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Nell Rojas Outkicks Jenny Simpson at 2021 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile; Edwin Kimutai Honors Recently Deceased Wife With Victory Over Abbabiya Simbassa in Men's Race

Simbassa and Rojas win respective USATF 10 Mile Championships Presented by Toyota.

September 12, 2021, Washington, DC: On a warm and crystal clear late summer morning in our Nation's Capital, American **Nell Rojas** won a thrilling race among the top women runners at this year's Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile (CUCB), while Kenyan **Edwin Kimutai** left the rest of the men's field in his footsteps 25 minutes into the race to handily win the men's race. With his 33-second victory, Kimutai honored the recent passing of his wife, while Rojas surprised all the pundits when she sprinted away from **Jenny Simpson** with less than one half mile left in the race to win the 2021 USATF Women's 10 Mile Championship Presented by Toyota.

"I had zero expectations on place or time," said Rojas in a post-race interview. "At seven or eight miles, I could tell Jenny and the others were



Nell Rojas celebrates her victory over Olympic Bronze medalist Jenny Simpson at the 2021 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run

working hard, and I was like 'I'm not working hard.' At that point I was OK letting myself believe I could win."

Rojas added: "With 800 to go, I knew Jenny was right there, I was really scared. I kicked around 600, and made that decision because I couldn't let Jenny have the last 50-meter sprint. At that point, I was like 'I'm fine with second, but just let me do this.'"

While she may have been a novice on the roads at anything longer than one mile, Simpson displayed confidence and savvy from the start. In fact, USATF.tv webcast commentator Carrie Tollefson remarked that Jenny cut the tightest tangent in the women's lead pack of 14, going into a roundabout on the Virginia end of Memorial Bridge at a little more than 1 ½ miles into the race. Throughout the race, Simpson could be seen moving around the dwindling lead pack — side to side, forward and back — while eventual third place American **Annie Frisbie** oftentimes found herself in the lead, pushing the pace, or sharing pacesetter duties with Rojas and overall third place finisher **Antonina Kwambai**.

"When Nell pushed it up the last hill, once she got separation, I just couldn't respond," said Simpson. "She was really strong."

Simpson added: "Sometimes the best thing that can happen with a new experience is to get second. I'm finishing hungry. Overall, the entire experience was 10 times better than I expected."

In the men's race, American **Frank Lara** —who would eventually finish fifth overall as fourth American — charged out hard from the start, and the men's field quickly strung out. By 5K four men had broken away: Kimutai, Lara, and his fellow Americans **Abbabiya Simbassa** and **Augustus Maiyo**. By 10K, Kimutai had established a 17-second lead over the Maiyo and Simbassa, with Lara a few seconds adrift of his compatriots. As Kimutai's lead grew, Maiyo and Simbassa continued to run side-by-side through 15K. Two minutes later, the 28-year-old Simbassa began to pull away from 38-year-old Maiyo, building himself a five second margin by the finish.

When asked if he felt guilty taking the 2021 USATF Men's 10 Mile Championships title from the 38-year-old Maiyo, Simbassa replied: "I respect those guys, they know more than I do. I'm just out to do my best."

Well, today, Simbassa's best earned him the title of America's best after so many recent second-place finishes in USATF Championship races, and elicited this comment: "It feels good. I've been hunting for a long time, and it finally happened today."

Here's a compilation of place, times and money earned by the top-10 American women and men as well as open prize money winners, and RRCA Roads Scholar-RunPro Development Award winners.

Top-11 American Women:

- **Nell Rojas** (52:13), took home \$5,000 for the overall victory and an additional \$5,000 as top American;
- **Jenny Simpson** (52:16), took home \$2,500 for being the second U.S. finisher and an additional \$2,000 for second place overall;
- **Annie Frisbie** (52:26), took home \$1,000 for being the third U.S. finisher, an additional \$400 for placing fifth overall, and an additional \$1,500 for winning the RRCA Roads Scholar-RunPro Camp Development Award competition;
- **Sara Hall** (52:43), took home \$900 for being the fourth U.S. finisher and an additional \$350 for placing sixth overall;
- **Carrie Verdon** (52:51), took home \$800 for being the fifth U.S. finisher and an additional \$300 for placing seventh overall;
- **Diane Nukuri** (53:23), took home \$700 for being the sixth U.S. finisher and an additional \$250 for placing eighth overall;
- **Amy Davis** (54:23), took home \$600 for being the seventh U.S. finisher and an additional \$150 for placing tenth overall;
- **Susanna Sullivan** (54:37), took home \$500 for being the eighth U.S. finisher and an additional \$1,000 for placing second in the RRCA Roads Scholar-RunPro Camp Development Award competition;
- **Bria Wetsch** (54:38), took home \$500 for being the ninth U.S. finisher;
- **Madeline Alm** (54:41), took home \$500 for being the tenth U.S. finisher.
- **Natosha Rogers** (55:02), placed eleventh among Americans, but still took home \$500 for placing third in the RRCA Roads Scholar-RunPro Camp Development Award competition.

Top International Women:

- **Antonina Kwambai** (52:23), took home \$750 for third place overall;
- **Caroline Rotich** (52:25), took home \$600 for fourth place overall;
- **Iveen Chepkemai** (53:40), took home \$200 for ninth place overall.

Top-10 American Men:

- **Abbabiya Simbassa** (46:18), took home \$5,000 for winning the USATF title, \$2,000 for finishing second overall and an additional \$1,500 for winning the RRCA Roads Scholar-RunPro Camp Development Award competition;

- **Augustus Maiyo** (46:23), took home \$2,500 for placing second among Americans, \$750 for finishing third overall and an additional \$1,000 for placing second in the RRCA Roads Scholar-RunPro Camp Development Award competition;
- **Reed Fischer** (46:59), took home \$1,000 for placing third among Americans, \$600 for finishing fourth overall and an additional \$500 for placing third in the RRCA Roads Scholar-RunPro Camp Development Award competition;
- **Frank Lara** (47:13), took home \$900 for his U.S. fourth place and an additional \$400 for placing fifth overall;
- **Shadrack Biwott** (47:35), took home \$800 for his U.S. fifth place and an additional \$300 for placing seventh overall;
- **Joel Reichow** (47:36), took home \$700 for his U.S. sixth place and an additional \$250 for placing eighth overall;
- **Elkanah Kibet** (47:39), took home \$600 for his U.S. seventh place and an additional \$200 for placing ninth overall;
- **Chris Derrick** (47:42), took home \$500 for his U.S. eighth place and an additional \$150 for placing tenth overall;
- **John Raneri** (47:43), took home \$500 for his U.S. ninth place;
- **Noah Droddy** (47:47), took home \$500 for his U.S. tenth place.

Top International Men:

- **Edwin Kimutai** (45:45), took home \$5,000 for the overall victory and an additional \$1,000 for breaking 46:00;
- **Dominic Korir** (47:30), took home \$350 for placing 6th overall.

**The complete listing of results and awards can be found below the “About America’s Credit Unions” information below.*

The only man to have run every Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, **Ben Beach** of Bethesda, MD, ran 1:42:49 today, and will line up to start his 54th consecutive Boston Marathon on October 11. **Rob Halladay** won the men’s 5K (18:38), while **Jocelyn Kelley** won the women’s 5K (19:49).

There were 5,888 finishers in the Ten Mile and 1,670 finishers in the 5K Run-Walk.

With virtual editions held in April 2020 and 2021, this in-person Fall Edition of the 2021 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Runs marks the 20th year of title sponsorship by Credit Union Miracle Day. Since 2002, over \$10 million has been raised for the Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals. Participants in the 2021 in-person race have raised \$180,059.

About the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile:

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, organized by Cherry Blossom, Inc., a 501c(3) chapter of the Road Runners Club of America, is known as “The Runner’s Rite of Spring®” in the Nation’s Capital. The staging area for the event is on the Washington Monument Grounds, and the course passes in sight of all of the major Washington, DC Memorials. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals, a consortium of 170 premier children’s hospitals across North America. About one-third of the funds raised support Washington, DC’s own Children’s National (“Children’s Hospital”). The event also funds the Road Runners Club of America’s “Roads Scholar” program, designed to support up-and-coming U.S. distance running talent.

Credit Union Miracle Day, Inc., a consortium of credit unions and credit union suppliers in partnership with CUNA Mutual Group, PCSU and CO-OP Financial Services, is the title sponsor of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run, 5K Run-Walk, and Kids' Run. Presenting sponsors include ASICS, Garmin, MedStar Health; supporting sponsors are E*Trade, Gatorade, Potomac River Running and Suburban Solutions.

The event is a proud member of the PRRO Circuit (PRRO.org), a series of major non-marathon prize money road races in Tampa, FL; Washington, DC; Spokane, WA; and Utica, NY. The circuit is committed to a drug-free sport and funds drug testing at all circuit events in compliance with the standards of international and U.S. drug testing authorities.

In addition to being sanctioned by USA Track & Field and the Road Runners Club of America, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run has earned Gold Level Inspire Certification from the Council for Responsible Sport in recognition of its legacy of commitment to sustainability and thoughtful resource management. To learn more, visit www.cherryblossom.org and follow the event on social media @CUCB and #CUCB2021.

About Credit Union Miracle Day:

Credit Union Miracle Day is a partnership of over 100 credit unions, CUSOs and partner organizations united to sponsor the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run promoting awareness of the credit union difference and benefitting Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals nationwide.

About America's Credit Unions:

Credit unions are financial cooperatives that provide consumers choices for financial services such as checking accounts, investments and loans of all kinds including mortgages. Funds are federally insured, but unlike banks, there are no stockholders at credit unions. Earnings are returned to member-owners in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates, low or no-fee products and services. The credit union

philosophy of placing members' needs first is why more than 115 million Americans do their banking at a credit union.

**Results are detailed below.*

**Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile Washington, DC,
September 12, 2021**
Awards Given Out on Race Day *(others, including age groups, will
be mailed)*

Open Men Prize Money Winners (places 1-10)

Name	Hometown	Time	Prize
1. Edwin Kimutai	Kenya	00:45:45	\$5,000, poster, Lucite award
2. Abbabiya Simbassa	Flagstaff, AZ	00:46:18	\$2,000, Lucite award
3. Augustus Maiyo	Colorado Springs, CO	00:46:23	\$750, Lucite award
4. Reed Fischer	Boulder, CO	00:46:59	\$600, Lucite award
5. Frank Lara	Westminster, CO	00:47:13	\$400, Lucite award
6. Dominic Korir	Kenya	00:47:30	\$350, Lucite award
7. Shadrack Biwott	Folsom, CA	00:47:35	\$300 Lucite award
8. Joel Reichow	White Bear Lake, MN	00:47:36	\$250, Lucite award
9. Elkanah Kibet	Colorado Springs, CO	00:47:39	\$200, Lucite award
10. Chris Derrick	Boulder, CO	00:47:42	\$150, Lucite award

Open Women Prize Money Winners (places 1-10)

Name	Hometown	Time	Prize
1. Nell Rojas	Boulder, CO	00:52:13	\$5,000, poster, Lucite award
2. Jenny Simpson	Boulder, CO	00:52:16	\$2,000 Lucite award
3. Antonina Kwambai	Kenya	00:52:23	\$750, Lucite award
4. Caroline Rotich	Kenya	00:52:25	\$600, Lucite award
5. Annie Frisbie	Minneapolis, MN	00:52:26	\$400, Lucite award
6. Sara Hall	Flagstaff, AZ	00:52:43	\$350, Lucite award
7. Carrie Verdon	Boulder, CO	00:52:51	\$300, Lucite award
8. Diane Nukuri	Flagstaff, AZ	00:53:23	\$250, Lucite award
9. Iveen Chepkemoi	Kenya	00:53:40	\$200, Lucite award
10. Amy Davis	Rochester Hills, MI	00:54:23	\$150, Lucite award

USA Men

Name	Hometown	Time	Prize
1. Abbabiya Simbassa	Flagstaff, AZ	00:46:18	\$5,000, USATF Medal, Lucite award
2. Augustus Maiyo	Colorado Springs, CO	00:46:23	\$2,500, USATF Medal, Lucite award
3. Reed Fischer	Boulder, CO	00:46:59	\$1,000, USATF Medal, Lucite award
4. Frank Lara	Westminster, CO	00:47:13	\$900, USATF Medal, Lucite award
5. Shadrack Biwott	Folsom, CA	00:47:35	\$800, USATF Medal, Lucite award
6. Joel Reichow	White Bear Lake, MN	00:47:36	\$700, USATF Medal, Lucite award
7. Elkanah Kibet	Colorado Springs, CO	00:47:39	\$600, USATF Medal, Lucite award
8. Chris Derrick	Boulder, CO	00:47:42	\$500, USATF Medal, Lucite award
9. John Raneri	Flagstaff, AZ	00:47:43	\$500, USATF Medal, Lucite award
10. Noah Drodgy	Boulder, CO	00:47:47	\$500, USATF Medal, Lucite award

USA Women

Name	Hometown	Time	Prize
1. Nell Rojas	Boulder, CO	00:52:13	\$5,000, USATF Medal, Lucite award
2. Jenny Simpson	Boulder, CO	00:52:16	\$2,500, USATF Medal, Lucite award
3. Annie Frisbie	Minneapolis, MN	00:52:26	\$1,000, USATF Medal, Lucite award
4. Sara Hall	Flagstaff, AZ	00:52:43	\$900, USATF Medal, Lucite award
5. Carrie Verdon	Boulder, CO	00:52:51	\$800, USATF Medal, Lucite award
6. Diane Nukuri	Flagstaff, AZ	00:53:23	\$700, USATF Medal, Lucite award
7. Amy Davis	Rochester Hills, MI	00:54:23	\$600, USATF Medal, Lucite award
8. Susanna Sullivan	Reston, VA	00:54:37	\$500, USATF Medal, Lucite award
9. Bria Wetsch	Broomfield, CO	00:54:38	\$500, USATF Medal, Lucite award
10. Madeline Alm	Louisville, KY	00:54:41	\$500, USATF Medal, Lucite award

RRCA Road Scholars-RunPro Camp Development Awards – U.S. Men

Name	Hometown	Time	Prize
1. Abbabiya Simbassa	Flagstaff, AZ	00:46:18	\$1,500
2. Augustus Maiyo	Colorado Springs, CO	00:46:23	\$1,000
3. Reed Fischer	Boulder, CO	00:46:59	\$500

RRCA Road Scholars-RunPro Camp Development Awards – U.S. Women

Name	Hometown	Time	Prize
1. Annie Frisbie	Minneapolis, MN	00:52:26	\$1,500
2. Susanna Sullivan	Reston, VA	00:54:37	\$1,000
3. Natosha Rogers	Littleton, CO	00:55:02	\$500

5K RUN-WALK AWARDS

Open Male

Name	Hometown	Time	Prize
1. Rob Halliday	Alexandria	00:18:38	Lucite award

Open Female

Name	Hometown	Time	Prize
1. Jocelyn Kelley	Potomac	00:19:49	Lucite award

— End —



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