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Tegenkamp, Baillie Win 20K Titles At New Haven Road Race

Nearly 6,000 Compete

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10:11 PM EDT, September 3, 2012

NEW HAVEN –

Renee Metivier Baillie and Matt Tegenkamp both came to the Stratton Faxon New Haven 20K looking for a rebirth of sorts.

Tegenkamp, a track runner from Portland, Ore., finished a disappointing 19th in the 10,000 meters at the Olympics. He decided he would move up to longer distances and give running the roads a shot.

Metivier Baillie, a former All-American track and cross country runner at Colorado, has been recovering from Achilles surgery a year ago. She decided recently she would move up to longer distances, too; she signed up for her first marathon, in Chicago, two weeks ago. She came to New Haven with a new look – she chopped off her hair and dyed what was left blond – and left with a new outlook.

"This solidified moving up to the longer distances," she said after winning the national 20K title in 1 hour, 7 minutes, 8 seconds.

"Everybody keeps telling me I'd be good at them, I'm like, 'Uh, I don't know, it's so long.' But it's fun."

Tegenkamp didn't appear to have a shot early on in the men's race, after Luke Puskedra bolted in the third mile and held the lead for most of the way. But midway through the 12.4-mile race, Tegenkamp started to chip away at the lead. By 10 miles, he had caught Puskedra and, with 400 meters left, he pulled away to win in 58:30.

"I knew I was really fit and wanted to finish the season on a positive note," said Tegenkamp, 30.

The course changed for the 35th annual race, winding out past the Yale Bowl and back through downtown on Chapel Street before heading to East Rock Park, with organizers attempting to flatten out the course and make it more traffic- and spectator-friendly.

There were 2,369 runners in the 20K and 3,548 in the 5K, which was won by Ryan Pearl of Hamden (15:33). Sarah Piazza of New Haven won the women's 5K (18:41).

Tegenkamp was running in just his second road race. Puskedra, a 2012 Oregon graduate, was running his third.

"I raced Falmouth three weeks ago and didn't get out well there," said Puskedra, 22. "I kind of underestimated the race and let the elite pack go. I don't think I was under 4:50 for the first mile there. Today, I didn't know how fast I was running, then I saw 4:30 and I was like, 'Oh, shoot.'"

"The funny thing was my coach was like, 'If you run anything under 28:40 for the 10K, forget about it.'"

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Puskedra ran through the 10K mark – alone – in 28:34.

Forget about it.

"I did so much work so hard in the middle of that race," Tegenkamp said. "I was just running and pushing. I'd look down for 400 meters, regroup, look ahead and see that he was getting closer and push for 800 meters. Slow down, regroup. I just kept doing that the entire end of the race."

He caught Puskedra in the 10th mile in East Rock Park.

"I knew he was coming," Puskedra said. "I tried to work the downhill. I couldn't shake him. In the last .4, he just took off."

Metivier Baillie took the women's lead in the ninth mile. Molly Pritz finished second (1:07:21) and Stephanie Rothstein third (1:07:59).

"I wanted to take off at Mile 3 and I was like, 'Nooo. That's a long way to go by myself,' " said Metivier Baillie, 30, of Bend, Ore. "So I waited. Stephanie made the first move at Mile 7. I thought, 'All right, we're going to go.' Then it calmed down. But I was already ready for it."

The first time Metivier Baillie ran any kind of distance, it was a half-marathon in 2010. She hated it but she wasn't really trained for it. This time, she was ready.

"My foot made the decision," she said. "I kept trying to push the 5K training and it wasn't working. It does really well with distance."

She felt great Monday.

"I'm getting a tattoo next week — it's going to be a phoenix rising from the ashes," she said. "I'm back. I'm excited."

Top 15 male finishers: 1. Matt Tegenkamp, Portland, Ore., 58:30; 2. Luke Puskedra, Ogden, Utah, 58:48; 3. Augustus Maiyo, Colorado Springs, Colo., 59:39; 4. Joseph Chirlee, San Antonio, Tex., 59:54; 5. Robert Cheseret, Colorado Springs, Colo., 1:00:00; 6. Sean Quigley, Boulder, Colo., 1:00:02; 7. Christopher Landry, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1:00:04; 8. Ben Bruce, Eugene, Ore., 1:00:22; 9. Brent Vaughn, Portland, Ore., 1:00:24; 10. Patrick Smyth, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1:00:27; 11. Tim Nelson, Portland, Ore., 1:00:48; 12. Andrew Carlson, Minneapolis, Minn., 1:01:13; 13. Chris Barnicle, Albuquerque, N.M., 1:01:27; 14. Timothy Ritchie, Brighton, Mass., 1:01:47; 15. Joe Moore, Raleigh, N.C., 1:01:50.

Top 15 female finishers: 1. Renee Mativier Baillie, Boulder, Colo., 1:07:08; 2. Molly Pritz, Rochester, Mich., 1:07:21; 3. Stephanie Rothstein, Flagstaff, Ariz., 1:07:59; 4. Serena Burla, Falls Church, Va., 1:08:45; 5. Adriana Pirtea, Fort Collins, Colo., 1:09:06; 6. Alisha Williams, Colorado Springs, Colo., 1:09:11; 7. Jeannette Faber, Portland, Ore., 1:09:35; 8. Stephanie Pezzullo, Charlotte, N.C., 1:09:36; 9. Brianne Nelson, Fort Collins, Colo., 1:09:37; 10. Katie McGregor, St. Louis Park, Minn., 1:10:00; 11. Kristen Fryburg, Boulder, Colo., 1:10:33; 12. Wendy Thomas, Windsor, Colo., 1:10:41; 13. Mattie Suver, Boulder, Colo., 1:10:53; 14. Addie Bracy, Boulder, Colo., 1:11:06; 15. Sheri Piers, Falmouth, Me., 1:12:01.

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