



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **2010 AFLAC IRON GIRL COLUMBIA TRIATHLON WINNER, LAUREL WASSNER**

**Columbia, MD** – Columbia Triathlon Association (CTA) proudly announces its 2010 Aflac Iron Girl Columbia Triathlon Winner, **Laurel Wassner(35) of New York, NY**, cancer survivor and pro female winner of the 2010 Columbia Triathlon. Laurel was hoping to beat her twin sister's course record, but the heavy rain during the bike held her back and she finished with a final time of 1:23:16. Laurel was followed by second place winner, Kristen Peterson (25) of Boulder, CO at 1:28:21, and third place winner Sharon Schmidt-Mongrain(35) of Lafayette Hill, PA at 1:30:35. Marge Burley, age 65 from Baltimore MD, finished the race in 1:58:01, first in her age group, and 138 overall. There were 34 women ages 60 and over that competed in today's race.

The race started at 6:40a.m. at Centennial Park in Howard County, MD., with Howard County Executive Ken Ulman offering words of encouragement to the racers, and thanking race coordinators, volunteers, Police, Fire and Rescue, Parks and Recreation, and urging all to have a great day. The Aflac Iron Girl Columbia is the largest Iron Girl Triathlon in the U.S., with about 2400 women competing. The race course is a "Sprint" distance, and consists of a .62 mile swim, 17.5 mile bike, and 3.4 mile run. The course is known to be an extremely challenging course with lots of hills on the bike and run portions.

This year, there were three Paratriathletes racing - Sarah Reinertsen (first female above-knee amputee to finish a full Ironman), U.S. Army LTC, Paratrooper, Patricia S. Collins, and Jamie Rogers (JHU Pediatric Nurse) of Baltimore. Sarah, after crossing the finish line, said how encouraged and impressed she was by the spirit of all the women along the way, and that her journey to racing in an Ironman started with a Sprint length race like this.

Also racing today, along with seven of her patients, was Dr. Pam Peeke. She is a nationally renowned fitness physician and expert, the chief medical correspondent with Discovery Health TV, WebMD's lifestyle expert, marathoner and leader of the "Peeke Performers", her women patients who joined her today to share the journey of becoming Iron Girls and complete their first ever triathlon. Her patients and Iron Girl partners used the training to overcome obstacles like illnesses, obesity, and life stress.

There were record numbers of mother/daughter teams (52), teens (62 ages 19 and under), and 71 relay teams. Ten charity organizations participated in the race today representing a number of causes. Among them: Team Embrace, Team in Training, Athletes Serving Athletes, The Women's Giving Circle, and Team Fight, the largest out of the teams with 120 members competing and raising money for The Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults.

**(For more race results, visit <http://www.tricolumbia.org/IronGirl/> and click on 2010 Race Results. To request photos or other information, email [khughes@bmcgroup.us](mailto:khughes@bmcgroup.us))**

**TOP 5 OVERALL FINISHERS:**

1 LAUREL WASSNER	35 NEW YORK NY	1:23:16
2 KRISTEN PETERSON	25 BOULDER CO	1:28:21
3 SHARON SCHMIDT-MONGRAIN	35 LAFAYETTE HILL PA	1:30:35
4 SUZY MCCULLOCH	30 COLUMBIA MD	1:31:50
5 KIM SCHWABENBAUER	31 ALLISON PARK PA	1:33:10

**PARATRIATHLETE FINISHERS:**

1 PATTY COLLINS	41 ALEXANDRIA VA	2:08:43
2 SARAH REINERTSEN	35 MISSION VIEJO CA	2:36:43
3 JAMIE ROGERS	48 BALTIMORE MD	3:00:59

**About CTA:**

The Columbia Triathlon Association (CTA) is a 501c-3 non-profit organization based in Columbia, Maryland and incorporated in 1988 by Founder and Race Director, Robert Vigorito. The organization plays an active role in its surrounding communities and supports several local charities, among them: The Arc of Howard County, which supports children and adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities, The Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults based in Howard County, The Lance Armstrong Foundation, Team In Training, The Blazeman Foundation, and several other causes.

CTA also produces and directs **The Columbia Triathlon, Eagleman Ironman 70.3 Triathlon** (a qualifier for the Ford Ironman World Championship Kona and Foster Grant Ironman 70.3 World Championship Clearwater), **Celebration Sprint Triathlon, ChesapeakeMan Ultra Triathlon Endurance Festival, TriColumbia LIFEfest**, and **TriColumbia Kidz Triathlon**. For event information visit [www.tricolumbia.org](http://www.tricolumbia.org), or email CTA at [events@tricolumbia.org](mailto:events@tricolumbia.org).