



The graph above shows how many of the times for the first 10 finishers in a given year are still among the 10 fastest times for one of the top 10 places. The entire men's top 10 are on this list from 1980, 1982, 1983 and 1986; for women, the whole top 10 have made this list four times: 1999-2000-01 and 2007, and nine of the top 10 in 1998 and this year ('09). That is a sign of not just a fast race, but a deep field.

As you can see, the "glory years" for the men were from 1978 through 1986. In that 9 year period, runners recorded 68% of the 10 fastest times for the top 10 places. Included in that period was the "snow year" of 1985 when times were slow. Some hot performances in 1998 and 1999 gave hope that another "glory years" era was on the way on the men's side. However, that has not proven to be the case. After a brief lull, some faster times have resumed. However, the first three finishers in the 2005 race (Kramer, Saari, Brinegar) all posted times among the all-time top 10 for their finish positions. Three more performances in 2006 (Saari, Rover Sayre, Evan Hone) and two in 2007 (Saari and Harald Aas) have also elbowed their way onto this list. The 2008 race was the first time in 22 years that eight or more men recorded all-time top 10 times, but in 2009, the men were shut out, with only Stian Stensland's 11th-ranked time for second place coming close.

The women's "glory years" have been from 1998 through 2007. During that 10-year span (including the "snow year" of 1996), women recorded 78% of the fastest times. Seven women are responsible for 38% of the best times: Laura McDonough, Susan Faulkner, Kristen (Bartecchi) Rozell and Jane Lanford each have posted six of the fastest times, Tina Devine and Michelle Mitchell have posted five each, and Jane Leblond has posted four. The ultra deep 2007 women's race showed that 2006 was an anomalous dip in the depth of the field, not a sign of the end of an era. After a fairly weak '08 race, the women bounced back in '09 with nine times that made the list - only Brosius' winning time did not earn a spot.