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Gutierrez and Cospolich Victorious at the 28th Teva Vail Hill Climb



More than 300 runners challenged themselves to an unrelenting 7.5-mile climb to the summit of Vail Mountain today. Sea-level competitors as well as altitude-adjusted locals gathered at Vail's Mountain Haus on a cloudless morning for the 8:00 start.

Vail Recreation District Director Mike Ortiz gave the runners pre-

race announcements and then turned the stage over to Matt Drummet, Marketing and Sales Director for the Vail Mountain Haus who shot the starter's pistol.

The course meandered through Vail Village on paved streets for nearly one and one half miles where the surface turned to gravel and dirt for the remaining six miles to the summit. A police escort led the runners through town and up to the gravel trail.



There were three aid stations on course supported by local volunteers, many of whom were students at area schools. Some of the more than 45 volunteers were runners like Bob Louthan who was taking a break from racing, while others were supporting a friend or loved one who was racing. Volunteers were visible at all of



the turns on course directing the runners up the hill while an entire crew at the finish line handed out goody bags, T-shirts, SmartWool socks, bananas, orange slices, and fruit juice. Sisters Acacia and Amelia Ortiz enjoyed their volunteer time slicing oranges and bananas and then cheered on their Mom to the finish line.





There was also a full complement of volunteers assisting with finish line duties which included calling out runner numbers, pulling race bib tags, and writing down manual finish times to be used as a



backup for the computerized timing system.

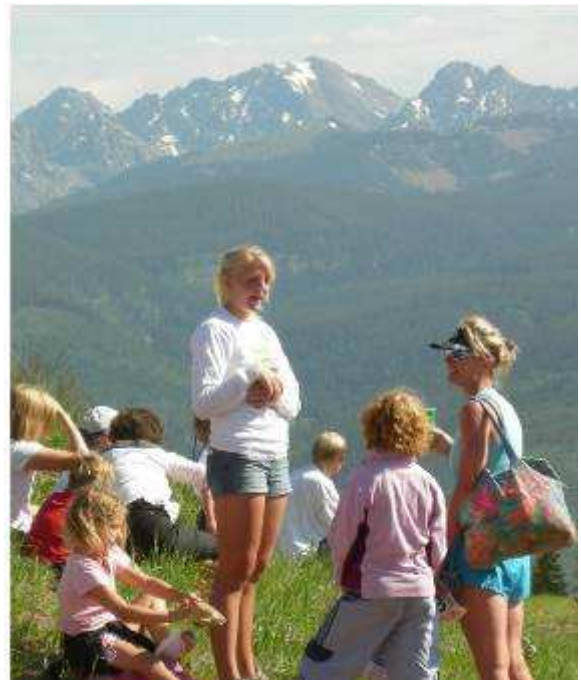


Four-time Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team member Simon Gutierrez was first to cross the finish line. The 40-year-old physical therapist from Alamosa, CO took the lead from the start and never looked back. Gutierrez's winning time of 51:58 was nearly one minute slower than last year's winning time recorded by both first-place finisher Matt Levassieur, 23, and Gutierrez, who was credited with the second place honors. Gutierrez will certainly be happy to have saved his energy for next week's Teva Vail Mountain Trophy Challenge which is the final selection race for the 2006 Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team. The Trophy Challenge will be held on Sunday, July 9 and runners hoping to earn a spot on the team will be at the start line to challenge uphill specialist Gutierrez.

Finishing second today was Bill Fanselow, 39, timed in 54:11, followed by 24-year-old John Tribbia. The first junior finisher on the day was local high school runner Jonny Stevens, 16, who represented the U.S. on the junior mountain running team last year in Wellington, New Zealand. Stevens' time was 59:41, a big improvement over his effort last year of 1:04:27.



Spectators enjoying the outdoors





Levassieur did not return this year to defend his title, nor did women's 2005 winner Stephanie Bylander who recently was named to the 2006 class of Roads Scholars by the Road Runners Club of America and is gearing her training toward road racing. Helen Cospolich, 29, from nearby ski-town, and Vail Resort's rival — Breckenridge — won the women's division in 1:03:04 with local runner and member of the Vail Mountain Divas Lynda Andros, 30, placing second in 1:04:25. Susan Nuzum, 39, another area runner, finished in third just 13 seconds behind Andros. As Nuzum approached the finish line she snuck a peak backward to check on her nearest competitor Kelly Ryan, 37, who was quickly closing the gap, but didn't muster enough speed during her last-



minute surge to catch Nuzum. Ryan finished in fourth place for the women, just 14 seconds back.

Bernie Boettcher, 43, won the masters division in 55:23 and was fifth overall. Eric Hermann, 44, who trains mostly on his road bike logging more than 100 miles per week while running only 15 miles per week, was second in the masters division in 58:11. Rounding out the top three masters was Hans Funke, 45, just 11 seconds behind Hermann in 58:22.



Second-place finisher at last year's Pikes Peak Ascent and member of the 2000 national

mountain running team, Cindy O'Neill, 44, Manitou Springs, won the women's masters category in 1:05:57. Rene Frazee a teammate of O'Neill's on the 2000 mountain team that ran in Bergen, Germany on an uphill race course, finished in third place in the 30-39 women's age category and 13th overall among the women timed in 1:13:16. Frazee was racing just three months after giving birth to her daughter Grace. O'Neill's husband John, 52, manager and co-owner of the Colorado Running Company in Colorado Springs, also ran today's race and finished in 1:33:57.



In the 60+ age group perennial winner Jim Romero, 66, settled for second place to Jim Oberheide, 61. Romero could have been a bit tired from yesterday's Leadville Half Marathon which he also ran as a tune-up for today's HillClimb.





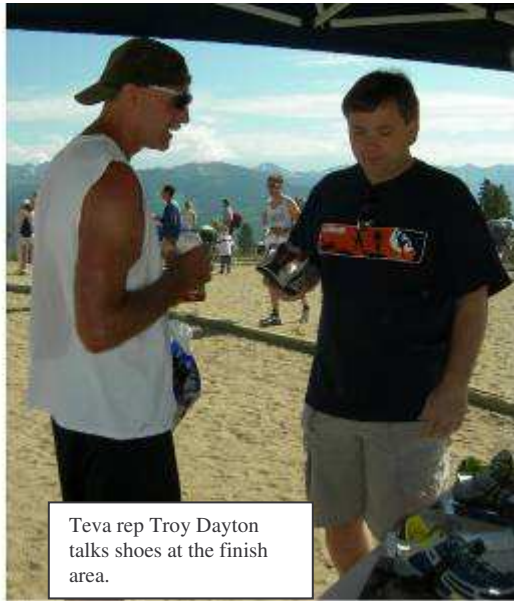
In addition to these great awards, each participant received a commemorative T-shirt and goody bag at the finish line. The T-shirts, designed by Bernie Boettcher, depicted a colorful mountain running vista to celebrate the 28th anniversary of the race.

Named best race series of 2005 by regional magazine *Colorado Runner*, the Teva Vail Mountain Trail Running series celebrates its ninth anniversary this year. In order to be scored as a series finisher, participants must complete at least four events. The first race in the series, the Teva First Bank of Vail 10K at 8,000 feet was held on June 11. The HillClimb is followed by the Teva Vail HalfMarathon on July 23, the Teva Tiga Berry Picker (5k/10k) on August 13 and on September 10, the final event will be held as the Teva Joint Worx EverGold 10K. Series awards will be presented at the September 10 event during the race awards ceremony. Last year's series boasted more than 1100 participants with nearly 20 runners completing all races in the series.

Individual race entry is \$25, or \$35 on race day. Runners can register Online at active.com, print out an entry form at www.vailrec.com and mail, or fax to VRD at (970) 479-2281, or stop by Vail Recreation District at 700 South Frontage Road East (the building with the large clock next to the tennis courts) and drop off an entry.

The top three male and female finishers overall were awarded gift certificates for Teva footwear while the top three finishers in each age group 19 and under, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and 60+ also received gift certificates. There was no duplicate prize giving although there were plenty of random prize drawings for all participants. FuelBelt provided bottle carriers for the prize drawing, SmartWool donated shirts, Teva donated a pair of X-1 trail shoes and hats, co-authors Nancy Hobbs and Adam Chase donated Ultimate Guide to Trail Running books, 180s donated gloves, and Trail Runner magazine donated gift certificates for a one-year subscription.





Teva rep Troy Dayton talks shoes at the finish area.

Series title sponsor Teva footwear introduced the Teva Mountain Running Club earlier this year and invites all athletes to join at

www.teva.com.

Series sponsors include First Bank of Vail, Joint Works Physical Therapy, Vail's Mountain Haus, Tiga Advertising, Howard Head Sports Medicine Centers, Steadman Hawkins, and Gatorade.

For more information including



results and press releases from last year's series, and to view course maps visit www.vailrec.com

Top finishers:

Men

1. Simon Gutierrez, 40, 51:58
2. Bill Fanselow, 39, 54:11
3. John Tribbia, 24, 54:28
4. Peter Vail, 31, 54:28
5. Bernie Boettcher, 43, 55:23
6. Jason Loutitt, 31, 56:07
7. Erling Chritiansen, 24, 57:04
8. Dan Weiland, 31, 57:18
9. Paul Thomas, 37, 57:51
10. Eric Hermann, 44, 58:11



Women

1. Helen Cospolich, 29, 1:03:04
2. Lynda Andros, 30, 1:04:25
3. Susan Nuzum, 39, 1:04:38
4. Kelly Ryan, 37, 1:04:52
5. Cindy O'Neill, 44, 1:05:57
6. Barbekka Hurtt, 36, 1:07:06
7. Danielle Rawlings, 20, 1:07:55
8. Megan Boord, 29, 1:08:36
9. Anita Ortiz, 42, 1:08:36
10. Heidi Vosbeck, 44, 1:10:31



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