

FORMER SEASIDE ATHLETE GINNY MEADWAY HAS NEWFOUND CAREER

SWIM, RUN, BIKE

By Gary Henley
Seaside Signal

Ginny Soller Meadway, a Seaside High graduate and triathlete, had another successful competition on Sunday, Aug. 27, in the Ironman Coeur d'Alene in Idaho.

Meadway, 34, finished second out of 71 competitors in the age 35-39 division, and sixth out of 304 females entered in the race.

Overall, she was 59th out of 980 competitors.

Her official time was 10 hours, 54 minutes, 30 seconds (8:40 per mile). The event starts with a 1.2-mile swim, followed by a 56.1-mile bike and a 13.1-mile run.

At Seaside High School, her big sports were soccer, basketball and track.

Now, Ginny Soller Meadway is winning awards for swimming, biking and running, and usually all on the same day.

The former Seagull star took up marathons, half-marathons and triathlons last year, and has taken to triathlons like ... well, a gull to water.

"I started triathlons last year," said Meadway, who now lives in Seattle. "My husband thought it would be a good idea to do all three sports instead of just running. Little did he know how expensive the triathlon world is."

Meadway has competed in events from the East Coast to the West, from Canada to the southern U.S., and recently came up big in the eighth annual Lake Meridian Triathlon Saturday, Aug. 12, in Kent, Washington.

Out of 78 females entered in the "Olympic Wave" triathlon (nearly 32 total miles of competition), Meadway finished first in a total time of two hours, 23 minutes, 11.1 seconds.

Meadway, 35, completed the 1,500-meter swim in 27:00.1. She had the best time in the bike portion (1:09:32.3, over 24.8 miles), and the second-best time in the 6.2-mile run (43:55.0).

Second place overall was Kari Vreugdenhil, in 2:23:52.8.

"It's an all-out sprint, plus endurance distance," she said of her most recent event. "You need both. I have done two 70.3 (mile) Ironmans this summer. I placed on my second in Canada, which is the biggest accomplishment of my racing so far."

In one of her most impressive finishes, Meadway was the first female finisher (and second overall, men and women) in the Jailhouse 5K run in Hampton, Georgia. Out of 357 finishers, she crossed the finish line in 20:27, second behind Tom Dillard (18:51). Meadway was also the fourth female finisher in the 2016 Hotlanta Half-Marathon in Atlanta.



Ginny Soller Meadway celebrates as she crosses the finish line in Sunday's Coeur d'Alene Ironman.

In a return to the North Coast last spring, she took first in the Astoria Run on the River Half-Marathon, in 1:31:34; and in "Ironman 70.3," July 30 in Whistler, British Columbia, she finished fourth in her age group (and 16th overall female).

Meadway ran in her biggest event April 17, taking part in the Boston Marathon, which she completed in 3:22:44.

Up next for Meadway is the "Full Ironman" competition in the annual Coeur d'Alene Ironman event, Aug. 27 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

It's a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride, and a 26.2-mile run, said Meadway, a former sprinter and pole vaulter in her days at Seaside High School (she still owns the third-best pole vault mark, 9-6, in school history).

Of her new career in triathlons and marathons, Meadway has "podiumed" or come in first in almost every race she has entered the last two years.

"I freakin' love it," she said.



The top spot on the awards stand — a familiar place for Seaside High School grad Ginny Soller Meadway.

Pedaling for a purpose

Bike and Build project lands in Cannon Beach

By Brenna Visser
Seaside Signal

Families from the East Coast huddled together in front of Haystack Rock, holding welcome signs and bottles of champagne.

The excitement in this group started building three months ago when their friends, siblings and children all made the decision to ride 3,856 miles across the United States, ending their journey Saturday, Aug. 5, was the end of their journey.

Mary Savarese flew from Connecticut to meet her daughter Katie with a poster with the names of all 36 participants mapped along the route they rode from Virginia Beach.

"We just find it amazing," she said. "When she told us, it was a surprise — but the decision did make sense. She is outgoing and always up for a challenge."

That challenge is a program called Bike and Build, where college-aged people have the opportunity to raise money for and help build affordable housing all while biking across the country. Founded in 2002, the program and those who apply for it have donated more than \$6.2 million to affordable housing causes throughout the United States, which each rider contributing to the construction or renovation of 3.6 new homes.

There are multiple routes riders can take, but the central route has historically always landed in Cannon Beach. Gabe Planas was one of the 36 riders celebrating in the surf of the Pacific Ocean.

"It was awe-inspiring," he said. "The impact of what we did probably won't hit for a while."

Before hitting the road, Planas and the other riders started preparing in January with 500 miles of training, 10 hours of volunteer work with affordable housing groups and raising \$4,800.

HOOD TO COAST

The challenge of race walking makes it 'more fun'

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"There aren't a lot of race walkers out there, so it's a pretty tight-knit community," team captain Marek Ziegen said.

The Portland-based team, donning bright yellow shirts with an illustration of the movie "Taxi Driver," are all co-workers who have been competing in this event for the past five years.

The team likes to keep it light, rotating team names with other walking puns like "Walks on Walks Off" and "Sasqu-walks."

But the walking itself is anything but casual.

"We're a part of a race walking network. There's a real technique to it," team member David Howitz said. The team competes in other events where there are strict guidelines for race walking form. And thinking of race walking as a slow sport is a misconception, they said. Currently, the record for fastest walking time for a mile is 5 minutes and 31 seconds.

The technique comes down to how the arm swings, how the hip drops and making sure to roll the foot forward. But that challenge of balancing physical and the mental components is what makes race walking more fun than running to some, team member Michelle Chuaprasert said.

"If you think you're just going to walk faster, it's not going to work. It's not intuitive," she said.

But for some race walking teams, like the "Christopher Walkins" from Sherwood, competing in Portland to Coast is a way to connect as friends out of the routine of their everyday lives.

"Why do we race walk? Because we don't run," team member Jenni Kelley laughed. "Because someone on your friend's team cancels, and you do it for the first time and then you get hooked."

For this team, race walking isn't about form and just doing something physical, team member Michelle Coxey said.

"It's about doing something for ourselves," Coxey said. "It's not easy, but it's something we can do together that's fun."



Having fun at the finish line at Hood to Coast.



Crossing the finish line at Hood to Coast.



The band Radical Revolution plays on the main stage at the end of Hood to Coast.



More than 19,000 runners and walkers competed in this year's Hood to Coast Relay.