

# SuperAthalon adds women's division for Monday's event

- [Guy Gargan](#)
- Jul 11, 2021



The Cape May Beach Patrol SuperAthalon, a sprint triathlon for top lifeguards, will include a women's division for the first time Monday.

The 39th annual race will begin at Second and Beach avenues in Cape May. The 16 men's competitors take off at 6:30 p.m. The eight women will start five minutes later.

The competitions begin with a 2.3-mile street run on Beach Avenue from Second Avenue to Poverty Avenue. The lifeguards then get into surfboats for a 1.5-mile singles row in the ocean in the opposite direction, from Poverty Beach to Congress Beach. After a 200-yard run to Cannone Beach, the competitors will do an out-and-back quarter-mile swim that ends with a run from the ocean to the finish line on Cannone Beach.

Jenna Parker, of Harvey Cedars Beach Patrol, should be a top contender for the women. She won the Cape May Point Women's Lifeguard Challenge, another triathlon, in 2014, 2016-17 and 2019. Some outstanding female athletes are entered, including Ventnor's Stacey Price, Longport's Kira McCully and Cape May's Rebecca Luft.

Rob Moran, of the host Cape May patrol, is the two-time defending champion and a three-time winner. Moran won in 2019 in 44 minutes, 58.9 seconds, and was first in 2016 and 2018, too.

The event wasn't held last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wildwood's Patrick Clemens, second in 2019 in 45:42.4, is back, too. Longport's Tim Schwegman, the winner in 2015 and 2017, also returns. Michael Barrett, of Ocean Beach II, was fourth two years ago and will compete.

# Strong current greets competitors in annual Superathlon

- By DAVID WEINBERG For The Current
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- 

No one would have blamed Rebecca Luft if she had given up during the recent Cape May SuperAthalon.

A strong, surging current had swept her and most of the other competitors past the turnaround buoy during the quarter-mile ocean swim leg of the event before they could maneuver around it. As a result, the Cape May Beach Patrol lifeguard had spent 15 minutes essentially swimming in place while trying to backtrack to get around the marker.

Several rivals opted to swim to shore and call it a day. They were exhausted, having already completed a 2.3-mile run and 1.5-mile row.

Luft, 23, and two other women's competitors opted to re-enter the water and attempt the swim again while the crowd cheered.

Luft got around the buoy on her next try and wound up finishing second in the women's division behind Wildwood's Katie Collins in one hour, 17 minutes, two seconds. Avalon's Sarah Powell also did the swim twice and placed third in 1:27:39.

Luft collapsed in the sand after crossing the finish line, her head buried in her knees, before some fellow lifeguards helped her up.

"I was so tired," said Luft, a former swimmer at Ohio State University. "But there was no way I wasn't going to finish. This is my race. I'm the reason this race even happened because I pushed for (organizers) to add a women's division. I had to do it."

Collins, a former swimmer at Temple University, was behind Luft, Powell and four other women's competitors after the row and thought she had no shot at victory.

But one by one, her rivals got swept past the buoy while she managed to stay the course. The 28-year-old lieutenant on the Wildwood Beach Patrol finished in 1:06:16, thus becoming the first women's champion in the 39-year history of the race.

"Once I got past the rock pile (at the start of the swim), I actually swam perpendicular and away from the buoy and hoped that the current would carry me," Collins said. "I hit it with my side

and had to wedge my way around it. But I still can't believe I won. I had no idea. There was no one around me, so I actually thought I was dead last."

Current events also played a major role in the men's race.

Cape May's Rob Moran, who won the event for the fourth time in five years, was in second place after the 2.3-mile run and 1.5 mile row. Two-time champion Timothy Schwegman of Longport owned about a 50-yard lead at the start of the .25-mile out and back ocean swim.

Schwegman was swept past the buoy at the halfway point before he could round it, however, and was unable to backtrack. Moran successfully rounded it, exited the ocean about 100 yards up the beach, and finished in 47:43.

"This year's race was the hardest one for me, personally," said Moran, who celebrated by hugging his wife Stephanie and their 8-month-old son Matthew. "I almost missed the buoy, too. I actually had to grab hold of it and pull myself around it."

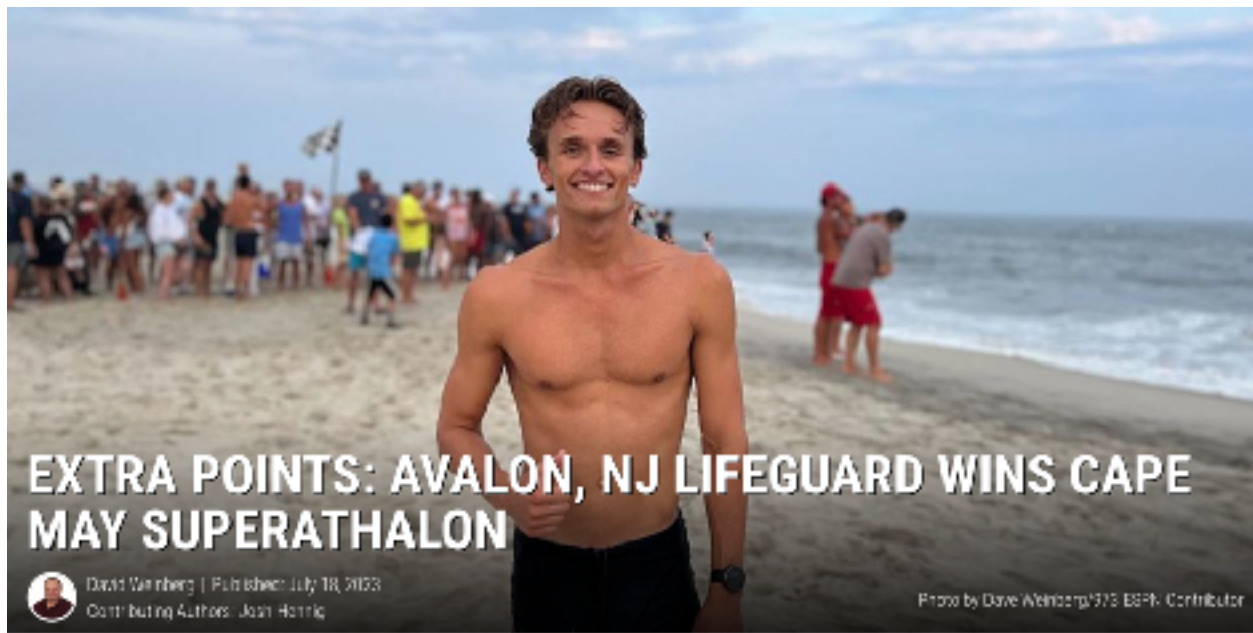
Of the 14 male competitors who started the race, only three were able to make it around the buoy, according to race officials. Wildwood's Pat Clemens took second place in 48:30, followed by Stone Harbor's Jack Levari in 51:35.

Levari, a Vineland native, is a 2021 St. Augustine Prep graduate who is headed to Virginia Tech on a swimming scholarship. He was making his SuperAthalon debut.

"I almost missed the buoy like everyone else," Levari said. "I felt like I was floating on a mat down a lazy river. I was getting carried by the current and there was only a small window (of opportunity) for me to get around it and I barely made it."

With his third straight victory, Moran tied Wildwood Crest legend Bic Murphy, an eight-time champion, for the most consecutive wins in the event.

The loudest cheers, however, were reserved for Luft and Powell, who were determined to finish the race, even if it meant going against the tide in more ways than one.



## Avalon, NJ Lifeguard wins Cape May SuperAthalon

July 18, 2023

**Read More:** [Extra Points: Avalon, NJ Lifeguard wins Cape May SuperAthalon](https://973espn.com/extra-points-avalon-nj-lifeguard-wins-cape-may-superathalon/?utm_source=tsmclip&utm_medium=referral) | [https://973espn.com/extra-points-avalon-nj-lifeguard-wins-cape-may-superathalon/?utm\\_source=tsmclip&utm\\_medium=referral](https://973espn.com/extra-points-avalon-nj-lifeguard-wins-cape-may-superathalon/?utm_source=tsmclip&utm_medium=referral)

CAPE MAY - Brandon Hontz ran away with the Cape May SuperAthalon championship last Monday. - He also rowed and swam away with it.

The 24-year-old Avalon lifeguard grabbed a huge lead in the opening leg of the race - a triathlon consisting of a 2.3-mile run, 1.5-mile row, and quarter-mile swim - and maintained his advantage en route to a convincing victory in the 41st edition of one of the area's most unique competitions.

**"I did this race in 2018 and wound up third," Hontz said. "I was in the lead after the run in that one, too, but I struggled in the row because it was my first time in a boat. I made sure I got some practice in with rowing this time."**

Hontz, who is in his fourth season with the Avalon Beach Patrol, finished in 45 minutes, 12 seconds. He became the second winner from Avalon, joining five-time champion Shane McGrath (2004, 2006, 2008, 2010-11). Wildwood's Patrick Clemons, 43 years old, finished second for the third time in 46:14, followed by three-time defending champion Rob Moran of host Cape May placed third in 47:37.

Moran, who also won in 2016, 2018, 2019 and 2021 - there was no race in 2020 or last year - was attempting to tie McGrath for the second-most victories in the SuperAthalon. Wildwood Crest's Bic Murphy (1993-94, '96-'98, 2001, '03, '05) won it an incredible eight times in a 13-year span:

**"I gave it a good shot, but those guys (Hontz and Clemons) were really gunning for it," Moran said. "I was in seventh place after the run and made up some ground in the row, but I was a little tired after that and couldn't catch them in the swim."**

Moran's fatigue was understandable, considering he hasn't been getting a lot of sleep lately. Moran and his wife, Stephanie, have a one-month-old daughter (Genevieve). Their son, Matthew, is 2 1/2. His children were there at the finish line waiting for him.

Clemons' 2-year-old daughter, Summer, was also at the finish line waiting for him and after the race, Clemons immediately scooped her up for a celebratory hug.

**"Second place three times in a row," he said with a shrug. "I finally beat Rob and it figures someone else would have a great race. (Hontz) is 20 years younger than me and he's a beast."**

Hontz, who ran the mile for the Nittany Lions, quickly separated himself from the pack during the run on Beach Avenue from the Cove to Poverty Beach. He was two blocks ahead after the first mile and steadily increased the lead.

Clemons, who has been a lifeguard in the Wildwood area and South Florida for 25 years, managed to close the distance a tad during the row, as did Moran.

In past years, the swim has sometimes made a huge difference in the outcome because of the swift current that runs parallel to the shore. In 2021, for example, Moran was in third place entering the water, but wound up winning because the two swimmers ahead of him missed the buoy and were unable to get backtrack to get around it.

Having done the race before helped Hontz with current events. He entered the ocean next approximately 50 yards left of the buoy, hugged the jetty for as long as possible, and continued to swim straight out instead of angling toward the turnaround, letting the tide sweep him toward the marker.

**"I was a swimmer in high school (in West Chester, Pennsylvania), so figured if I had the lead after the row, I had a chance to hold the other guys off," Hontz said. "I stuck as close to the jetty as I could, but even then I almost missed the buoy. I was getting nervous, but I barely made it around it."**

The race featured a mix of veterans and newcomers who were drawn to the challenge.

At 43, Clemons was the oldest competitor, followed by Ventnor's Greg Smith (42), Moran (34), and Longport's Daniel Gordan (33). The field also featured two teenagers: Upper Township's Jim Nilson (18) and Sea Girt's Will Hefernan (19).

Gordan, who is a member of the United States Coast Guard reserves in Cape May, finished seventh as a first-timer. He celebrated with a beer and hugs from his two children.

**"It was awesome," Gordan said. "I felt blessed and happy to be able to do it with so many great competitors. I hope I get to do it again next year."**

CAPE MAY BEACH PATROL SUPERATHALON

# Wildwood's Patrick Clemens wins Superathalon in Cape May in lifeguard racing season opener

- [Guy Gargan](#)
- Jul 2, 2024
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Veteran Wildwood lifeguard Patrick Clemens was tired of being the runner-up in the Cape May Beach Patrol Superathalon, and Monday he finally won it.

The 44-year-old Clemens, a lifeguard for 26 years in Wildwood, North Wildwood and Florida, won the run-row-swim sprint triathlon in 52 minutes, 9 seconds. Clemens, a Philadelphia firefighter, finished second in his other three attempts — 2019, 2021 and last year. The race wasn't held in 2020 and 2022.



“It feels great (to win). I honestly can’t believe it,” said Clemens, who is married and has one daughter. “To get second place three years really hurts. The first year was amazing, but the last two years it stung, and I said I really got to try to win this one.

“I had a smart race and left everything out there, and all the stars lined up tonight. It was really close between first, second and third.”

The second-place finisher was Cape May’s Rob Moran, a four-time Superathalon champion — 2016, 2018, 2019 and 2021. Moran’s time was 52:16. Avalon’s Brandon Hontz, the defending champion, was third in 52:25.

After a gap of more than five minutes, Ventnor’s Michael McMenamin placed fourth in 57:27. Jenna Parker of Harvey Cedars on Long Beach Island and the only female in the 15-person race finished fifth in 58:11.

The race for lifeguards was created by former Cape May Beach Patrol Chief Buzz Mogck, who died in June.

The Superathalon, which has the same course every year, began with a 2.3-mile run up Beach Drive in Cape May. At Poverty Beach, the guards entered lifeboats and rowed 1.5 miles in the

other direction to Congress Beach. Following a 200-yard run to Cannone Beach, the guards did an out-and-back quarter-mile swim and then a short run to the finish line on the beach.

Matt Bogdan of Ortley Beach led in the run with a time of 11:50, and Hontz was second in 12:02. Bogdan eventually finished 14th in 1:04.51.

“I was in contention after the run and went into the boat in sixth place,” Clemens said. “I turned the first flag (in the row) in third place. And I jumped out of the boat and was in first place after the run to the swim. I’m a pretty good swimmer. I try to maintain a decent swim all winter long.”

## **Results**

1. Patrick Clemens, Wildwood 52:09
2. Rob Moran, Cape May 52:16
3. Brandon Hontz, Avalon 52:25
4. Michael McMenamin, Ventnor 57:27
5. Jenna Parker, Harvey Cedars 58:11
6. Jake Klecko, Wildwood Crest 58:42
7. Nick Matousch, Sea Isle City 58:55
8. Bill Clarke, Stone Harbor 58:56
9. Michael Excell, Diamond Beach, 1:00.47
10. Garrison Swan, Cape May Point 1:03.00