

Over 100 Runners Compete In Hot Montpelier Race

By MIKE SEAMANS
Over 100 runners pounded the dirt road between Montpelier High School and Middlesex on Saturday in the first annual Montpelier Road Race.

The races, an 11-mile for durable oldsters, everyone 18 and over, and a five-mile for youngsters, were held along the same course, the dirt road along the south side of the Winooski River, with the five turning around at the Three-Mile Bridge and the 11 extending almost to Route 100B in Middlesex.

While 130 entered the race, only 103 competed, with 102 finishing. The dropout rate prior to the race was high, according to organizer Paul Mailman of Montpelier, but the high temperatures could have been a determining factor in that.

A number of runners who had not submitted entries before the deadline also ran, including Brattleboro's Jon Dimick, who placed "about fifth." Unofficial runners were asked not to cross the finish line, and received no trophies, which were handed out to nearly every competitor.

Runners in both races started out together. The race, which began in the driveway of the High School, moving out onto River Street before cutting back into the road to Montpelier Jet, began at a very fast pace, with almost all of the runners moving out right behind the leaders, though the line quickly began to stretch out as the top circuit runners kept up their steady, fast pace, while the less stout, or more stout, depending on your definition, began to fall behind.

After two and a half miles, the juniors made their turn, with eventual winner in the boys division, Bob Fowler of Laconia, N. H., taking a sizeable lead over Peter Brigham of Montpelier, who placed second.

Fowler finished the five miles in 25 minutes, 15 seconds, while Brigham crossed the line at 26:01. Mark Ramsey of Montpelier was third and Jay Gopping of East Montpelier was fourth, with about a three minute spread between the top four.

Brigham said after the race

that he had finished ahead of Fowler in the two-mile race in the New England in early June, but had not been training hard since then.

In the girls division, another New Hampshireite, Sue Collins of Littleton, took an easy first with a 31:11 finish, over three minutes ahead of Dodie Brigham of Montpelier. Another Brigham, brother Doug, finished eighth among the boys.

Margaret Bottomley of Penacook, N.H., was third and Barre's Donna Raymond was fourth. Raymond was the only Barreite in the entire race. Brenda Mailman of Montpelier was fifth, followed by the McCann sisters, Kellie and Darci, also of Montpelier.

The youngest runner in the race, seven-year-old Christi Burton of Montpelier, finished tenth for the girls.

Top runner in the 11-mile race was Keith Woodward of East Corinth, coming in almost a minute ahead of Mike Cauty of Mendon, who took second. Woodward's time was listed as 59:58 and Cauty's at 1:00:53.

Woodward, who is averaging about 50 miles a week through the hills of Corinth, said he was a little sore after the race, largely from putting up about 3,500 bales of hay last week. A student at Kenne State College in New Hampshire, Woodward is working towards making the Olympic trials for the marathon, at a pace of 5:30 in the past.

Times went gradually up by age group. Mike Sudlow of Lennoxville, Quebec, was the first finisher in the 30-39 year-old age group, finishing at 1:05:00. Clinton Whiting of Center Barnstead, N. H. was the top in the 40-49 range, with a time of 1:11:34, while Gerald Rowe of Middlebury was the best for the over 50's, placing at 1:18:24.

The oldest competitor, Ed Estle, a 65-year-old CPA from Littleton, N. H., finished at 1:30:42. Estle has been running for about 10 years, but this is his longest race yet. "Now that I am on Medicaid, I am taking more chances."

In the women's division, with

just five runners competing, first went to Carol Degan of Burlington, crossing the line at 1:12:42. Stowe's Dia Elliman was second and Amy Davis of Marshfield was third. Two Montpelier girls, Maureen Horan and Linda Harrison were fourth and fifth.

Despite its being the first race of its kind in this area, it was very well organized and came off with scarcely a hitch. Water stations dispensed cold refreshing water at two points along the course, and a first aid car was on hand.

The race was sponsored by the Montpelier Recreation Department and the North Country Athletic Club of Littleton, N. H., which puts on its own nationally famous race every year, a nine and a half mile with some tough hills. This year it will be on August 2.

The Montpelier course was very flat, with just two small hills along the way.

Appreciation is due to the numerous volunteers who helped with the various aspects of the race, including Ed Skea, Rome Aja, Lou Duesing, Buell Mitchell, Diane Burton, Kathy Wurtman, Amy Drew, Rosemary Hall, Kim Keough, Kathy Curtis, John Canavan, Stan Walker, Dave Kelley, Bernice Johnson, Carolyn Slesby, Bob Mercier, Mike Mayo, Marie Hones, Mill McSheffrey, Warren Kitzmiller, Ann McIntosh, Ann Roy, Joan Zorzi, Cecile Leslie, Kevin and Marty Shannon, Al and Patty Blakeman, Joy Facos, Pat Mitchell, Laura Smith, James Sevwright, Tom Hunchett, Lynn Shea, Terry Custen, and local members of the NCAC.

The following business and organizations contributed donations to help cover expenses: Sherwin Williams Store, Huntsman's, Pierce's Mobil, St. J. Trucking, Howard Bank, Mike Baker Dinn Trophies, Vermont National Bank, Locker Rosen Sports, Allen Lumber, Onion River Sports, Dave's Amoco, Leahy Press, State Equipment, McDonalds, Vermont Federal Savings, Pepsi Cola, IBM, Nates' Tavern, Bear Pond Books, and Donnelly's News Store.

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