

Triathlon

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mounted deputies at the Penn State Campus where the transition from bicycling to running will take place, and where the race will finish.

Many of the triathlon volunteers have been involved since the first race in 1982, a few, such as Ayleen Landon of Dallas, even longer.

Landon, who supervises the bike to run transition at Penn State

has been involved with the triathlon since before it was a triathlon — when it was only a run more than a decade ago.

"It was called the Back Mountain Run for about five years," said Landon. "My kids and my husband ran."

Her husband, Tom Landon, makes sure that the athletes all get on the bus at Penn State to make it to Harveys Lake to the swim.

Ron Dean of Dallas was pulled into the triathlon by friends for the first race in 1982, and he's been stuck with it ever since.

"I had some friends who were doing this and they said do me a favor...." said Dean, who along with his wife Amy, takes care of the registration of racers. This year, he'll also be monitoring the hairpin curve at the face of the Huntsville Dam.

For the Deans and other Back Mountain families, the triathlon has become a sort of exchange program, as they've opened their home to professional athletes from around the world. For one race, he had nine athletes staying in his home in Foxhollow.

This year, sisters Joan and Joy Hansen are staying with the Deans.

"Joy Hansen puts away a roast beef dinner," said Ron Dean. "You can't eat in a day what she puts away at dinner. Joan has a baked potato and a salad."

Of all the athletes that have stayed with them, Amy Dean remembers best New Zealander Scott Donaldson who stayed with them two years ago.

"It was his first time in the U.S.," said Amy Dean. "He was kind of like a kid in a candy store. He was supposed to stay for a week, but instead he stayed two and half weeks."

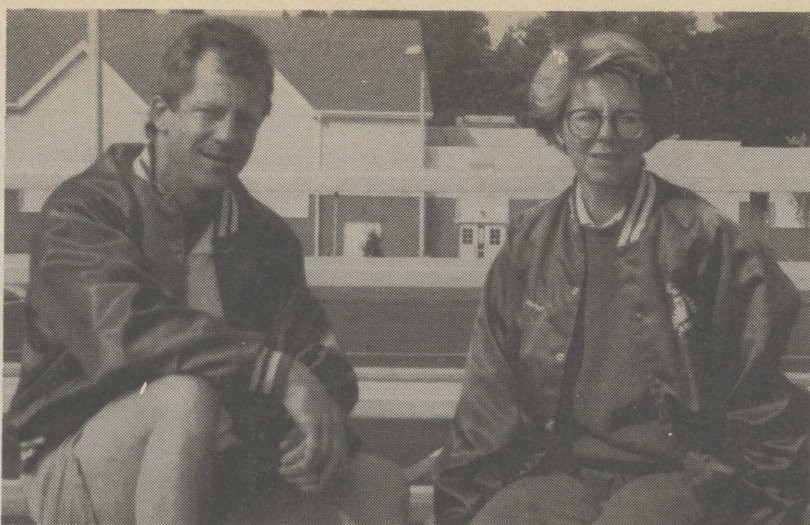
To this day, the Deans and Donaldson keep in touch.

"It's like an extended family," said Amy Dean.

"I like it because it's a very big event. It's a good event for the Back Mountain," said Chip Morgan of Shavertown, swim coordinator for the past four years.

A swim instructor for the American Red Cross, Morgan has been a volunteer for the triathlon since the first one.

"Gradually, I just moved up," he said.



A WINNING TEAM — Co-race directors for the 1992 Wilkes-Barre Triathlon James Harris and Joanne Gensel at Penn State University's Lehman Campus which will host the triathlon this year.

For Pat Kramer of Shavertown, who finds hosts for the international athletes, the triathlon has been a family project since the very beginning.

Her brother Tim Bauman helped found the race in 1976 when it was just a run. Though no longer from the area, he puts his familiarity with the pros to work, making sense of the race for spectators as an announcer at the finish line.

Though Kramer's husband David was killed several years ago while making sure the course was set up properly the night before the race, she's stuck with the triathlon.

If there is a medical emergency during the race, Dr. Charles Krivenko of Dallas and Nancy Kline of Shavertown, nursing supervisor of Nesbitt Hospital's emergency room, will have a cadre of paramedics at both the swimming area and Penn State University.

Ed Gensel, along with Dallas Borough Police Chief Jack Fowler and Frank Gelsleichter will coordinate the volunteers along the course to try to prevent accidents. The Murgas Amateur Radio Club is providing radios and operators for the race.

Martin Noon and Larry Dauksis of Harveys Lake gather a group of motorcyclists together who carry race marshalls along the course to make sure no rules are broken.

Dozens of other volunteers coordinate other aspects of the race, and scores of people help simply by being there with water along the course for the racers.

Joanne Gensel started as a volunteer helping at the water stations.

"I'm not an athlete. I'm not a swimmer, a runner or a biker," said Gensel. "To see it all come together, it's a wonderful experience. It's a fun event, it's a healthy event."

In 1988 Gensel assisted race director Jerry Kowalski and in 1989 she helped director Scott Millington.

In 1990 she and Harris teamed up to direct the race. The team approach worked, making it possible for a director to be two places at once in the growing race.

Gensel oversees the action at the swim area, where the race begins and where the swim to bicycle transition is, and Harris stations himself at Penn State University, where the bicycle to run transition is located, along with the finish line.

Gensel takes care of the registration, Harris the publicity.

"I enjoy talking to the athletes on the phone," said Gensel. "We get calls from all over the world, and they say it's a great race. People forget how national and international the race has become."

Gensel said that one competitor entered the race after hearing about it on the beach.

Harris's involvement with the triathlon started as a competitor in 1985, when he raced in his first triathlon in the Back Mountain.

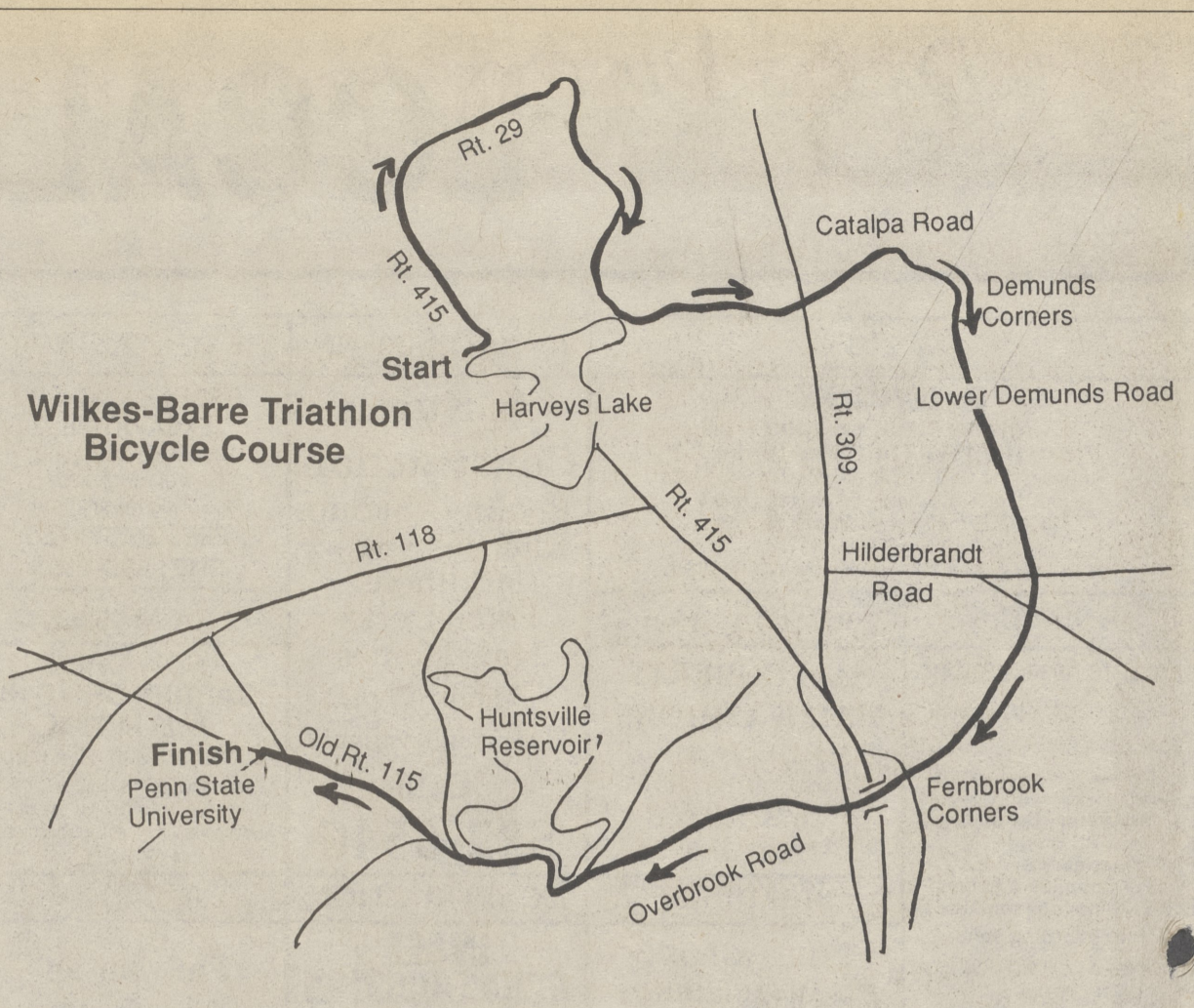
"My wife Andrea was a swim coordinator in 1989. In 1989 Scott Millington asked me to be bike coordinator," said Harris, who still races in triathlons. "I miss racing this race."

"I liken it to theater, to directing a play. I was in theater for years and years. I've been doing events like this since high school," said Harris, but he added, like a play, "there's nothing a director can do on opening day."

Harris began racing in triathlons because of the challenge, but says that directing the race is a lot harder.

"I never dreamt about racing. But I dream about the race a lot," said Harris. "Triathlon is an individual competition. Organizing the triathlon is a very big team effort."

"People come up and just say thank you and it's a great feeling," said Gensel.



Triathlon course and schedule

The Wilkes-Barre Triathlon will start at 8:30 a.m. with the 1.5 kilometer swimming leg at Sandy Beach at Harveys Lake. Spectators are strongly advised not to drive to the lake because there isn't any parking available. Shuttle buses will be provided from the Penn State campus in Lehman to the lake.

The first swimmer is expected out of the water by 8:50 a.m. and the bicycle leg will begin.

The 40 kilometer bicycle course will follow Route 415 from Sandy Beach to Hanson's, where it will turn north to Route 29. From Route 29, the course will turn back towards the lake at

Alderson. The bicyclists will continue along the Alderson-Kunkle Road, Catalpa Road, Lower Demunds Road, Overbrook Road, Huntsville Road, and Old Route 115 to Penn State University's Lehman Campus.

Traffic may be slowed all along the bicycle course, but drivers can expect delays at the following intersections in particular: Route 309 and Kunkle-Alderson Road, Demunds Corners, Fernbrook Corners, Overbrook Road and Pioneer Avenue, and Huntsville Road at the face of the dam. While the triathlon was held at College Misericordia for all of its previous years, it was moved

to Penn State because the construction work at Misericordia left no room for the triathlon set-up.

The first bicyclist is expected to finish at about 9:50 a.m.

The 10 kilometer run course will take the athletes through rural farm roads behind the Penn State Campus to Sutton Road and Mountain View Road. The first overall finisher is expected at about 10:30 a.m. at the Penn State Campus.

The race is expected to be completed by 1 p.m. The awards ceremony has been scheduled for 1:30 p.m.

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