

## For the record, triathlons big hits

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The Sept. 3 inaugural Summertime Blues Sprint Triathlon in Freeport drew 184 finishers, 179 individuals and five relay teams.

The Sept. 9 24th annual Brazosport Relay Triathlon in Lake Jackson drew 64 relay teams and 10 individuals, nine males and one female.

Except for the swim segment — a 500-yard, open-water swim in the Old Brazos River in the Summer Times Blues Triathlon and a 1,000 meters (1,100 yards) pool swim in the BRT — the runs and the cycle routes were the same, 5K (3.1 miles) runs and 15-mile bike rides.

However, Freeport triathletes ran over the Velasco Bridge, the levee and cycled over and back across the Intracoastal Waterway Bridge; BRT teams ran two 5K relay legs and cycled on level courses.

How do the fastest individual and team triathletes compare in the two races?

Swim comparisons are impossible unless someone better at math than I can crunch the numbers and determine relative speeds.

Christopher Sustala, 36, was the fastest male swimmer in the Freeport triathlon in 7:48; Greg Bunker, 33, was the fastest

male swimmer in the BRT in 13:14. Sustala finished second overall in the competition in 1:09:46. Bunker's ContraSlow team from Lake Jackson finished third among male ages 73-160, determined by the sum of ages of team members, in 1:41:57.

Jada Hallmark, 27, finished the 500-yard Freeport swim in 7:34 and the triathlon in 1:19:51 for first place in her 25-29 age group. Swimmer Alison Hasbargen, 23, finished the BRT swim in 14:09; Hasbargen's team, Supernova of Dow Chemical, won first place in the mixed corporate competition in 1:45:20. Hasbargen also swam the 500 yards in the Freeport triathlon in 8:06 and finished in 1:30:18 for second in the 20-24 female division.

The fastest male cyclist in the Freeport triathlon was Trent Stephens, 34, in 39:21 (22.9 mph), which earned first overall in the male competition in 1:08:39. The top BRT cyclist, Spencer Rippstein, 29, averaged 26.6 mph and finished the route in 33:25.

Jennifer Browning, 38, cycled the Freeport course fastest for the females in 42:18 (21.3 mph); Browning finished 31st overall and first in the female 35-39 age bracket. Sarah Hayne finished the BRT route in 42:19 (21 mph); her team, The Venus Connection of Lake Jackson, finished first in the overall mixed competition in 2:04:44. Sustala, the fastest Freeport triathlon male swimmer, ran the fastest 5K leg in 19:38, a 6:33-mile pace. Jose Lara, 30, finished the fastest 5K

in the BRT in 16:44, a 5:24-mile pace that earned his team, Tornado Warning of Richmond, first place in the male 161-200 competition.

Overall female masters winner (40 plus) in the Freeport triathlon Lisa Tilton-McCarthy, 40, ran the fastest 5K, an 18:38 run for a 6:19 pace and a triathlon finish of 1:17:07. The fastest swimmer in the Freeport triathlon, Jada Hallmark, 27, ran the fastest BRT 5K in 22:49, a 7:22 pace, which garnered her team, We 4 Play of Houston, first place in the mixed 161-200 age bracket.

The top individual marks in the inaugural Summertime Blues Triathlon are records posted for next year's triathletes to match or break. The top individual marks in this year's BRT did not match or break any records.

Mark Chamberlain of Lake Jackson set the male swim record, 11:29, in 2001; Bonnie Garcia-Meitin of Angleton set the female swim record, 13 minutes, in 2002. Cornelia Garibay of Houston ran a record 16:41 5K in 1999; Melissa Hurta of Jones Creek ran a female record 18:34 5K in 1999. Kenny York of Angleton raced a record cycle route of 29:24 (30.6 mph) in 2002, and Annie Hadow of Houston posted a female record ride of 38:40 (23 mph) in 2004.

**Bill Shaw's column appears every other Monday in *The Facts*.**