



Running the Numbers

BY JOHN STORKAMP, RD



This year marked the 23rd running of the Afton 50K. In 1994, the first year that the race was held, we had thirty-nine 50K finishers, and only one of them was under the age of 30. This year, we had 209 finishers, with 33 runners under the age of 30. In a sport that has started to onboard more young runners from its once solidly over-the-hill participant base, this year's Afton 50K was dominated by the "old guys," with the over-40 crowd accounting for three of the top four spots. Times were fast, but not record fast, since the men's 3:40:20 record is super sick fast. This year's times were just regular sick fast. Three masters men (40-49 age group) smashed the previous masters record, which had been standing since Jim Ramacier set it all the way back in 2005.

Former Team USA Minnesota teammates Kurt Keiser and Chris Lundstrom both raced. The latter is the current course record holder and eventually took fourth, with Keiser running the fourth fastest time ever

on the course and placing first overall. Team USA Minnesota is a name thrown around nationally on the road and track. It was formed in 2001 in Minneapolis/St. Paul as a post-collegiate elite level training program for road, track and cross-country runners. Team USA Minnesota has developed an Olympian and 24 National Champions in events ranging from the 1,500 meters up through the marathon. There is a fair bit of a history of program alums finding their way to Minnesota trail races, where they have a tendency to dominate, a la Lundstrom and Keiser.

Tim Hardy, a road marathon specialist who enjoys ripping the trails and has been doing so with increasing frequency, took second place. Third, and the only one to break up the old-guy convention, was 26-year-old David Hackworthy, who must have done some impressive training since last year's race, improving his time by a whopping 33 minutes and running the ninth fastest

time ever. We cannot wait to see what kind of times he is running in his 40s! While this group of four was busy sweeping up the open and masters' titles, Jeff Miller was busy working on the grand masters record. He came close, but fell just one minute and 12 seconds short of the current over-50 record. His time was good enough to grab first in that division. The assumption is he will be back for another crack at it in 2017. The story for the ladies was quite the opposite of the men, with young Annika Hempel (age 20), quietly racing to a well-earned first place. We call it well-earned due to the fact that Hempel did not sneak into first until the final 3 miles, with Lisa Dunnigan fighting on valiantly to finish in second just one minute behind! Third was rounded out by one of the pre-race favorites, Christine Loza, who was just two minutes behind Dunnigan. This is a testament to the competitiveness of the women's field. When asked what the plan was leading into the race, Hempel confided that

it was her first-ever ultra and the goal was to finish, “hopefully in about 6 hours.” What a refreshing underestimation of one’s abilities and smashing of one’s own expectations!

Our masters’ champ was Jenny Wilcox, a long-time standout Minnesota road-runner who lives near Afton State Park and was participating in her first ultra, like Hempel. Our grand master on the women’s side was local “awards hoarder” Shelly Groenke, who is likely due for a fireplace mantle upgrade, or perhaps an outbuilding to house all of the hardware she’s earned over the years at Afton and other local trail and ultra races. Resident ambassador of youth and positive energy Herb Byun scored another one for the

OPPOSITE: Race winner Kurt Keiser (front right), course record holder and fourth for the day. Chris Lundstrom (front left), second-place finisher Tim Hardy (back right) and third-place finisher David Hackworthy lead the race. [© Kevin Langton]

RIGHT: Duluth’s own Eric Nordgren cruising down the trail to a top-10 finish. [© Todd Rowe]

BELOW: Mill City Kids – Kelcey Knott (left) and Madeline Harms. [© Todd Rowe]





"extra old guys," finishing his 14th Afton 50K at the age of 72, while Les Martisko, born the same year as Herb, finished his 13th, bringing his lifetime marathon/ultra total to a whopping 382! These two now tie with Steve Frankum for oldest finisher of the Afton 50K. Next year, perhaps another record will fall. As is the case with a race like Afton, these top performances, while impressive, are only subplots to wonderfully layered human stories that unfold on the trails of one of Minnesota's historic ultras. These inner performances are oftentimes harder to quantify, but evident none the less in smiles and tears witnessed at the finish line. Whether you are chasing a win, a time goal or something less tangible, Afton is a wonderful place to do it. 🏃



Smooth sailing for this runner as she makes her way across the prairie. (© Allison Carolan)

Afton Trail

Hastings, MN // July 2

🏃 3,3* // 50k

Elevation gain: 4,670 feet | This is a hilly, 25k-loop course on 100% trail winding through Afton State Park's trail system. For the most part, the trail is on well-established footing through the woodlands and prairie. There are long climbs, rising from the river bottom, up rocky ravines, and down again.

1	Kurt Keiser, 42, MN	3:44:27	46	Eric Burrell, 19, MN	5:22:37	102	Kyle Schwarting, 34, MN	6:02:30	158	Bri Ahern, 34, MN	7:05:37
2	Tim Hardy, 41, MN	3:49:35	47	Madeline Harms, 30, WI	5:24:16	103	Christina Stavig Just, 36, MN	6:06:20	159	Lynette Kasperek, 51, WI	7:05:39
3	David Hackworthy, 26, WI	3:52:42	48	Jonathon Graff, 32, MN	5:27:48	104	Marc Grabowski, 39, IL	6:10:12	160	Stephen Bradley, 30, MN	7:06:09
4	Chris Lundstrom, 40, MN	3:54:25	49	Angie Gora, 40, MN	5:31:23	105	Luke Thoreson, 37, MN	6:12:46	161	Julie Lindgren, 47, MN	7:07:16
5	Jeff Metzendorf, 33, MN	4:13:03	50	Matthew Haberman, 40, MN	5:31:57	106	Jodee Hollenbeck, 44, MN	6:14:27	162	Holly Gantman, 46, MN	7:07:16
6	Eric Nordgren, 31, MN	4:18:07	51	Katie Thompson, 32, MN	5:32:36	107	Lisa Van Pelt, 56, MN	6:15:34	163	Zach Peterson, 25, MN	7:07:20
7	Brian Dahl, 29, WI	4:21:31	52	Calvin Norman, 20, MI	5:35:38	108	Mark Gregware, 36, MN	6:15:41	164	Scott Carnahan, 22, MN	7:08:53
8	Eric Tadt, 29, MN	4:22:44	53	Jason Sonterre, 34, MN	5:36:10	109	Jo-anne Hass, 49, MB	6:16:02	165	Herb Byun, 72, MN	7:11:42
9	Joseph Boler, 36, MN	4:23:02	54	Mark Martinsen, 52, MN	5:37:05	110	Elmer Pagel, 39, MN	6:16:53	166	Mike Prendergast, 32, MN	7:12:31
10	Jeff Leuwewerke, 35, MN	4:26:24	55	Alex Kasperek, 19, WI	5:37:21	111	Maggie Olson, 26, OH	6:17:04	167	Dave Simmons, 38, ND	7:13:51
11	Jeff Miller, 51, MN	4:28:39	56	Jeffrey Bruzek, 41, MN	5:37:35	112	Mike Cox, 56, MN	6:19:20	168	Dan Knutson, 36, MN	7:17:27
12	Chris Robbins, 31, MN	4:31:01	57	Christopher Hutton, 22, MN	5:37:46	113	Tony Cesario, 52, IL	6:19:26	169	Megan Ahlers, 30, MN	7:19:51
13	Joseph Altendahl, 34, MN	4:32:34	58	Neil Johnson, 39, MN	5:37:53	114	Douglas Simonetto, 33, MN	6:20:13	170	Kelly Buser, 38, MN	7:19:55
14	David Hansen, 31, MN	4:36:59	59	Tim Andrews, 34, MN	5:37:54	115	Kevin Bass, 45, MN	6:20:37	171	Matthew O'Hara, 47, MN	7:19:58
15	Annikka Hempel, 20, WI	4:37:14	60	Edward Conley, 44, MN	5:39:28	116	Stephanie Francis, 44, MN	6:20:46	172	Ryan Laurn, 27, MN	7:20:00
16	Mark Johnson, 45, MN	4:37:43	61	David Just, 56, MN	5:39:57	117	Stephen Corner, 54, MN	6:22:18	173	Liz Lund, 33, MN	7:22:30
17	Eric Slagle, 40, MN	4:38:11	62	Dave Bon, 45, MN	5:40:57	118	Chris Fennwald, 54, MO	6:22:52	174	Karl Benson, 51, MN	7:24:33
18	Lisa Dunnigan, 34, MN	4:38:25	63	Shelly Groenke, 58, MN	5:41:26	119	Justin Nostrala, 52, IA	6:24:01	175	Karen Wray, 51, IL	7:24:43
19	Steven Bailey, 37, MN	4:38:28	64	Julie Hull, 43, MN	5:41:59	120	Adam Back, 31, MN	6:24:12	176	Michael Johnson, 51, IL	7:24:43
20	Christine Loza, 30, MN	4:40:55	65	Jay Johnson, 56, MN	5:42:31	121	James Arps, 48, MN	6:24:39	177	Joel Button, 48, MN	7:25:25
21	Duke Rembleski, 40, MN	4:44:05	66	Paul Hanusa, 58, SD	5:44:02	122	Joseph Eichorn, 29, MN	6:26:20	178	J.D. Coolidge, 41, MN	7:25:56
22	Mark Emmons, 24, MN	4:44:11	67	Stephanie Hoff, 36, WI	5:44:22	123	Paul Hasse, 55, MN	6:26:34	179	Ken Corbett, 55, MN	7:26:09
23	Steve English, 49, MN	4:44:28	68	Brian Tork, 49, IL	5:44:24	124	Thomas Andrews, 62, MN	6:26:36	180	Janel Hurtado, 34, MN	7:27:00
24	Travis Sands, 38, MN	4:46:40	69	Samuel Chamberlain, 33, MN	5:46:21	125	Michael Skoglund, 43, MN	6:28:00	181	Melissa Rotenberger, 37, MN	7:27:44
25	Michele Asmus, 35, MN	4:50:45	70	Ross Jilk, 51, WI	5:46:48	126	Thomas Peterson, 52, MN	6:28:16	182	Alex Nhep, 28, MN	7:31:24
26	Aaron Hansen, 35, MN	4:53:35	71	Ken Ambrose, 51, MN	5:47:04	127	Willie The Whip, 61, MB	6:28:31	183	Wally Goettl, 70, MN	7:32:36
27	Chris Gulbrandson, 37, MN	4:53:53	72	Clint Counsellor, 53, MN	5:47:05	128	Troy Winegarner, 40, MN	6:28:35	184	Gabby Ilagan, 46, MB	7:34:07
28	Scott Ross, 57, MN	4:57:01	73	Shannon Lindgren, 44, MN	5:47:17	129	Steve James, 38, MN	6:29:23	185	Ayabear Ilagan, 27, MB	7:34:08
29	Ashley Hansen, 29, MN	4:57:12	74	Sarah Bundy, 36, ND	5:47:32	130	Denise Whiting, 57, IA	6:29:40	186	Jamie Klemenhagen, 34, MN	7:34:17
30	Joe Delano, 37, NY	4:58:45	75	Jack Prentice, 44, MN	5:49:30	131	Derek Steward, 32, MN	6:34:42	187	Maggie Jasper, 24, CO	7:34:29
31	Eric Otto, 29, MN	4:58:50	76	Steven Burrell, 47, IA	5:49:45	132	Juli Aistars, 57, IL	6:36:57	188	Antoinette Sobon, 24, WI	7:34:30
32	Jenny Wilcox, 41, MN	5:00:01	77	Brittany Gilman, 31, MN	5:50:07	133	Keith Gora, 42, MN	6:37:24	189	Meg Harahan, 25, WI	7:34:31
33	Michael Asmus, 35, MN	5:03:59	78	Jennifer Gilman, 48, MN	5:50:07	134	Stephanie Dar, 28, MN	6:39:25	190	Ruisi Wang, 29, MN	7:36:18
34	Erik Hull, 45, MN	5:04:03	79	Duane Feist, 54, MN	5:50:10	135	Frank Alessandrini, 28, FL	6:39:25	191	David Kingsbury, 47, MN	7:37:00
35	Les Regehr, 43, MN	5:04:12	80	Rory Jackson, 25, MN	5:50:19	136	Mary Ryan, 60, MN	6:41:14	192	Jack Ver Steegh, 67, MN	7:37:46
36	Aaron Desmond, 33, MN	5:05:38	81	Kate Leis, 39, MN	5:50:47	137	Kelby Land, 23, MN	6:41:19	193	Dennis Bauer, 52, MN	7:41:18
37	Michael Bunda, 35, MN	5:07:48	82	Andy Blenkush, 41, MN	5:52:14	138	Chris Zysk, 25, MN	6:45:38	194	Ed Sandor, 63, MN	7:47:39
38	Brian Beckman, 29, WI	5:09:07	83	Heather Felderman, 32, MN	5:52:32	139	Thuy-mi Nguyen, 25, MN	6:45:39	195	Andrew Sandor, 30, MN	7:47:40
39	Sarah Kemp, 33, MN	5:11:02	84	Kelly Jaworski, 28, MN	5:52:42	140	James Kerr, 35, MN	6:46:15	196	Amanda Rockwood, 34, WI	7:50:05
40	Timothy Owata, 38, MN	5:12:27	85	Timothy Larson, 60, MN	5:52:59	141	Jeff Goldstein, 59, MN	6:47:23	197	Radek Lopusnik, 42, MN	7:54:18
41	Andrew Owata, 36, MN	5:14:10	86	Jared Gilman, 31, MN	5:53:17	142	Wayne Gilman, 52, MN	6:48:33	198	Suzanne Zimmerman, 52, MN	7:55:00
42	Brian Wolfe, 35, MN	5:15:07	87	Julia Thorn, 58, AUS	5:53:21	143	Anjanette Arnold, 40, MN	6:49:29	199	Andrea Odrzykowski, 43, WI	7:55:00
43	Chris Restad, 43, MN	5:16:57	88	Nico Brooks, 50, CO	5:53:28	144	Sarah Chapman, 40, MN	6:51:42	200	Phyllis Mahan, 47, MN	7:57:18
44	Stephanie Boss, 42, MN	5:19:46	89	Lisa Hane, 42, MN	5:54:04	145	Marisa Vaughn, 37, MN	6:51:42	201	Brent Johnson, 40, MN	7:59:56
45	Carson Galloway, 25, IA	5:20:17	90	Michael Rowe, 35, MN	5:54:33	146	Chris Ramsey, 52, MN	6:51:51	202	Joanna Diaz, 32, MN	8:02:49
			91	Russell Stebner, 37, MN	5:57:15	147	Rebecca Ballmann, 30, MN	6:53:15	203	Steve Hagedorn, 57, MN	8:08:23
			92	Tracy Wallace, 47, MN	5:57:45	148	Bob Hoard, 40, MN	6:54:36	204	Julie Bane, 52, IL	8:27:28
			93	Deanna Nelson, 50, MN	5:59:23	149	Kari Gibbons, 36, MN	6:54:49	205	Janette Maas, 57, GA	8:32:15
			94	Jeffrey Nelson, 50, MN	5:59:23	150	Katie Knoblauch, 38, MN	6:54:53	206	Les Martisko, 72, MN	8:32:56
			95	Mike Schmitt, 39, MN	5:59:45	151	Aurora Lemay, 28, MN	6:57:17	207	Sally Hulbert, 59, MN	8:32:57
			96	Griffin Geisler, 39, MN	5:59:45	152	Tim Whisler, 61, MN	6:57:45	208	Joseph Galloway, 59, IA	8:36:44
			97	Jodi Johnson, 37, MN	6:00:17	153	Luke Knudson, 30, MN	7:00:12	209	Bob Schug, 47, MN	8:39:51
			98	Stephanie Moeller, 37, MN	6:00:29	154	Meredith Oneill, 30, MN	7:00:12			
			99	Lisa Burger, 45, MN	6:01:13	155	Jon Howard, 36, MN	7:01:49			
			100	Tom Ihlenfeldt, 58, MN	6:01:22	156	Mary Donnelly, 39, MN	7:04:34			
			101	Sarah Paycer, 28, ND	6:02:29	157	Daryl Saari, 53, MN	7:04:58			

*See page 46 for key