



[Suzy Walsham and Christian Riedl triumph in New York](#)

While the temperature outside had been sub-zero for days, the action inside the building was heating up at the 38th Empire State Building Run Up. As the first Premium Race of the 2015 Towerrunning World Cup and WFGT Tower Challenge got under way, elite athletes from 10 countries lined up to scale the 1,576 steps to the 86th floor observation deck. Continuing on from his impressive victory at the recent World Cup Final, German climber Christian Riedl finally triumphed at his sixth attempt, while Australian Suzy Walsham improved on her record-breaking tally to become a six-time winner.

The elite women were first off the mark and it was Italian Christina Bonacina and American Cindy Harris who were quickest through to the stairwell. Walsham trailed in third, but overtook soon after and powered away for her 6th victory in a strong 12min30sec. "I've had a really interrupted preparation with injury and illness so I wasn't sure how I would hold up today, but I am thrilled to win again. Having done the race 8 times now, my familiarity with the building definitely helped with my race strategy", commented Walsham. Americans filled the minor placings with Stephanie Hucko finishing in 13:50 and Shari Klarfield closely behind in 13:55. Hucko thought there were a few girls ahead of her until a race official told her she was in second place around the 66th floor, "I was so shocked I nearly tripped over", she laughed "But I knew Shari was close behind so I told myself to leave nothing behind and went for it. I am ecstatic."

The men's race was equally exciting with Riedl triumphing by a mere 3 seconds in 10:16 from defending champion Norwegian Thorbjorn Ludvigsen in 10:19. Completing the international podium was Australia's Darren Wilson in 10:53. Riedl paced his race to perfection initially trailing in 5th place, until he passed Wilson on the 45th floor and Ludvigsen on the 66th floor to storm home for the win. Speaking after the race, "It was really great. For me it was like the end of a long story, having raced here 5 times and finally winning on my sixth, but maybe it is now the beginning of another story" he smiled.

As the building was specially lit up in red and white for the evening race, there were other stories of triumph with cancer survivor Madeleine Fontillas Ronk finishing 13th place in the women's elite race, and amputees Sarah Reinertsen and Eduardo Garcia, representing the Challenged Athletes Foundation, also completing the grueling race.

Further information

Towerrunning World Association: www.towerrunning.com

Press contact: Piotr Jakobik, media@towerrunning.com