

Simpson Family Becomes Toast of Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon

Jason Simpson wins race while Olympian wife takes second during family vacation; Brazilian runner sets record in women's division; More than 14,000 runners registered for the 13.1-mile runDisney event

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. (November 6, 2016) – As it turns out, Olympic medalist Jenny Simpson isn't just an elite runner, but she's also quite a master planner. And at the Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon on Sunday, the Simpsons saw their own family fairytale become reality – husband Jason won the 13.1-mile race in record fashion; Jenny took second place among the women; and the entire family made the special weekend their family vacation.

Indeed, there was a lot for the Simpson clan to celebrate during the race that started at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort and finished at Epcot. Jason Simpson shattered the race record, posting a time of 1:10:24 – more than a minute quicker than the previous mark of 1:11:47.

Jenny, who was just using the race as a “training run” during her early preparation for the World Championships next summer, nearly won the women's division, her 1:21:23 eclipsed only by Giovanna Martins of Brazil (1:20:20), whose time also set a race record among women. And the Simpson 1-2 finish unfolded on the heels of their 6th wedding anniversary and Jenny's parents' 35th wedding anniversary, and in her home area of Central Florida.

“I worked my tail off to make this all happen,” Simpson said of coordinating the family trip from her home in Boulder, Colo. “Winning the bronze medal (in the 1,500 meters in Rio this summer) was great, but this is really, really amazing. It was just so much fun to be in the environment where I grew up here in Orlando and at Disney and especially being around all of the (Disney) characters and my friends. It was a lot of fun.”

Donald Hanigosky of Parma, OH finished second overall (1:20:47) followed by Jeremy Spry of Brooklyn, NY (1:21:22). Among the women, Mason Cathey of St. Petersburg, Fla., (1:22:55) behind Martins and Simpson.

In all, more than 31,000 runners participated in the Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon Weekend presented by MISFIT, which included Mickey's Holiday 5K, the Wine & Dine 10K, Kids races, Lumiere's Two Course Challenge (running the 10K and half marathon), plus a Health & Fitness Expo featuring the latest in fitness apparel and products, and a speaker series with industry leaders, such as *runDisney's* official fitness trainer Jeff Galloway.

After the Sunday morning half marathon, many runners, including the Simpson clan, celebrated their

accomplishment in the theme park, primarily at the official Post Race Party during the Epcot International Food & Wine Festival, featuring fine wine and cuisine from around the world.

“(Winning the race was a) really great start to a Disney day,” Jason Simpson said after crossing the finish line. “We’re going to go to the parks and have a good time and celebrate, so this is really fun.”

RACE VIDEO: Click on the FTP link for video and soundbites of Beckman, as well as video and sound of today’s half marathon winners.

Link to FTP: <https://dlbroadcast.exavault.com/share/view/ctp5-gp70m9hg>

About runDisney: runDisney, one of the largest race organizers in the nation, hosts a series of nine event weekends providing runners unique opportunities to run various distances through Disney theme parks. Race participants earn Disney-themed medals, experience legendary Disney entertainment and guest service and ultimately celebrate their accomplishments with a Disney vacation. The original event in the series, the Walt Disney World Marathon Weekend presented by Cigna, takes place in January followed by the Disney Princess Half Marathon Weekend presented by Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals in February, the Star Wars Half Marathon – the Dark Side in April and the Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon Weekend presented by MISFIT in November. Disneyland Resort hosts the Star Wars Half Marathon – the Light Side in January, the Tinker Bell Half Marathon Weekend presented by PANDORA Jewelry in May, the Disneyland Half Marathon Weekend presented by Cigna during Labor Day Weekend and the Super Heroes Half Marathon Weekend in November. Disneyland Paris hosts the Disneyland Paris Half Marathon Weekend in September. More than 200,000 running enthusiasts participate in runDisney events each year. For more information, visit [runDisney.com](https://www.rundisney.com) and follow us on **Facebook (runDisney), Twitter @runDisney** and **Instagram**.