



Hello Outdoorsman Triathletes,

Despite Hurricane Helene's fury and the terrible devastation in western NC, some of you were able to navigate the roads and floods to compete in the 49th Outdoorsman Triathlon. A special shout-out to those who were also able to help the local community while you were there. The Outdoorsman Triathlon Charitable Trust has donated to the relief effort on your behalf as well.

You faced floods, winds, closed roads, no cell service, downed trees, and a horde of bees to complete the 49th running of the Nation's oldest triathlon. The Little Tennessee River went from a 350 cubic feet per second flow (2 feet on the gauge) on Wednesday to 15,000 cfs (10 ft) Friday night.

This year John Wallace won the overall Individual Race and the Lindsey Wilson College students, who had traveled from Kentucky through the storm to make it to the race, won the Collegiate Relay Race. Students from William & Mary traveled for over 22 hours to make the event. Rhett Morris made it down from Brooklyn NY. Ann Armstrong and Cesar Sica came in from Bothell, Washington and Jim Ross made it in from Washington DC. Russ Callen managed to make his way from Atlanta, Georgia. Mike Robinson & family made it from Fredericksburg VA and Florida and the Hasselquists and Wallaces made it in from eastern Virginia. Keith & Sue Havens and Alex

Sullivan found a way in from eastern Tennessee. Zak & Kaitlyn Havens attempted to travel from West Jefferson NC but after clearing 3 trees on the roadway in just a mile or so, had to turn back. BR and Susan Carson made it to Winston-Salem but had to turn back as well as Paul Joffrion from Durham NC (Paul noted that this is the first race he has missed since Carter was President). Phil Pickett made it all the way to Tennessee from Blacksburg VA before having to turn back. I am sure I missed others who made the attempt. We are glad all are safe. Scott Kitchens made it to Rainbow Lake at the top of the Nantahala River but had the canoe he was planning to use blow away somewhere on the lake - he was able to find another to race in.

We were honored once again to have two of our Race Founders join us. **Payson Kennedy** stopped by on Saturday to inspire everyone and the indomitable **Russ Callen** completed his 49th Individual race - amazing! A big THANK YOU to our volunteers, especially our timers Sue Havens, Keith Havens, Cesar Sica, Katie Robinson-Jones, Julia Jones, and Elizabeth Armstrong, our safety boaters Mike Robinson & Katie Robinson-Jones, our course set-up & take down crews (Karla Havens, Ed Sharp, Lincoln Williams, Zak Havens, Kade Havens), our kudzu wrangler Paul Wolf, Keith Havens for transporting the SWCC canoes for Lindsey Wilson College (thanks Keith & Paul!), and all the others (basically everyone!) who pitched in to carry canoes and equipment. THANK YOU!

Finally, a special recognition for this year's main Sponsors: Nantahala Outdoor Center, Nantahala Village, Rolling Thunder River Company, TEVA, Russ Callen, Jo Carol & Dodge Havens, Sue & Scott Dillery, and Phil Pickett.

Take a week off and then get back to training for the big **50th running** of the Outdoorsman Triathlon (the Nation's Oldest Triathlon) on the last full weekend in September (Sept 27-28, 2025). Hopefully we will be back on the original course and will be canoeing on the Little Tennessee River.

This year's race results are now up on the website under Race Results <https://outdoorsmantriathlon.org/>

See you all along the long muddy line for the swim start!

Kirk & Ed