

Wynn Wins Dramatic Superior | by phillip gary smith

"The win felt great!" is what Wynn Davis, 26 year old rising star from River Falls, Wisconsin, exclaimed after taking the overall championship at the Superior Sawtooth 100 mile, and in under 24 hours.

Drama ruled the front of the pack. Andy Holak, former champion at this race, leading at the mile 71.6 Sugar Loaf Road aid station, as he had for the entire race, was now sick. Leaving this stop shortly after 1:00 a.m., more than 17 hours into the event, Andy was passed a few miles later by an accelerating Davis near Alfred's Pond, a landmark on the trail. Five minutes later, he collapsed to the trail's side. Wynn turned back to check on his friend before making his way on to the Cramer Road aid station to send assistance.

The spirits of Gitchee Gumee were alive that night - of no moon and black sky - as Dr. Cathy Drexler just happened to be volunteering at Cramer, pulling an all night shift before running her own trail marathon the next morning. Dr. Drexler explained, "I backtracked on the trail a distance that seemed to be less than a mile. Andy and his pacer, Steve, were moving along on the trail, and Andy arrived at Cramer on his feet."

An IV was administered at the aid station. Wynn's dad, Carver, crewing for his son, clicked up the heater in his van to warm a shivering Andy who insisted Mr. Davis not delay on his account and drive immediately to the next aid station, Temperance River, to meet Wynn. So, off they went; the former race leader concerned that his condition not affect the race of the competitor who passed him, riding along shotgun in the Davis van, heater blazing.

Andy explained, "What happened at the Superior Sawtooth really happened suddenly. I felt super at Crosby-Manitou at 62.2 miles, arriving there just before dark. My legs felt great, and I was still running at a really good pace, feeling light and super. About five miles out of Crosby-Manitou, I got sick and started throwing up. It happened so suddenly."

"I knew at that time I needed to drink water and eat, but even water wasn't palatable. From there, it was all downhill. I think I was sweating more than I realized because it was a humid day - not that hot on Friday, but very humid (in July, Andy had won the hot and humid Voyageur Trail 50 Mile). Basically I think I needed more fluids, more electrolytes and more food. I think I got behind on all of those things for the pace I was running at the time. Even when I got sick, my legs still felt great, and I could run at a good pace between bouts of nausea, dizziness and incoherence."

Davis went on to finish in the second fastest time ever on the Superior Sawtooth 100 course with a 23:17. After the race Wynn, looking forward, said, "I will definitely be back in 2008 to defend and to lower my time as I want to try and break the course record here at the Sawtooth 100. After I finish some unfinished business at a few more Midwest races like Ice Age and Voyageur, I plan to focus on 100 mile races." As a rookie ultra race director, Wynn's inaugural Chippewa Moraine 50 km is April 12, 2008.

Andy found recovery by taking his true trophies of life, the three giggling, happy Holak children, swimming at the host hotel just hours after being transported back.

In the battle for the open win, Scott Meyers caught Duke Rembleski for the first time in the race just after the Temperance aid station, mile 84. Running together over the next 11 miles, Scott got his winning edge with a fresh pair of shoes at the last aid station, Oberg. After settling for second last year, he won the open championship in 26:59, just minutes ahead of Duke and an hour and a half better than his 2006 finish. Duke won the 2006 Moose Mountain Marathon, but this was his first attempt at the 100 mile distance. Masters winner, Paul Jaeger, slid in right behind these two at 28:46 with Jerry Frost taking masters silver.

Susan Donnelly, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, now has the women's overall win on the new course in 32:35 to go with a previous victory on the "old" Sawtooth. Susan remarked, "I felt good at the Finland aid station (the halfway mark), and I just went on from there. I'm delighted to win my favorite race on this most beautiful trail, the Superior Hiking Trail."

Diane Farmer finished just six minutes ahead of Julie Berg and won the women's open. Earning the masters victory, Julie avenged a disappointing DNF in 2006 that motivated her throughout the distance this year. Her pink gaiters livened up the dark woods.

Superior Trail 50 Mile

A brilliant new race record was set as Chris Gardner burned the out-and-back course in 7:59, the first time under eight hours ever in this event. Chris said, "My previous background has been the road marathon experience, where I learned patience, but trail running has become my passion. My goal was to run slightly ahead of a record pace, but I felt relaxed, enjoyed the day, and got in with a seven still showing on the clock. I'm now curious about the 100 mile distance."

Adam Harmer won the open in 8:58 with second going to Goeff Hanson. Masters male winner was Brent Bjerckness, 40, with only ten minutes over 55 year old Buck Benson.

Rochelle Wirth took the women's overall championship by four minutes in 9:40, edging out Deb Bennett who was awarded the master's win. Valeria Shuster won the 50 mile open by just 30 seconds over Molly Cochran.

A feature in this year's event was race director Larry Pederson's addition of a new 50 mile race-within-a-race. The Superior Trail 50 remains in its out-and-back format. However, if a runner is entered in the Superior Sawtooth 100, a point-to-point event, and drops at the halfway mark or later, credit will be given for a 50 mile finish (although the participant is not eligible for the 50 mile race awards). Nine Sawtooth competitors earned this finish.

A special presentation was made at the 4-H ultra spaghetti dinner/race registration to Stuart Johnson, 48, Shawnee, Kansas, for completing ten Sawtooth 100 races. Although a foot rest might have been appropriate, Larry Pederson crafted a beautiful wooden table with etched glass showing each of Stuart's finish times. Not to be found on eBay, Larry's coveted woodworks of art are the awards given in all of the fall races.

The Superior Trail Races were the featured events in Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty's Proclamation of "Trail Running Week" in Minnesota.

superior trail races | TWO HARBORS, MINNESOTA • SEPTEMBER 7 • RUGGED TRAILS

100 MILES

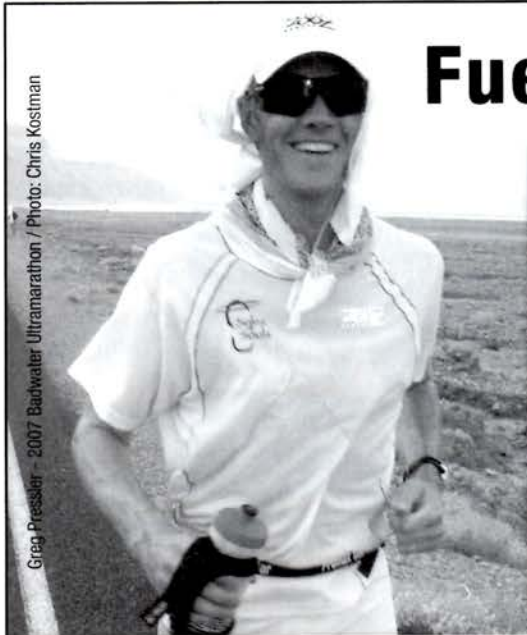
1. Wynn Davis, 26, WI	23:17:26
2. Scott Meyers, 39, WI	26:59:08
3. Duke Rembleski, 31	27:05:57
4. Paul Jaeger, 42, WI	28:46:43
5. Christopher Hanson, 36	29:21:29
6. Jerry Frost, 51, MO	30:43:51
7. Matt Long, 51, WI	31:32:09
8. Susan Donnelly, 44, TN	32:35:58
9. Daryl Saari, 44	32:57:52
10. Dallas Sigurdur, 36, MB	33:18:49
11. Kevin O'Grady, 48, OH	33:56:42
12. Kazimierz Swistun, 55, IL	34:54:25
13. Jason Husveth, 35	35:26:09
14. Diane Farmer, 29	35:31:07
Bob Triplett, 44	35:31:07
16. Gary Giannunzio, 62, MI	35:34:37
17. Julie Berg, 42	35:37:07
Stuart Johnson, 48, KS	35:37:07
19. John Taylor, 45	35:37:09
20. Casey Lopez, 31, WI	36:48:27
21. Robert Lisey, 57, OH	36:59:31
22. Shannon Johnson, 39, TX	37:00:08
23. Alfred Sauld, 61, WI	37:26:55

50 MILES

1. Chris Gardner, 30	7:59:16
2. Adam Harmer, 37	8:58:01
3. Goeff Hanson, 32, WI	9:27:32
4. Dan Horihan, 35, ONT	9:39:55
5. Rochelle Wirth, 45	9:40:03
6. Deb Bennett, 48	9:44:20
7. Jason Mangosing, 33, MO	9:49:37
8. Brent Bjerkness, 40	10:06:56
9. Buck Benson, 55	10:16:38
10. Matt Miller, 24	10:36:25
11. Zeb Breuckman, 20, WI	10:36:55
12. Valeria Shuster, 31	10:40:44
13. Molly Cochran, 32	10:41:13
14. Chris Clausen, 23, WI	10:42:52
15. Matthew Patten, 36	10:51:42
16. Tim Allen, 31	11:19:05
17. Jeff Allen, 41	11:55:58
18. Shira McDonald, 29	12:07:19
19. Michael Scandrett, 53	12:20:10
20. Jeff Mallach, 47, WI	12:26:05
21. John Stewart, 45	12:32:50
22. Barb Giles, 39	12:47:33
Pam Pettengill, 41	12:47:33

24. Brian Moen, 37	12:47:35
25. Carl Gammon, 52	13:16:07
26. Carol Izadi, 48, MO	13:18:08
27. Tom Rowe, 59	13:21:39
Tony Evans, 37, ONT	13:21:39
29. Mary Gorski, 44, WI	13:24:22
Deb Vomhof, 45, WI	13:24:22
31. Karen Gall, 48	13:36:30
32. Zach Pierce, 34	13:42:53
33. Jeffery Swainhart, 52	13:45:08
34. John Montwill, 46	13:45:53
35. Pete Anderson, 40	14:48:31
36. Curt King, 54	15:57:00
37. Andy Holak, 39	9:11*
38. Jason Boon, 33	11:50*
39. Bill Gengler, 53	13:38*
40. Michael McKenna, 37, IL	15:45*
41. Maria Barton, 41	16:05*
42. Debby McKinzie, 37, MI	16:43*
Londell Pease, 44	16:43*
44. Les Martisko, 63	18:15*
45. Phillip Smith, 59	18:35*

* indicates 50 mile time from 100 mile race DNF



Greg Pressler - 2007 Badwater Ultramarathon / Photo: Chris Kostman

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