



Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 21, 2009

2008 Champs Defend Titles at “TRI-TO-WIN” SavageMan Triathlon

International Media Attraction to Third Annual “Savage Race to Fight a Savage Cancer”

Westminster, MD – Sweden’s Bjorn Andersson and U.S. Olympic medalist, Susan Williams, defended their 2008 “TRI-TO-WIN” SavageMan Triathlon long-course titles at the “world’s most savage and beautiful triathlon,” organized by, and benefiting, the Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation, on Sept. 20, 2009 at Deep Creek Lake State Park in western Maryland, USA. This year’s much acclaimed and heralded race, attracted athletes from 25 states and the District of Columbia (notably including all four corners of the U.S. – WA, CA, ME & FL), and from abroad, as an international pro field competed with Andersson, world-record holder on the bike at this race distance, and Williams, the U.S.’s only Olympic medalist ever in the sport of triathlon (Athens 2004) from Boulder, CO, who set a woman’s course record of under 5-hours (4:56:41) and placing first among women and third overall.

Both, International Triathlon Union (ITU) pro Margie Shapiro, USA; and Lyne Bessette, former Canadian Olympic cyclist, national road, cyclo-cross and time trial national champ; made their first half Ironman-distance debut – to compete along with 2007 SavageMan champion Tara Norton from Canada. These pro standouts placed consecutively behind Williams at the race’s completion.

In the men’s field, Andersson dropped back 1:20 from his last year’s finish with 4:43:17 and just under 2-minutes ahead of USA’s Josh Beck who at one point in the race was 19-minutes back and actively reeled Andersson in on the bike and the run, but ran out of race course to secure an upset victory. Just two weeks earlier, Beck was the 1st US finisher and 7th overall at the grueling Powerman Zofingen in Switzerland, one of the most significant long course duathlons in the world (10k run-150k bike-30k run).

According to Foundation President and Race Director, Greg Safko, “The ‘TRI-TO-WIN’ SavageMan Triathlon has garnered much international attention as arguably the world’s toughest and most “savage” triathlon at the long-course distance. We continue to attract and heighten interest among the world’s most accomplished triathletes to test themselves and compete on this very challenging and unique triathlon course.”

Besides its signature event, the Festival features a SavageMan International-distance (Olympic) triathlon to compliment race offerings and fundraising. “*Triathlete*” magazine, one of the world’s premier multi-sport publications, featured a notable quote in its August issue re: the race, and senior editor Jay Prasuhn actively participated in this year’s race

The Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation

...the voice for melanoma prevention, detection, care and cure



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filing a [pre-race](#) and [post-race](#) reports, with a future article likely to appear in the print issue of "*Triathlete*."

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The SavageMan Half's "signature" features boast: a 1.2-mile swim in Maryland's largest lake at 2,000' in the Allegheny Mountains highlands; followed by the crown jewel bike stage featuring nearly 5,800' vertical climbing and the most savage ascent in all of triathlon, the Westernport "Wall" and Big Savage Mountain summit over the Eastern Continental Divide; and, culminates in twice tackling the 6.5-mile loop course along the shores of Deep Creek Lake and undulating State Park Road and finally back to the exceedingly panoramic, lakeside finish.

Many triathletes now recognize the famous vertical challenge—"the Westernport "Wall," at just four street blocks, though not particularly long, features an average grade of 25% and a max pitch of 31%. Successfully getting up the final block of the "Wall" takes a bit of skill, luck and a lot of "True Savage" determination! Only 46 athletes were able to conquer the "Wall" in 2007 and 114 in '08 and the count (still underway) increased during the 2009 "Wall" ascent, with athletes required to continue and finish the entire course.

Men

1. Bjorn Andersson (SWE) 4:43:17
2. Josh Beck (USA) 4:45:04
3. Rick Hellard (CAN) 4:59:38

Women

1. Susan Williams (USA) 4:56:41
2. Margaret Shapiro (USA) 5:11:36
3. Lyne Bessette (CAN) 5:17:08

The Cause: All proceeds from the "TRI-TO-WIN...the fight against melanoma" SavageMan Triathlon Festival will support the Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation's efforts toward: medical research leading to a cure for melanoma; opportunities to educate the general public on

prevention and the seriousness of melanoma; and, the development of resources for patients and the entire melanoma community. Melanoma is the most serious and lethal form of skin cancer that

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U.S. Olympic medalist, Susan Williams (USA), defends her title with a women's course record.



World-record holder, Bjorn Andersson (SWE), displays skills in technical mountain descent during '09 race.



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strikes triathletes and individuals of all ages, races and economic levels. The Foundation is very instrumental as “the voice for melanoma prevention, detection, care and cure.”

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Joanna M. Nicolay Melanoma Foundation: <http://www.melanomaresource.org>

GOT SKIN? LEARN THESE FACTS!!!

- Melanoma is the most serious and lethal form of skin cancer.
- One person dies every hour in the U.S. from melanoma.
- The lifetime risk of developing melanoma is **1 in 39**.
- Melanoma is the only cancer for which **incidence and mortality are rising unabated**, yet **only receives 2.5% of the funding** provided by the National Cancer Institute.
- Over one million new cases of skin cancer occur in the U.S.– **more than all other cancers combined**.
- Melanoma is the **most common cancer among young adults ages 20-30**; and, is
 - The **primary cause of cancer death for women ages 25-30**; and,
 - **Second most common cause of cancer death for women ages 30-35**.
- During the past 10 years, **melanoma is one of only three cancers where the incidence rate is increasing**.
- 10,000 people in the U.S. died in 2007 from skin cancer of which 8,000 were melanoma.