

## A day of fun in the spring sun



Sarah Kate Brock, Ella Watson, Abby Heinichen, Haydon Tucker and Ann Cameron visit at the recent family day event.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

# Rock Creek racers from Signal take top spots across nation

STAFF REPORT

Rock/Creek Race Team took several podium spots in trail races around the country recently. The Road Runners Club of America held the Southeast regional championship for trail running at the Sweetwater 50k and Half Marathon.

Both titles went to Signal Mountain residents and Race Team members this year. Longtime Signal Mountain resident and team member Sheridan Ames took first place in the 50K with a time of 5:01:44. Rock/Creek team captain and new Signal Mountain resident Matt Sims continued the domination by taking first in the half marathon with a time of 1:38:16. Kathy Johns finished as the sixth woman overall. She was the 30th overall finisher of the 50k with a time of 6:41.

Located right outside of Atlanta, Sweetwater State Park offers a challenging course including steep climbs, gnarly downhills and treacherous creek crossings. This year, team Rock/Creek made its presence known at the race.

For Sheridan Ames, the 50k title had special significance as his first ever first place win. Mr. Ames has been to the Ironman World Championships in Kona, has run the

Grand Canyon Rim-to-Rim-to-Rim solo.

"The course was very challenging, physically and mentally," said Mr. Ames. "The river crossing was particularly interesting. Wading through waist deep cold rushing water while holding onto a rope to keep you from being washed downstream was a new one for me. Sharing the win with fellow team members made the race particularly special, and I'm now looking forward to the Shadow of Giants 50K at the end of the month."

Matt Sims had to fight for the half marathon title. Since there were 150 runners in the half marathon, he headed out to the front early. Mr. Sims maintained his lead throughout most of the race.

"As soon as we joined the trail, I was able to get away from (the other runner challenging for the lead) on some technical turns and steep rocky down hills and never saw anyone again until mile 12.5," he said. "I thought I pretty much had this one in the bag until I heard the leaves rustling behind me with a younger runner bearing down on me in the last half mile. Miraculously I was able to hold him off and crossed the line with 15 or so seconds to spare."

Several other Rock/Creek

Race Team members finished strong as well. Race Team members Johanna Gartman and Stephen Taylor won the overall women's and overall men's titles at Chattanooga's Scenic City Triathlon. Johanna is a new member of the team, and at only 15 years old has already won several races including the 2007 Ironkids National Championship in Phoenix, Ariz.

John Anderson, fresh off a win at the Old Pueblo 50 Miler in Arizona, finished second at the Zane Grey 50 miler, which takes place on the Highline Trail near Payson, Ariz. He is a Signal Mountain native who currently studies medicine at the University of Colorado.

"These racers continue to blow away our expectations as they have taken the podium in races across the country this spring," said Rock/Creek co-owner Dawson Wheeler. "In addition, our race team members have been working on building new trails, organizing and supporting the Rock/Creek Trail Series, and raising money for The Boonies. We're proud to have them associated with Rock/Creek."

For more information about the Rock/Creek Race Team, visit <http://www.rockcreek.com/raceteam>.

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