

GREENFIELD TRIATHLON



STAFF PHOTO/THOMAS JOHNSTON

A group of racers make their way down Leyden Road during the 2024 Greenfield Triathlon on Sunday.

Hermans gets redemption

Cambridge man avenges 2nd-place finish from last year

By **THOMAS JOHNSTON**
Staff Writer

GREENFIELD — Harvard's Magnus Hermans was the first to cross the finish line at the 2023 Greenfield Triathlon, but South Burlington, Vt.'s Tom DiRenzo — competing in a later heat — managed to have a better time to take the win, forcing Hermans to settle for second.

On Sunday during the 2024 edition — the 40th running of the race — Hermans was once again the first runner to complete the sprint course with a time of 1 hour, 3 minutes and 8

seconds.

Hermans, now living in Cambridge, waited while all the other runners came through to see if that time would hold up.

This year it did.

He narrowly edged out Greenfield's Daniel Bensen for first, as Bensen took second with a time of 1:03:14, just six seconds behind Hermans.

"I wanted it last year," Hermans said. "It feels much better this year. This feels great. I'll be back next year and for years to come."

Sunday's race was not the triathlon athletes have become

accustomed to.

The triathlon typically opens with a swim, followed by the bike and the run to close it out. The water in the Green River Swimming Area did not pass the test to be swimmable, as the swim portion of the triathlon was replaced with a one-third mile run near the starting line, followed by the typical bike and run.

Despite no swim portion, Hermans said it didn't stop him from enjoying the race.

"This is the most fun local race I've seen out there," Hermans said. "No swim was unfor-

tunate but even without the swim, it didn't make a difference. It's why I drive two hours out here each time. It's a great course and the volunteers are great. They're ringing their bells and there's people outside their houses cheering you on. It's great."

It did change the strategy of the competitors, as Hermans said he didn't know how to approach the short run to open the race, which was followed by a 15.14 mile bike ride and a 3.08 mile run.

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Hermans, Reino tops at Greenfield Triathlon

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"I didn't know how to pace it," Hermans said. "I didn't know whether to run fast or stick with the pack. I tried to keep up then realized they were relay runners so that was a big mistake. First hill on the bike I felt good. I pushed harder on the bike than last year."

Bensen has won the male sprint event four times, the last coming in 2022. Having competed in the race nearly every year since 2005, Bensen said he was proud to be part of its 40th running.

"I generally don't have much time to specifically train for this race but it's such a great race that I keep coming back," Bensen said. "It's a really fun event. I like any course where you can ride a loop instead of out and backs with 180 degree turns."

Burlington's Mark Mulder took third (1:09:11), Berkeley, Calif.'s Logan Graham placed fourth (1:09:34), Greenfield's Garth Sahneyfelt came in fifth (1:09:54) while Amherst's Ian Burns (1:10:10), Swanzey, N.H.'s Colby Zilinski (1:11:34), South Deerfield's John Reino (1:12:00), Charlestown, N.H.'s Brian Lashway (1:12:23) and Albany, N.Y.'s Peter Dewitt (1:12:25) rounded out the top 10 male sprint finishers.

JoEllen Reino has made winning the sprint race on the women's side look almost routine.

The South Deerfield resident has won the last six races on the women's side and entered Sunday having won it nine times in total.

She made it an even 10 championships during the 40th running of the triathlon, finishing ninth overall and first on the women's side with a time of 1:12:06.

"It felt great out there," Reino said. "I couldn't have done it any harder. I red-lined the whole event so I was going to be happy no matter what place I got but it's always a big deal to win."

Reino was not disappointed that the swim was canceled, and said it didn't change her strategy at all.

"My strategy is to go hard the whole way whether there's a swim or not," Reino said. "It's amazing. It's an honor to have that. It's a big deal."

An annual competitor, Reino said she's always impressed with how well run the race is.

"I'm so impressed with [race director Christy Moore] and the whole group of them," Reino said. "They do such a nice job for a small race. They do so much work. It's such a community event and it's fun no matter what. To have the swim, to not have the swim, it's a great event no matter what."

Easthampton's Erica Tibbetts took second in the women's sprint (1:14:40). Centerville, Utah's Ashley Kernan came in third (1:14:44), Berkeley, Calif.'s Sierra Loomis placed fourth (1:17:11), Spencer's Caitlyn Germain came in fifth (1:19:35) while Deerfield's Jennifer Schimmel (1:19:54),



STAFF PHOTO/THOMAS JOHNSTON

Magnus Hermans makes his way out of the transition area and into the running portion of the 2024 Greenfield Triathlon on Sunday.

South Deerfield's Mallory Sullivan (1:20:19), Shutesbury's Melissa Warwick (1:20:43), Groton's Meghan Sunyar (1:21:06) and Greenfield's Audrey Boraski (1:22:25) rounded out the top 10.

The international race started out with the same short run as the sprint race, but the longer course followed with 30.28 miles on the bike and a 6.5-mile run.

After winning the international race on the women's side for the third time in 2021, Watertown, Conn.'s Cassandra Maximenko did not compete in the Greenfield Triathlon the last two years.

She returned on Sunday and added a fourth championship to her resume, completing the course in a time of 2:17:54 to take first overall on the women's side and fifth overall.

"I started doing this triathlon way back in 2001," Maximenko said. "It was way back. It's always been one of my favorite races. I keep coming back because the community is fantastic. The volunteers are amazing. Where else can you go to a race where there are little kids in the back of a truck wearing their jammies ringing a cowbell at eight in the morning to cheer us on? Everyone is so supportive and that's why I keep coming back."

Maximenko used the first lap of the bike portion to get a feel for the course again and from there, used her speed to clear the competition.

"I'm glad to be able to take the win again," Maximenko said. "The four laps is so much fun because the first lap is a sighting lap where you're figuring out the course and the corners. The next three you just try to go faster. It's super fun. There's no big hills on the run but it still ends up being challenging. The whole thing is great."

Northampton's Mikey Toledano took second (2:27:25), Shrewsbury's Tonya Spagnuolo came in third (2:28:10), Easthampton's Tori Laverdiere came in fourth (2:33:01) while Sunderland's Lianne McCluskey placed fifth (2:33:32).

Jefferson's Kathryn Hiller



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Daniel Bensen makes his way out of the transition area and into the running portion of the 2024 Greenfield Triathlon on Sunday.

(2:35:41), Poestenkill, N.Y.'s Lauren Lounsbury (2:37:29), Dorchester's Emily Resciniti (2:51:55), Amherst's Jodi Stevens (2:55:33) and South Hadley's Anna Klimes (2:57:12) rounded out the top 10.

Worcester's Matt Rabasco competed in the Greenfield Triathlon for the first time on Sunday, but you'd never know it by the results.

Rabasco completed the international course in a time of 1:57:58, giving him first place overall.

"It was pretty challenging," Rabasco said. "Especially the first hill coming off of the transition and in front of the bridge. The hills balance out where you have flats where you can cook."

Without the swim, it was the first duathlon Rabasco said he's competed in. A frequent racer, the change-up didn't seem to bother him.

"I've never done a duathlon before," Rabasco said. "This was a lot of fun. It feels good to do my first duathlon and get a win. I just did an Ironman at Lake Placid a few weeks ago and qualified for a world championship. From here on out, it's just a celebration."

Winthrop's Adam Crombie came in second (2:09:27), Shelburne Falls' Kristian Whitsett placed third (2:12:00), Northampton's Eric

Pfalzgraf took fourth (2:13:57) while Amherst's Carsten Redenz earned fifth (2:17:57).

Manchester, Vt.'s Isaiah Lewit (2:19:00), Montgomery, N.Y.'s Mike Kresge (2:19:09), Littleton's Eric Merideth (2:19:12), Springfield's Ryan Barnhart (2:20:18) and Greenfield's Ben Whitbeck (2:21:10) closed out the top 10 on the men's side.

Team Irlag Full Send had the top two-person international team (2:36:22), Team Trifury Batlers was the top three-person international team (2:54:50), Team Hake won the two-person sprint (1:16:00) while Team Hampshire Meadows won the three-person sprint (1:06:06).

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