



Courtesy Photo

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A film about endurance

Matt Barrett and John Stann have set out to film the limits of human endurance.

The pair grew up in the Myersville area, running track and cross country in high school. Since then, they've run marathons and recently began competing in triathlons. Now they want to film others as they compete.

"We used to watch Kona (Hawaii Ironman) in the early days, and seeing these iconic people crawling across the finish line literally in heat exhaustion was fascinating," Barrett said in a phone interview.

For their first project, they documented the Annapolis Triathlon on Sept. 9.

Barrett and Stann wanted the film to show that finish line drama, plus other highlights, in their documentary series, Race Day Films DVD Series. They have also completed a second DVD about the Nation's Triathlon, in Washington on Sept. 29.

Both those triathlons were inaugural events. Participation in marathons and triathlons has increased exponentially in recent years. Barrett and Stann reasoned that expanded participation in these events meant burgeoning interest. They haven't quit their day jobs, but they thought there might be a market for films about major endurance events.

"We try to show these are normal people with lawns to mow and bills to pay," Barrett said. "They are teachers, nurses, research scientists, engineers. We want to humanize them."

Barrett and Stann are familiar names in the local running community. Both took part in track and cross country at Middletown High School before graduation in 1992.

In college, Barrett was a walk-on at Virginia Tech's track and cross country team. Stann attended Virginia Military Institute. He did not take part in collegiate sports, but trained for road races, and talked



GOING THE DISTANCE

By **KAREN GARDNER**

■ For suggestions or to include your event in the list of upcoming events, e-mail kgardner@newspost.com, or call 301-662-1177 ext. 268.

Barrett into running the Shamrock Marathon with him in 1993. They ran the race in 3:10.

After college, they stopped competing for a while. Barrett, now 34, has two young children, and Stann has five children. Barrett works at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg and Stann is a civil engineer in Front Royal, Va.

Barrett, who lives in Ellicott City, resumed competition a few years after college. He had always been a runner, but he took up cycling, and found his niche. He participated in criterium races, and quickly became ranked 40th in the nation.

In 2000, he took part in the Columbia Triathlon, and then the Eagleman, a half-Iron distance triathlon in Cambridge. Since then, he has focused on Olympic distance and half

triathlons. The past two years, he and Stann also completed the Chesapeake Man, a full Iron distance triathlon in Cambridge.

Barrett said he'd like to one day qualify for the Hawaii Ironman. But it isn't the athletes at the top end he wants his films to focus on. Instead, it's the effort, the pain, the fatigue, the sheer joy of finishing, whether it's a 10K run, a two-hour sprint triathlon or a 17-hour Ironman triathlon.

Plans are to film documentaries on several major road races as well as triathlons.

The camera captures the early morning starts, the mass of swim caps bobbing through the water, the focus of the cyclists and the rhythm of the runners. At the finish line there is exhaustion and relief.

The DVDs also offer viewers a video feel of the bike and run course. The filmmakers tested the course with a camera, and hill grades are provided for those who want to try out the course on their bike trainers and treadmills. A triathlon-certified coach narrates the course and offers tips, and also shows examples of what people do right and wrong during races.

"It's a chance to visualize," Barrett said, something many experienced athletes find valuable when preparing for races.

Barrett and Stann are executive producers for the films. Kevin Hershberger is the director. Kera O'Bryon, an Emmy-nominated actress who has done projects for Discovery Channel, National Geographic and Fox Family Network, serves as the interviewer and narrator of the documentaries. She weaves the action together.

For more information on the DVD series and to see future developments, check the website, www.racedayfilms.net.