletes had signed up to compete. Sign-ups ended on Friday, though the race is holding additional registration from 4-6 p.m. on Saturday.

Last year's winners were Manchester, N.H.'s Mackenzie Hall in the women's international race (2 hours, 29 minutes and 50 seconds), Winthrop's Adam Crombie in the men's international race (2:29:53),

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South Deerfield's Joellen Reino in the women's sprint race (1:18:53) and South Burlington, Vt.'s, Tom Direnzo in the men's sprint race (1:08:45).

For Reino, it was her sixth straight title and she'll be going for her seventh straight this weekend. The Mass. Senior Games will present awards after.

The race offers a local vibe, something Moore says the racers enjoy. That will be on full display on Sunday, when people line the streets around the course to cheer

on the athletes.

"It's our hometown race," Moore said. "We have to get ourselves on the map. People are always happy with the support they get and encouragement they get from the people who live on the course route. They always come out to celebrate and cheer on our athletes."