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Nippert Places Fifth Overall while Four U.S. Women Finish Under 8:10 at IAU 100Km World Cup

Misari, Korea — At yesterday's (Sunday, October 9) IAU 100Km World Cup Team USA's Howard Nippert finished fifth overall and the top four U.S. women set personal bests with each going under 8:10. According to USA Team Leader Lin Gentling, "This is by far the best the U.S. Women have done at



Worlds. Even though they didn't get on the podium (USA was fourth in the standings), they ran incredible."

Leading the women was Anne Lundblad, 40, Asheville, NC, who posted a sixth place finish in 7:47:15. "It was not my top place finish, but my PR by like seven minutes. Conditions were a lot better than I expected. I thought we would have more sun. The cloud cover was great," said Lundblad who said she would retire from the 100Km after this race. She retires with a new U.S. age group record for 40-44 (pending ratification).



Newcomer to the team Kami Semick, 40, Bend, OR, (pictured right) running her first road 100Km finished in eleventh position with a 7:56:38. "It was the most painful experience of my life," Semick said initially then added, "Childbirth was maybe tougher, but it was shorter."



Rounding out the team scoring was Nikki Kimball, 35, Bozeman, MT, in 14th place timed in 8:06:02. "Considering it's not my kind of course, it's really the best I've ever run at Worlds. I set a PR by about 15 minutes. It is by far my best-ever run on a flat (100Km) course," said Kimball.

The top three runners score for the team with their finish times combined for team placement.

Kimball and Team Leader Lin Gentling



Pacev

Also new to the team, Julie Udchachon, 36, Eagle River, Alaska, ran a gutsy 8:08:32 to finish 16th. Connie Gardner, 42, Medina, Ohio was 23rd in 8:27:20 and Tania Pacev, 47, Littleton, CO, finished in 24th with a time of 8:44:57.



Gardner

Three of the U.S. women (pictured right), Udchachon, Kimball, and Gardner ran the first few laps together and unwittingly picked up a hanger on from the citizen's open race who ran alongside the women for more than 20 kilometers. This can happen when the citizen's race is run concurrently with the open race and is not considered pacing by the IAU rules. A frustrated Gardner yelled to USA staff to, "get rid of this guy, he won't leave us alone." At one point the itinerant runner waited while one of the women left the path to find a toilet. "He just wouldn't get out of our way," said the women. When the women entered an aid station, the runner impeded the women from getting their fluids and one of the staff members had to run interference. This allowed the women to accelerate and outpace their nemesis.



Kimball and Semick post race



In the men's race, Howard Nippert, 41, Fork Union, VA, (pictured left) ran to his best-place finish ever in fifth position. "It's all about place," said Nippert, "I wanted to run 6:38. If I'd done that today I'd have finished about second. It was a tougher course than it looks (on paper). We had to run 2.5 kilometers into the wind on each loop and there were cobbles which were a bit tough. We also went out fast, but it was cool early on in the race which was great."



Nippert's time was 6:53. Team staff kept close tabs on the race for Nippert and watched as he picked off his competitors one by one. In 20th position after the first few loops, at 96Km he was in 6th place. "I was told that I was in sixth place about one minute thirty back from fifth. I never passed anyone so I thought I was finishing in sixth. When I got closer to the finish I heard my name called by the announcer in fifth place. I had run the last 4km thinking the whole time how happy I would be with sixth and then to cross the finish line in fifth...well, that is just awesome!"

Patrick Russell, 30, Minneapolis, MN, (pictured left) started out ahead of Nippert and kept the pace for a few laps, but his inexperience probably affected him as he crossed the line in third place for the American men in 7:43:33 for 31st place. Bob Sweeney, 39, Rye Brook, NY, (pictured below) finished just ahead of Russell in 7:34:45. The final American finisher for the men was Phil Kochik, 27, Seattle, WA, (pictured right) in 39th place timed in 8:00:24.



The IAU (International Association of Ultra Runners) 100Km World Championship is the most competitive ultramarathon in the world and this year's event brought together athletes from 22 countries to determine the World's best 100Km runner. The 100 kilometer race is 62.137 miles in length and it tests not just an athlete's stamina and endurance, but also tests one's will and mental toughness.

It was a chilly, overcast morning when the contenders in the IAU 100Km World Cup left their hotels at 4:00 to head to Misari by bus for the race starting line. The ride lasted about 40 minutes and the teams arrived in total darkness with lights showing the way toward rows and rows of tents. The athletes headed directly for the shelter to take advantage of the limited warmth as they prepared for the start by sorting their water bottles, energy gels, electrolyte tablets, salty foods, sunglasses (for later in the day), and sunscreen.



With temperatures forecast to rise to 27 degrees centigrade later in the day, the start was scheduled for 6:00 a.m. to take advantage of the cooler temperatures. As it turned out, for much of the race the temperature hovered just above the 12 degree centigrade mark. It was not until about four and one half hours into the race that the sun peeked through the clouds and started heating up the course, a course which had no shade whatsoever. As the day progressed the cold and overcast conditions were aggravated for much of the race by a consistent headwind blowing down the 2.5 kilometer back straight.



Car lights helped show the way to the start line and racers waited for the last possible minute to strip down to their shorts and singlets. The Harvest Moon reflected slightly off the water of the Misari boat dock with the distant city lights gleaming ever so slightly through the overcast sky. Before the final ten second countdown for the race began, the Korean Polka music, which had been on a continuous song reel for nearly 45 minutes, thankfully ended.



Competitors raced on a 10 kilometer loop course that, according to organizers was "free of bumps and hills in order for racers to set personal bests." In fact there were a few "bumps," but they were merely speed bumps on a short section of the course. There were two aid stations, one just beyond the start/finish line, a second at the 6 kilometer mark. Each aid station had a "feed zone" complete with tables for each of the competitor countries as well as a universal table with drinks, food, and sponges.



The men's race got off to a fast pace as Italy's Giorgio Calcaterra took early possession of the race lead with Nippert comfortably in 21st place. Nippert remained patient throughout the 60Km point in the race hovering around 20th position throughout the early stages. With a 30Km split of 1:58.32, an average of 39:30 per 10Km loop (6.2 miles), he held his goal pace of roughly 6:30 per mile pace. He then covered the next 10K in loop 40:40 followed by a lap of 39:46 to hit the 40K mark in 2:39:12 and 50K in 3:18:58. His 50K split marked the halfway point of the race and he remained on target of his goal to run 6:40:00, which annually puts one in contention for the overall title.

From 60Km to 80Km is where Nippert showed his form and strength. It is also where his experience and patience began to pay off. He stormed through the field catching runners who started too fast and their bodies could not handle and endure the pain they began to face from racing 48 miles with another 12 miles to go. With a 60Km split of 3:58:08 (40:10-10K lap), a 70Km split of 4:49:44 (40:36-10K-lap) and an 80Km split of 5:22:21 (42:19-10K lap) he moved steadily from 21st to 7th over-all with 20Km (12.4 miles) remaining in the race.

From 80Km (48 miles) to the finish (62.137 miles) officials commented that Nippert looked "like a lion closing on prey." He finished in 6:53:00 and achieved his goal of a top five overall finish. "I've placed in the top eight the past two years and had a goal of finishing in the top five today," said an elated Nippert. "The race went out fast. I told my teammates to be patient and stick to the race plan. I did what I wanted and I am very happy to finish fifth wearing this USA singlet. My goal for the past 30 years has been to represent USA and I have been fortunate to make eight consecutive US teams. This World Championship race is what I train for. The 100K distance defines who I am."

When asked about his training leading up to this years race Nippert remarked, "From my workouts I knew I was fit and ready to roll. I moved to Fork Union, Virginia this past year to work at **Fork Union Military Academy** and although the area is not as mountainous as where I used to live, I have used this time to become more efficient at faster paces. I knew from my shorter intervals...the mile repeats and 1000M repeats... that I was much faster than the previous 2 years. At the same time my 4 hour runs were still at a very high level. I felt I could convert that efficiency at faster paces into speed in a road 100K. I knew I was ready...My taper over the past two weeks was right on target... I just needed to get to the starting line because I was beginning to feel like a caged animal that was being poked by a stick."

One of Nippert's crew members with the USA delegation, Paris Davis said, "Howard looked great today. He was a machine out there. He kept the tempo high and moved better than anyone else late in the race."



Crew member Colin O'Sullivan summarized Nippert's race, "Howard always runs his own race. He was strong and confident. I think a top ten was never in doubt. He is always hungry for another place. If he knows there's someone weak in front of him, he's going to hunt him down."

France's Yannick Djouadi took the gold medal in a winning time of 6:38:41, well clear of Russia's Oleg Kharitonov and Denis Zhalybin, who crossed the line together in 6:42:18. France's Christoph Bachelier, who had run steadily throughout the race came in fourth in 6:48:43 and was followed home by USA's Nippert in 6:53:00.

Nippert's top ten finish earned him an automatic spot on the 2007 USA National Team which travels in September to the World Cup in Winschoten, The Netherlands. Asked about qualifying for yet another 100Km team Nippert smiled and said, "Mission accomplished."

Team USA included athletes from ten states who had a combined 34 years experience in World Cup competition. The USATF Selection Process and the lists of men's and women's performances that were used to select the team are available at www.usatf.org. Special thanks to team product sponsor, FuelBelt, Inc., provider of hydration equipment. Complete results can be found at www.iau.org.tw. For live race highlights to see how the race progressed visit, www.iau.org.tw/news_detail.php?Id=219

Final results for men (official chip times)

1 FRA – DjouadiYannick	6:38:27
2 RUS – KharitonovOleg	6:42:01
3 RUS – ZhalybinDenis	6:42:02
4 FRA – BachelierChristophe	6:48:27
5 USA – NippertHoward	6:52:46
30 USA – Sweeney Robert	7:34:29
31 USA – Russell Patrick	7:43:19
39 USA – Kochik Phillip	8:00:07

Final results for women (official chip times)

1 GBR – Elizabeth Hawker	7:28:56
2 ITA – Monica Carlin	7:29:01
3 JPN – Niroko Sho	7:31:48
4 ITA – Paola Sanna	7:41:56
5 FRA – Laurence Fricotteaux	7:45:03
6 USA – Anne Riddle-Lundblad	7:47:18
11 USA – Kami Semick	7:56:19
14 USA – Nikki Kimball	8:05:42
16 USA – Julie Udchachon	8:08:12
23 USA – Connie Gardner	8:27:00
24 USA – Tania Pacev	8:44:37



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