The Journal

Inaugural Jocassee team triathlon

THE JOURNAL STAFF

SALEM — The inaugural 3x3 Team Triathlon Challenge went off without a hitch last Saturday at Lake Jocassee in Devils Fork State Park.

The triathlon started with a 700-yard swim in the chilly, choppy, crystal clear waters of Lake Jocassee. After completing the swim, the athletes sprinted from the lake to their bikes for a 13.8 mile bike ride that began with a steep uphill climb out of the gorge through the neighboring Cliffs Falls North Community, up to Scenic Highway 11, and ended, with a downhill ride back to Devils Fork State Park where they parked their bikes and put on their running shoes for a 5K sprint through the park campground.

"We can't wait for the opportunity to return to this wonderful venue for next year's race," Furman Triathlon Club faculty advisor Dr. Scott Murr said. "This is another gem in Oconee County."



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Furman Triathlon Club faculty advisor Dr. Scott Murr stands beside his winning time following the 3x3 Team Triathlon Challenge on Saturday at Devils Fork State Park.

For Greenville resident Sarah Barry, the event was her first triathlon, but she said afterward it would certainly not be her last.

"This was my first triathlon and after participating in the event I am completely hooked," she said.

With team awards in Co-ed, All Male, All Female and Over Age 120 divisions, the participants indicated that they truly enjoyed the Team format.

This unique approach to a sport that is generally recognized as appealing mostly to the individual athlete was "a welcomed change that was very well received by all of the competitors" said Dr. Murr.

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a big hit

In this format, each three-person team member contributed to an overall team score by completing an individual triathlon.

Pieces of hand-made pottery, indicative of the Cherokee heritage in Oconee County were given as team trophies, as well as Best Time Male and Best Time Female.

All proceeds from the event went to the Tamassee DAR School in nearby Tamassee.

Dr. Dean Bare, Director of the Tamassee DAR School, said he was grateful to the many volunteers who worked so hard to make the event a success.

Planning for next year's race is already under way. Members of the triathlon community are urged to keep a sharp eye out for the announcement of the 2010 race. For more information, contact Lyndon Ashworth at Mountain Lakes Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1-877-685-2537 or log onto www.3x3teamtriathloncha llenge.com.