

2021 Kerr Memorials

The Avalon Beach Patrol won the 2021 David J. Kerr Memorial Lifeguard Championship, their fourth consecutive win. Here are some of the winners from the 2021 competition:

- **Swim:** Dolan Grisbaum (Avalon) won with a time of 13:08, followed by Jack Christian (SIC) and Brendan Lewis (WW)
- **Singles row:** Ryan Finnegan (Avalon) won with a time of 5:49, followed by Gary Nagle (Avalon) and Jake Klecko (WC)
- **Iron man relay:** Avalon won with a time of 15:07, followed by Stone Harbor and Upper Twp
- **Iron woman relay:** Sea Isle won with a time of 16:52, followed by Avalon and Cape May
- **Brett Fitzpatrick surf dash relay:** Avalon won with a time of 2:04, followed by Sea Isle and Wildwoo

Avalon wins Kerr Memorials in chilly ocean conditions



- [Patrick Mulranen](#)
- Jul 23, 2022

AVALON — The swim and surf dash events were not competed in the most ideal conditions Friday night at the 38th David J. Kerr Jr. Memorial Lifeguard Races.

Despite very hot temperatures throughout this week, the ocean temperature Friday morning was 57.6 degrees and not much warmer for the race. That colder water was due to upwelling, which occurs when cold water under the surface rises to the top.

That did not slow down Dolan Grisbaum.

The 2021 Ocean City High School graduate won the swim in 14 minutes, 19 seconds to lead the Avalon Beach Patrol to its second straight team title in its home event. He also helped Avalon win the the iron man relay (a three-person event with a swimmer, a runner and a doubles crew)

The event was held at the 35th Street beach. Avalon won with 31 points. Sea Isle City was second with 13. Cape May was third with five.

“It was a little colder than I would like it to be, but I got it done,” said Grisbaum, who also won the swim at the Beschen-Callahan Memorial Lifeguard Races on July 15 and at the Cape May County Championships on July 8. Avalon also won the team titles at those events.

“That’s what my goal is: to win,” Grisbaum said. “It was closer than I expected. I figured fighting the current wasn’t really the best option. I just tried my best to win.”

Grisbaum (swimmer), Brandon Hontz (runner) and Ryan Finnegan and Ray Derman (doubles) won the iron man relay in 12:09. Grisbaum helped his team get off to a great start as Avalon won the relay by 11 seconds.

Grisbaum helped win the relay in 2021, but the rest of the relay team was different Friday.

“After (the swim), I was so exhausted,” said Grisbaum, who swims for Boston University. “But I knew I had to get a good lead for my team.”

The beginning of the swim is like a surf dash, which Grisbaum said isn't his best event. He was a little bit "boxed-in going out," he said.

"I was kind of shocked I was first going around that first flag," he said. "But I caught some waves coming in and (it) gave me a boost, which helped me a lot. I'm happy we won the race."

Avalon's Alick Killian, Justin Rhyne, John McDonnell, Colin Rosser and Dave Giulian won the surf dash. Maggie Mikalic, Jill McEntee, Danielle Smith and Gabbi Eppright won the iron women's relay, which was just added this summer. Avalon won in 14:18

"It was awesome," said Killian, a recent graduate of Middle Township High School. "We have been working hard, and all that hard work is paying off. It's really nice to win at home. It's great winning at home. It would really (stink) if someone came to Avalon and beat us in this race."

Avalon's Erich Wolf won the singles row. Wildwood Crest's Jack Klecko was ahead when the rowers reached the flag, and it was a close finish.

Friday was a beautiful night for rowing, said Wolf, who won the event for the third straight week, having also done so at the Cape May and Beschen-Callahan races.

Eight patrols from Cape May County competed Friday, some having multiple boats for the doubles and singles rows. Scoring was 5-3-1 for the first three places.

"So farm so good," said Wolf, who praised the rest of his patrol, including the other singles rowers, Ryan Finnegan and Gary Nagle.

Wolf won in 5:41, while Finnegan was second in 5:49. Klecko was third (5:59)

"They rode a great race," Wolf said. "It was neck-and-neck the whole race. (Klecko) rode a great race. Coming in, it was close again. I was in the right place at the right time and rode it in straight. It was a good race overall."

Sea Isle's Danny Rogers and Pat Scannapieco won the doubles row in a very close finish with Avalon's Dave Giulian and Gary Nagle. The boats were almost side-by-side as they approached the shore, but Sea Isle was able to pull ahead near the end.

Scannapieco and Rogers won in 14:40. Giulian and Nagle finished in 14:48.

"They are very fast," Scannapieco said of Nagle and Giulian. "Tough kids and tough competitors. They (beat us at the Beschen-Callahan Memorial Lifeguard Races and Cape May County Championships), so it was nice to be able to take them because they are very fast."

Scannapieco said there was not a lot of wind. Rogers and Scannapieco also won the Tri-Resorts on Sunday.

“It started to pick up as the tide went out,” he said. “It helped on the way in, but for the most part it was just a flat pull.”

Note: Wildwood Crest won the Kerr Memorials in 2019. Avalon captured the title from 2011-18. The event was not held in 2020 due to the pandemic.

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Results

Team scoring: 1. Avalon 31; Sea Isle 13; Cape May 5

Doubles row: 1. Danny Rogers/Pat Scannapieco (Sea Isle) 14:40; 2. Dave Giulian/Gary Nagle (Avalon) 14:48; 3. Mike Fitzpatrick/Andrew Treffeisen (Cape May) 15:05

Swim: 1. Dolan Grisbaum (Avalon) 14:19; 2. Andrew Taylor (Sea Isle) 14:31; 3. Brendan Lewis (Wildwood) 15:05

Singles row: 1. Erich Wolf (Avalon) 5:41; 2. Ryan Finnegan (Avalon) 5:49; 3. Jake Klecko (Wildwood Crest) 5:59.

Iron man relay: 1. Grisbaum, Brandon Hontz, Finnegan/Ray Derman 12:09;. 2. Tom Medvecky, Josh Forrest, Fitzpatrick/Treffeisen (Cape May) 12:20; Taylor, Zach AbuAwad, Aiden Reed/ Nolan Morasco (Sea Isle) 12:49

Iron woman relay: 1. Maggie Mikalic, Jill McEntee, Danielle Smith/Gabbi Eppright (Avalon) 14:18; 2. Mary Kate Leonard, Emily Kulak, Callie Reed/Abbie Ryan (Sea Isle) 14:22; 3. Kate Luft, Maddie Hawks, Gray/Rafter 15:05

Surf dash: 1. Alick Killian, Justin Rhyne, John McDonnell, Colin Rosser, Dave Giulian (Avalon) 1:45; 2. Brendan Lewis, Matt Comas, Connor Ewart, John Ebert (Wildwood) 1:49; 3. Matt Pytel, Andrew Torney, Rob Dougherty Jr., Andrew McLaughlin, Corbin King (Sea Isle) 1:50.

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Avalon wins Kerr Memorials for 3rd straight summer, 11th time in last 12 years

- [Patrick Mulranen](#)
- Jul 22, 2023



AVALON — The Avalon Beach Patrol enjoys winning on its own beach.

Avalon won the David J. Kerr Jr. Memorial Lifeguard Races team title in 10 of the previous 11 summers its home event was held. That dominance continued Friday.

Avalon captured the championship, its third in a row, at the 35th Street beach. The lifeguard racing season was canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic. Wildwood Crest won the title in 2019, and Avalon won eight straight from 2011-18.

On Friday, Avalon won four of the six events and finished with 26 team points. Sea Isle City, which won two races and was second in two others, placed second with 16 points. Wildwood Crest placed third with four.

An offshore wind affected the waves, making them more rough.

“The race did not get off to a great start,” Avalon Beach Patrol chief Matt Wolf said. “Our doubles boat, who have been very competitive over the last couple of years, got hit with water going out. It’s just bad luck, but that’s ocean racing, and it happens. Sea Isle got off to a great start, and they have a very good team. But we are a very deep team, and special things happen here.”

Sea Isle’s Danny Rogers and Pat Scannapieco won the doubles row in 13 minutes, 51 seconds. Jake Klecko and Pat Bakey (Wildwood Crest) were second. Mike Fitzpatrick and Andrew Treffeisen (Cape May) finished third. Scoring was 5-3-1, so Avalon did not get on the scoreboard in the first race.

“It’s nice to get a first (this summer),” said Rogers, who placed second with Scannapieco at both the Cape May County Championships and the Beschen-Callahan Memorial race. “We had a good start, a pretty good turn.”

Scannapieco added, “We had a really good pull. Just a good start, and I’m happy with that race.”

Avalon third-year guard Dolan Grisbaum won the swim in 13:08, about a minute faster than Jack Christian of Sea Isle (13:58). Grisbaum, an Ocean City High School graduate who was the 2021 Press Boys Swimmer of the Year, finished so fast he walked out off the water and onto shore.

Grisbaum, who had not previously raced this summer due to an internship in Boston, just started training in the ocean two weeks ago.

Grisbaum has been a threat for Avalon the last couple of years, winning nearly every race he enters. On Friday, Grisbaum, Brandon Hontz and Ray Derman and Frank Lawson won the iron man relay (a three-segment race with a swimmer, a runner and a doubles crew) in 15:07. It was Grisbaum's third straight summer winning the swim at Avalon's race.

“When I was swimming this morning, I was a little worried because my arms were hurting really bad,” said Grisbaum, a rising junior swimmer at Boston University. “My arms were killing me on the way out, but I just put my head down and tried to get back. And once I got past the buoy, I kind of knew I was going to win it.”

Added Lawson, “It was helpful to have a big lead from South Jersey champ Dolan Grisbaum and the great Penn State standout Brandon Hontz. All (Derman and Lawson) had to do was not flip that boat.”

At the Kerr races, patrols can enter multiple teams in the double and singles row and surf dash. For the second straight summer, Avalon placed first and second in the singles row. Ryan Finnegan won in 5:47, and Gary Nagle was second (5:50).

“It’s always good to win on your home field,” Finnegan said. “I’m used to racing here every day.”

After the iron man relay, Avalon had 18 points, and Sea Isle had eight. Avalon and Sea Isle tied at the Cape May County and Beschen-Callahan races. Avalon won the tiebreaker at the county race, and Sea Isle at the Beschen-Callahan races. So the two patrols, separated by about 5 miles, have been very competitive with each other throughout the summer.

“Special things happen here for us,” Wolf said.

Avalon's Allick Killian, Justin Rhyne, Harry Rolhfig, Sean Geary and John McDonnell won the surf dash (2:04). Ten years ago, Avalon renamed its surf-dash race in honor of Brett Fitzpatrick, who served as a lifeguard and died in 2015. He was 25, and many current guards on the patrol knew him. Winning the Kerr race is something Avalon wants to do each year.

"To seal it on the 10th anniversary of Brett, it's a special thing," Wolf said. "It's hard to put it into words."

Added Geary, "It feels great. We knew we had to do it. A hometown race, we just did what we had to."

Sea Isle's Kevin O'Dare, Tucker DeLuca, Andrew Torney, Pat O'Hanlon and Mike Farley placed second in the surf dash. Patrol mates Mary Kate Leonard (swim), Emily Kulak (runner) and Callie Reed and Abbie Ryan (doubles) won the iron woman relay. The team took second at the Avalon event in 2022.

"We felt great," Ryan said. "We were really happy to pull through and take first this year. A lot of hard work."

RESULTS

Team scoring: Avalon 26; Sea Isle City 16; Wildwood Crest 4.

Doubles row: Danny Rogers-Pat Scannapieco (Sea Isle) 13:51; Jake Klecko-Pat Bakey (Wildwood Crest) 13:53; Mike Fitzpatrick-Andrew Treffeisen (Cape May) 13:58

Swim: Dolan Grisbaum (Avalon) 13:08; Jack Christian (Sea Isle) 13:58; Brendan Lewis (Wildwood) 14:08

Singles: Ryan Finnegan (Avalon) 5:47; Gary Nagle (Avalon) 5:50; Klecko (Wildwood Crest) 5:53

Iron man relay: Grisbaum, Brandon Hontz and Ray Derman-Frank Lawson (Avalon) 15:07; DJ Comerford, Joe Cahill, Dennis Bakey-Tom Lake (Stone Harbor) 15:48;

Iron women relay: Mary Kate Leonard, Emily Kulak and Callie Reed, Abbie Ryan (Sea Isle) 16:52; Katie Scanlon, Maggie Murphy, Danielle Smith-Gabbi Eppright (Avalon) 17:06; Kate Luft, Maddi Hawkes, Lindsey Frenia-Jenny Rafter (Cape May) 17:32

Surf dash: Allick Killian, Justin Rhyne, Harry Rolhfig, Sean Geary, John McDonnell (Avalon) 2:04; Kevin O'Dare, Tucker DeLuca, Andrew Torney, Pat O'Hanlon and Mike Farley (Sea Isle) 2:13; Brendan Lewis, Matt Comas, Connor Ewart, Dylan Hagan, I. Peterson (Wildwood) 2:15

Avalon wins Kerr Memorials for 4th straight summer, 12th time in last 13 years

- [Patrick Mulranen](#)
- Jul 19, 2024



AVALON — The Avalon Beach Patrol prides itself on winning its home race each summer.

Avalon showed that again Friday.

For the fourth consecutive summer, Avalon won the team title at the David J. Kerr Jr. Memorial Lifeguard Races at the 35th Street Beach.

Avalon won six of the eight races to win with the 40th edition of the event with 39 team points. Sea Isle City placed second with 19. Wildwood Crest was third with five.

Patrols could enter up to three boats in the doubles and singles races and two teams in the surf dashes. Avalon placed second or third in five events, including the men's swim in which Alex Zoldan and Tim Hanway placed second and third.

“There is only one 40th anniversary,” Avalon Beach Patrol Chief Matt Wolf said. “We have done a lot of stuff this week, but it’s all just execution. Guys have worked hard. Girls have worked hard. The patrol has worked hard. And it shows. ... Everybody had a great night, and they stepped up to the moment.”

Avalon’s Gary Nagle and Dave Giulian won the doubles row in 12 minutes, 41 seconds. Also for Avalon, Becca Cubbler and Ryan Finnegan won the women’s swim and the singles row, respectively.

Cubbler, Maggie Murphy, and Regan and Molly McDonnell won the iron women relay (a three-leg race with a swimmer, a runner and a doubles crew). Zoldan, Brandon Hontz, Jack Glomb and George Glomb won the iron man relay.

“It’s great to contribute,” Regan McDonnell said. “There are a lot of people competing tonight. It’s fun to be a part of it.”

Added Murphy, "It's fun to hear all our teammates cheering."

Avalon's Brett Nabb, James Glomb, Tom Carr, Matt O'Connor and Karl Giulian won the men's surf dash. The five competitors were Avalon's No. 2 team in the race.

"We were the B-team, and we just came out and we wanted to race," Carr said. "We ran a good race, and the boys had a lot of fun."

"It feels good," said Nagle, a 2018 Middle Township High School graduate. "Gotta represent the patrol correctly. We have been working really hard for it. And to live up to Dave Kerr, he was a good guy and tough rower. We are happy to be here representing him and the patrol."

The races honor Kerr, who died of cancer in 1981 at the age of 28. Kerr was the 1980 South Jersey Lifeguard champion in the doubles row. The men's surf dash is named after Brett Fitzpatrick, a former lifeguard who died in 2015 at the age of 25.

Avalon won the team title in 12 of the previous 13 summers its home event was held. Wildwood Crest won the title in 2019. The lifeguard racing season was canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic. Avalon won eight straight Kerr championships from 2011-18.

"This means a lot to the patrol," said Dave Giulian, a 2022 Middle graduate. "We talked about it all week. You never let them come on your home turf and beat you, so we had big expectations. It's awesome."

Sea Isle's Danny Rogers and Pat Scannapieco placed second in the doubles row in 12:50, just nine seconds behind Nagle and Giulian. The winners were the first to turn at the flag in the ocean.

"We did four turns on that warmup, and I think we had a beautiful turn during the race, so that paid off," Nagle said.

"That's a good crew they got," Giulian said of Sea Isle. "They are good competition every weekend. It's just fun to have good competition like that and get a (win) on your home turf."

Skies were sunny and temperatures were in the mid-70s when the race started, but the ocean temperature was about 58 degrees. So, it wasn't perfect conditions for the swimmers.

"It's a little cold," Cubbler said. "But not as bad as it's been."

Sea Isle's Andrew Taylor agreed.

“It’s definitely cold, but a lot warmer than a few of the races we had last week,” said Taylor, who won the men’s swim.

Taylor won in a close battle with Zoldan. They were swimming next to each other, but Taylor took the late lead and won in 14:18, just two seconds ahead of Zoldan.

“I am pretty excited,” Taylor said. “It was a tough race. We are always fighting with Avalon out here. Coming here, in their town, and getting first place, I am pretty happy with it.”

Avalon just added the women’s swim to the event this year, so the win was special for Cubbler. She won in 15:26, and Sea Isle’s Mary Kate Leonard was second (15:34).

“I am so excited,” Cubbler said. “I am glad to take it out with a bang.”

Like last summer at the Kerrs, Avalon’s Ryan Finnegan won the singles row and Nagle placed second. Finnegan won Friday in 5:42, and Nagle came to shore in 5:47. Rogers placed third (6:01). Finnegan also won the singles last week at the Beschen-Callahan Memorial Lifeguard Races in North Wildwood.

“Always have to win the Kerrs. (The South Jersey championship) is the end goal, but the Kerrs are our hometown race. There is nothing better. ... This race means a lot to us. To come out and perform like we have, it means a lot.”

Hontz, who was the runner on the iron man relay, gave Avalon a dominant lead. Jack Glomb and George Glomb, the doubles rowers, helped the relay team win in 11:37. Sea Isle’s Taylor, Kai Heyman, Pat Scannapieco and Nick Matousch were second (11:58).

Hontz has been on the winning iron man relay for three straight years.

“I was trying to build up as big of a lead as possible,” Hontz said. “This event is super special. We have been thinking about it all summer. We always want to win the home meet for Dave Kerr. I am happy to do it for the third time.”

Added Jack Glomb, “It’s a great day for us. The best day of the year.”

Wildwood Crest’s Maddie Priest, Sophia Jurusz, Lauren Sweet, Emie Frederick and Caitlyn Lak won the women’s surf dash. Sea Isle’s Anna Scoblick, Kylie Fry, Kaylee Dougherty, Fiona Keenan and Ella Shaak placed second.

“That was very, very awesome,” Frederick said. “We have been working hard. It’s all about teamwork and putting the effort in. It pays off. We had a good run. It felt good to get a win.”

Results

Team scores: 1. Avalon 39; Sea Isle City 19; Wildwood Crest 15

Doubles: 1. Gary Nagle-Dave Giulian (Avalon) 12:41; 2. Danny Rogers-Pat Scannapieco (Sea Isle) 12:50; 3. Jimmy Nilsen / James Garoh (Upper Township) 12:51

Mens swim 1. Andrew Taylor (Sea Isle) 14:18; 2. Alex Zoldan (Avalon) 14:20; 3. Tim Hanway (Avalon) 15:07

Womens swim: 1. Becca Cubbler (Avalon) 15:26; 2. Mary Kate Leonard (Sea Isle) 15:34; 3. Katie Scanlon (Avalon) 16:14

Singles: 1. Ryan Finnegan (Avalon) 5:42; 2. Gary Nagle (Avalon) 5:47; 3. Danny Rogers (Sea Isle) 6:01

Iron man relay: 1. Avalon (Alex Zoldan, Brandon Hontz, Jack Glomb / George Glomb) 11:37; 2. Sea Isle (Andrew Taylor, Kai Heyman, Pat Scannapieco / Nick Matousch) 11:58; 3. Cape May (Tie Manuel, Zeb Hinker, Mike Fitzpatrick / Jack Solecki) 12:06

Iron woman relay: 1. Avalon (Becca Cubbler, Maggie Murphy, Regan McDonnell / Molly McDonnell) 13:00; 2. Upper Twp. (Meredith Steele, Ava Smith, Lorna Connell / Kailey Grimley) 13:30; 3. Sea Isle (Mary Kate Leonard, Emily Kulka, Maura Quinn / Molly Quinn) 13:34

Womens surf dash: 1. Wildwood Crest (Maddie Priest, Sophia Jurusz, Emmie Frederick, Lauren Sweet, Caitlyn Lak); 2. Sea Isle (Anna Scoblick, Kylie Fry, Kaylee Dougherty, Fiona Keenan, Ella Shaak); 3. Avalon (Maddy Hippensteal, Sarah Powell, Alex Glomb, Mackenna Finnegan, Molly McDonnell)

Mens surf dash: 1. Avalon (Tom Carr, James Glomb, Brett Nabb, Matt O'Connor, Karl Giulian); 2. Cape May (Zack Barron, Clay Stephens, Zeb Hinker, Pat Kennedy, Roberto Steele); 3. Wildwood (Brendan Lewis, Connor Ewart, Matt Comas, Brandon Acevedo, Charlie Kitching)