

TOP AGE GROUP ATHLETES CLAIM TEAM USA SPOTS AT DUATHLON DRAFT-LEGAL WORLD QUALIFIER IN BEND

By USA Triathlon | June 18, 2017, 9:42 a.m. (ET)



BEND, Ore. — More than 230 age-group duathletes from across the United States toed the line for the 2017 USA Triathlon Draft-Legal Duathlon World Qualifier on Sunday in Bend, with top finishers earning the right to represent Team USA at the 2018 ITU Multisport World Championships Festival in Odense, Denmark.

The race was held in conjunction with the USA Triathlon Duathlon National Championships for the first time, whereas in prior years it had been a separate event. In fact, many athletes on the start list for Sunday's world qualifier were competing in their second or third duathlon of the weekend, as both the non-drafting Standard and Sprint-Distance Duathlon National Championship events were held on Saturday. All races throughout the weekend took place at Bend's Summit High School.

In the world qualifier, the top 12 male and top 12 female finishers per age group, rolling down to 25th place after applying the age-up rule, were awarded spots on Team USA. All qualifiers have the opportunity to compete in the draft-legal sprint-distance race at the ITU Duathlon Age Group World

Championships, held as part of the 2018 ITU Multisport World Championships Festival in Odense, Denmark.

Duncan Reid (Palos Verdes Estates, Calif.) and Melisa Christian (Dallas, Texas) took overall top honors in the world qualifier, which covered a 5-kilometer run, two-lap, draft-legal 20k bike, and 2.5k run.

In the men's race, Reid, Adam Goulet (Portland, Ore.), Aaron Seipel (Sandy, Ore.), Will Drinkwater (Palo Alto, Calif.) and Jared Eytcheson (Cary, N.C.) ran in a close pack for the first 5k run, all coming into transition in about 16:44.

The lead group held up on the bike, with yesterday's sprint duathlon overall national champion Keith Jackson (Loveland, Colo.) joining the pack and only Drinkwater falling off the pace.

The five men worked together to put a gap of more than a minute on the rest of the field by the end of the bike. Heading into the second run, it was anyone's race — but Reid pulled ahead with an 8:29 2.5k second run split to break the tape in 58 minutes, 10 seconds. Eytcheson crossed second in 58:30, and Jackson took third in 58:34.

Reid also had a strong performance in the non-drafting Sprint-Distance Duathlon National Championships yesterday, winning the men's 15-19 national title and placing fifth overall.

"I prefer draft-legal racing, because for one it's more fun for the fans to watch," Reid said. "You get to see the athletes more. And then for the athletes, you're not going full gas the whole way so you can be more tactical."

Though Reid hasn't decided whether he will compete at the ITU Multisport World Championships Festival next year in Denmark, he is planning on racing in the junior elite draft-legal duathlon at this year's event in Penticton, Canada, set for Aug. 18-27.

"Representing Team USA is always a big deal," Reid said. "The first time I represented Team USA was in Cozumel, Mexico, almost four years ago, and it was amazing."

The women's race saw an impressive first run from Jessie Rubin (Portland, Ore.), who recorded an 18:20 5k to build a 40-second lead on her closest competitor. Christian was second on the run in 19:00, with Cymon Kersch (Portland, Ore.) close behind in 19:10. It was Christian's day on the bike, though, as she covered the 20k course in a race-best 35:35. By the time she exited the second transition and headed out for the final run, she had a lead of 80 seconds on Kersch and more than two minutes on Rubin.

Christian held onto her lead over the last 2.5k run, finishing in 1:06:28. Kersch finished in 1:07:41 for the runner-up spot, and Rubin completed the podium in 1:08:27.

“I’m not used to the altitude, so yesterday I felt really terrible,” said Christian, who finished third overall in the women’s non-drafting Sprint-Distance Duathlon National Championships. “I was expecting the same thing today, but I actually felt better today as the race unfolded. I’m making my biggest improvements on the bike, and my run has been compromised because of that because I have a running background. But I just have to trust the training and let it unfold.”

New to the Team USA experience, Christian said she looks forward to racing in Demark next year.

“Representing Team USA — who would pass that up? Not me,” Christian said. “I never thought in my lifetime that I’d get to do that.”

David Burkhart (Brighton, Mich., M60-64) won his third duathlon of the weekend, as he also took national titles in the men’s 60-64 age group at both the Standard-Distance and Sprint-Distance Duathlon National Championships yesterday.

Kaytlynn Welsch (Alvin, Texas) also completed the triple crown of racing this weekend, winning her age group in today’s world qualifier and yesterday’s Standard-Distance Duathlon National Championships, and taking third in her age group in yesterday’s Sprint-Distance Duathlon National Championships. Her sister, Heather Welsch, won the women’s 15-19 sprint-distance national title on Saturday and placed second in the women’s 15-19 division in Sunday’s world qualifier.

Jeffrey Hoppert (Portland, Ore., M40-44) and John Craft (Bend, Ore., M45-49) earned their second wins of the weekend, as they both took age-group titles at the Standard-Distance Duathlon National Championships.

Kersch (F30-34), Patty Peoples-Resh (Redlands, Calif., F60-64), Benjamin Green (New York, N.Y., M35-39) and Kenneth Fleischhacker (Littleton, Colo., M80-85) also earned back-to-back victories after winning their age groups in yesterday’s Sprint-Distance Duathlon National Championships.

For more information on Team USA, comprised of the nation’s top amateur multisport athletes who represent the U.S. at each ITU World Championships event, visit usatriathlon.org/teamusa. To learn more about draft-legal racing, [click here](#).

Draft-Legal Duathlon World Qualifier
5k run, 20k bike, 2.5k run
[Complete Results](#)

Female Overall: Melisa Christian (Dallas, Texas), 1:06:28
Male Overall: Duncan Reid (Palos Verdes Estates, Calif.), 58:10
Female Masters: Melisa Christian (Dallas, Texas), 1:06:28
Male Masters: John Craft (Bend, Ore.), 1:00:10
Female Grand Masters: Patty Peoples-Resh (Redlands, Calif.),
1:10:48
Male Grand Masters: David Burkhart (Brighton, Mich.), 1:06:57
F15-19: Kaytlynn Welsch (Alvin, Texas), 1:12:51
M15-19: Duncan Reid (Palos Verdes Estates, Calif.), 58:10
M20-24: Jeevan Philip (Richland, Wash.), 1:00:53
F25-29: Jessie Rubin (Portland, Ore.), 1:08:26
M25-29: Keith Jackson (Loveland, Colo.), 58:33
F30-34: Cymon Kersch (Portland, Ore.), 1:07:40
M30-34: Adam Goulet (Portland, Ore.), 59:12
F35-39: Wendy Clark (Ewa Beach, Hawaii), 1:14:03
M35-39: Benjamin Green (New York, N.Y.), 1:01:28
F40-44: Melisa Christian (Dallas, Texas), 1:06:28
M40-44: Jeffrey Hoppert (Portland, Ore.), 1:02:29
F45-49: Cindy Abrami (Santa Barbara, Calif.), 1:11:33
M45-49: John Craft (Bend, Ore.), 1:00:10
F50-54: Diana Garbarino (Campbell, Calif.), 1:25:33
M50-54: Marcus Alexander (Cambridge, Mass.), 1:04:07
F55-59: Valerie Eipper (Longmont, Colo.), 1:12:46
M55-59: Jeff Dorrill (Dallas, Texas), 1:08:25
F60-64: Patty Peoples-Resh (Redlands, Calif.), 1:10:48
M60-64: David Burkhart (Brighton, Mich.), 1:06:57
F65-69: Judi Carbary (San Diego, Calif.), 1:32:20
M65-69: Rich Chillingworth (Tulsa, Okla.), 1:17:52
F70-74: Jo Schmidt (Albuquerque, N.M.), 1:54:56
M70-74: William Arnerich (Solvang, Calif.), 1:24:56
F75-79: Graciela Val (Evanston, Ill.), 1:56:27
M75-79: Dick Morgan (Tioga, Pa.), 1:51:18
M80-84: Kenneth Fleischhacker (Littleton, Colo.), 1:36:58

About USA Triathlon

USA Triathlon is proud to serve as the National Governing Body for triathlon, as well as duathlon, aquathlon, aquabike, winter triathlon, off-road triathlon and paratriathlon in the United States. Founded in 1982, USA Triathlon sanctions more than 4,300 races and connects with nearly 500,000 members each year, making it the largest multisport organization in the world. In addition to its work with athletes, coaches, and race directors on the grassroots level, USA Triathlon provides leadership and support to elite athletes competing at international events, including International Triathlon Union (ITU) World Championships, Pan American Games and the Olympic and Paralympic Games. USA Triathlon is a proud member of the ITU and the United States Olympic Committee (USOC).