

A COOL START

In 2006, athletes racing the long-course MightyMan event had to contend with unseasonably wet and cold conditions that saw several sections of the course flooded out; however, this year, despite cool early-morning temperatures, athletes enjoyed brilliant weather with highs in the upper-60s that made for fast times.

After a flat 1.2-mile wave-start swim, athletes made a quick scramble out of Fort Pond and a short run to T1. Once on the bike, athletes ride east to the tip of Long Island, which takes them through Montauk Point State Park and past the Montauk Point Lighthouse, which was commissioned by President George Washington and built in 1796 and still stands as one of the country's oldest lighthouses.

On the 56-mile bike, local age-group triathlete Grant Connelly, racing from the first wave, quickly consolidated his advantage, opening up a comfortable gap over his chasers as the men wound through the two-lap course, which includes sections on the highway and rural seaside residential streets. But over the second half of the bike Halsted began taking significant time out of Connelly, catching the leader just a mile from T2.

"I tried to stay steady on the first lap and hammered the second," said Halsted. "On the second lap I could see the leader [Connelly] and thought I'd make a move."

And making Halsted's performance on the bike even more impressive was that the 41-year-old veterinarian was racing from wave four, which started six minutes after Connelly's wave, making Halsted the clear T2 leader on paper if not on the course.

Despite Halsted's challenge on the bike, however, Connelly, who won the Mighty Hamptons race on Sept. 16, attacked early on the run to again open a lead over Halsted, who battled leg cramps over the first three miles of the half-marathon.

"I got off the bike and my quads cramped in the first three miles of the run," said Halsted. "But I was patient."

After finding his rhythm on the run Halsted raced well but conservatively, comfortable in the knowledge that, because of the staggered wave start, he held a solid margin over his closest chasers, two of whom moved past him in the closing miles of the run but posed little threat to his overall lead. "I knew I had a big cushion," explained Halsted, "but I kept them close."

Although he crossed the line fourth, Halsted took the win in 4:25:39, his first here after finishing second in 2006 and fourth in 2005.

In second place was New York, New York's Mike Arnstein who, racing from the first wave with Connelly, overcame a 34-minute swim and, incredibly, raced and won the Hamptons Marathon the day before in 2:44. "I was really tired for the first six miles of the run," said Arnstein, who nonetheless ran a spectacular half-marathon to cross the line first and ultimately take the runner-up spot fewer than two minutes behind Halsted, in 4:27:24.

In third was Brooklyn's Michael Perlberg, in 4:30:17, who placed second behind Connelly at the Mighty Hamptons race. For his part, Connelly finished fourth in 4:31:59 after hanging tough on the run. "I went too hard early on and started fading," said Connelly. "I started the run strong, but it's late in the season and my legs didn't have anything for the end of the run."

VITAI RUNS INTO FIRST

Pro triathlete Liz Vitai, who works as a trader on Wall Street, wrapped up the women's title with a surge on the run. "I came off the bike in second and caught the leader by mile three," said Vitai, 42, who raced Ford Ironman Wisconsin three weeks ago,



Liz Vitai closed the gap on the run to take the top spot.

finishing eighth there in 10:22.

For much of the day, however, Vitai had been chasing Arizona's Kathryn Bertine. "I'm done," said Vitai after her win, which came on tired post-Ironman legs. "But once I got the lead I thought I'd better suffer. It was hard to get going, but once you get in the front the adrenalin takes over."

Vitai took the win in 4:50:00 with Bertine a strong second in 4:53:37. ▲

MIGHTYMAN MONTAUK

Montauk, N.Y.

Sept. 30, 2007

1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run

Women

1. Liz Vitai (USA)	4:50:00
2. Kathryn Bertine (USA)	4:53:37
3. Jessica Allen (USA)	5:03:13
4. Christine Kachinsky (USA)	5:03:28
5. Katherine Ward (USA)	5:06:34

Men

1. Michael Halsted (USA)	4:25:39
2. Michael Arnstein (USA)	4:27:24
3. Michael Perlberg (USA)	4:30:17
4. Grant Connelly (USA)	4:31:59
5. Kevin Higgins (USA)	4:37:38