

# Triathlon

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Still, he feels confident that he will do well. He believes that a time of under two hours will win the triathlon.

Competing for the first time will be 19-year-old Jarrod Baranowski. The Lake-Lehman graduate and former soccer and volleyball player will have to rely on his youthful athleticism to get him through his first true triathlon. Jarrod competed on part of a relay team at last year's race.

Although some observers might feel that Jarrod's age and ability give him an advantage over older competitors, he disagrees. "Most people peak in this sport after they reach 30," the anxious rookie stated, "I'm really young when it comes to this kind of thing."

Jarrold works out year-round but says that since January he has tried to bike at least 100 miles a week. He usually swims and runs a few times a week. When asked what his expectations were for this first triathlon he laughingly replied, "no idea." He says that he is a bit nervous and he just wants "to do well and in a few years really start to turn in some good times."

Finally, in the family-that-trains-together-stays-together department, we have Team Rittenhouse. Joe and Pat Persico head a group of six family members who will compete as two different relay teams.

Joe, an attorney at Rosenn, Jenkins and Greenwald, will swim for his team. His sister-in-law, Maureen VanBloem, will bike and her husband, Pete VanBloem, will run.

Pat (Rittenhouse) Persico will bike for her team. Pete's brother, Ed VanBloem, will swim, and Pat's brother, Dan Rittenhouse, will run.

According to Pat, the Back Mountain Triathlon really is a family affair. "We have t-shirts made up that say 'Team Rittenhouse.' We really have fun. The gang of us even vacation together in Corolla, North Carolina. We call it 'Camp Corolla' because we're all in training while we're there."



Jim Harris, race director, and competitor in 1995.

You might wonder how a triathlon becomes the focus of a family's energy. Pat says that her husband, Joe, started the tradition. "My husband has been swimming at the Y for a while. He met some people there that we train for the triathlon. One day he

*"Most people peak in this sport after they reach 30."*

Jarrold Baranowski  
19-year-old triathlon rookie

came home and said that we should give it a try just for fun." Pat says that in their first year of competition no one knew what to expect. However, their training has become more intense in recent years.

"With each team member competing in a different event, that's basically what they concentrate on. We also do some cross-training to give us variety. Even when we work out, we're there for each other and push each other just like we do in the race itself."

Pat's family has competed in triathlons in bigger cities, but she says that nowhere is as organized as the Back Mountain Triathlon. "We've been to places that you would think would have their act together, but they didn't. The people of the Back Mountain, the volunteers, the organizers, all of them, are terrific."

## Wilkes-Barre Triathlon will be U.S. Championship qualifier

Cold weather in Detroit last weekend has made the Wilkes-Barre Triathlon even more important to female professional racers.

Race director Jim Harris III said the women's U.S. Professional Team should have been selected after last weekend's event in Detroit, but 48° water forced shortening of the swim leg. As a result, only three of the six team members, who will compete in the World Championships in Cleveland Aug. 25, were chosen. The other three will be picked from the top finishers at Wilkes-Barre.

Harris received a call from the president of the U.S.A. Triathlon Federation late Monday, asking if the local event would host the second half of the U.S. Pro National Championship. Harris and his crew scrambled to accommodate the request, with the result that several additional competitors will be here. Among the late registrants are Joy Luetener, a former winner here, Gail Laurence and possibly Karen Smyers, who won here in 1993.

## Triathlon has gained international respect

The Wilkes-Barre Triathlon began 15 years ago, as an outgrowth of the Back Mountain 10-mile run.

Rusty Flack, Harry Reich, Lee Turner and Mike Jones were looking for an innovative fundraiser for the American Cancer Society when they approached Tim Bauman, the run organizer. They added a one-mile swim in Harveys Lake and a 37-mile bicycle leg to create the Back Mountain Triathlon.

The first event was held Aug. 28, 1982, and attracted 124 local competitors. Until 1985 the race was mostly a local affair, but it began to attract regional standouts like Bill Ruth, who won the event in 1982, 1983 and 1985.

Race director Jerry Kowalski

took the race into the big leagues in 1986, when a professional division was added. Local business donations funded cash prizes, and participation soared to 488 athletes, including 21 pros from around the world.

In 1988, the Wilkes-Barre Triathlon hosted the first-ever Triathlon Federation Championships. Seventy-nine professionals took part, in a total field of 851. Mike Pigg won the men's division with a time of 1:51:04, and Colleen Cannon took the women's crown at 2:04:34.

After 10 years at College Misericordia, the finish line moved to the Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus in 1992. The course now consists of a 1500 meter swim, a 40 km (24.8 mile) bike tour and

an 11 km (6.8 mile) run.

The local triathlon hosted the Pro National Championships and Ironman Qualifying Series in 1992, with the top six finishers qualifying for the world championships. "If you win in Wilkes-Barre it means a lot," said Mike Pigg in 1993. "This isn't a small race."

Australian Greg Welch set an event record in '93, at 1:57:48, which still stands. The triathlon was again an Ironman qualifier in 1993, and Jim Harris, who had been co-director of the race the previous three years decided to compete. He won an amateur slot and competed in the Ironman that October, finishing at 12:29:49.

Harris is back as race director this year, as he was in 1995.



## St. Therese's Brennan tournament winners

112 golfers participated in the recent St. Therese's Joe Brennan Memorial Golf Tournament. Winners in the mens' flight were the team of Allen, Gosart, Heffron and Piazza. Womens' flight winners were the team of Zampetti, Umphred, DeGennaro and Perkins. Mixed flight winners were the team of Gelso, Gelso Williams and Williams.

Long drive was a titanic blast by Barry Horwath of 340 yards. Closest to the line was won by Peggy Perkins, while Jim Dougalis won the closest to the pin competition.

Winners are, seated, from left: Jean Brennan, Peggy Perkins, Donna Zampetti, Lois DeGennaro, Cathy Gelso, Fran Williams; standing: are Jack Allen, Chuck Heffron, Joe Piazza, Don Gosart, Barry Horwath-tournament chairman; Charlie Gelso, Fr. Peter Crynes, Gary Williams.

## 1996 WILKES-BARRE TRIATHLON RACE WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Saturday, Aug. 17

10:30 a.m.: Future Triathletes 1 mile run, Penn State campus, Lehman

12 p.m.: Registration opens, Penn State campus

12-5 p.m.: Health & Sports Expo, Penn State campus

12:30 p.m.: Bike area open at lake

5 p.m.: Mandatory pre-race meeting for all athletes. Registration closed for one hour.

6 p.m.: Registration reopens

7 p.m.: Registration closes

7:30 p.m.: Lake area closed; all bikes must be racked with numbers affixed

Sunday, Aug. 18:

6 a.m.: Campus open; athletes place run bags at bike racks, take buses to lake. Lake area open; athletes check in - must have helmet inspected to receive swim cap

It is strongly suggested that spectators stay at Penn State and not travel to the lake.

7:45 a.m.: Swim check-in closes

8:15 a.m.: Race start

8:35 a.m.: First swimmer finishes (estimate)

9:15 a.m.: Traffic on Old Rt. 115 rerouted to Mountain View Drive

9:30 a.m.: First biker finish (estimate)

10:15 a.m.: First overall finisher (estimate)

11:30 a.m.: Bike course closed (estimate)

1 p.m.: Run course closed (estimate)

1:30 p.m.: Awards ceremony and raffle, race party; outdoors weather permitting, in Field House if rain.

## Harveys Lake Yacht Club Invitational

Held Aug. 11. Two races, combined results

1st Place - Dale Campbell

2nd Place - Bob Hall

3rd Place - Jack Barnes Jr.

Also racing: John Morris, John

Alaimo, Barbara Aston, Dave Hoffman, Ann Barnes, Hery and Kigoko Steuben, Lane Giddings, Fred Shaefer, Joan Williams and Jane Harter.

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