

Past Champions Dominate Run to Read Half Marathon

Chelsea Jarvis, winner in 2006 and 2008, and David McCollam, the 2007 champion, cruised to victory in the 5th Annual Run to Read Half Marathon on January 16.

Jarvis, a 19 year old freshman, defeated 42 year old Tracey Magee of Venetia, PA, by over 7 minutes. Jarvis, who was redshirted this year by the WVU cross country team, finished in 1:28:03.5. Magee's time was 1:35:17.1. Jarvis finished 4th last year and was 2nd in 2007.

McCollam, who ran cross country at Alderson Broaddus College, won by over 3 minutes as he finished in 1:14:45.9. 21 year old Jobey Knapton recorded a time of 1:18:36.4 as he finished 2nd. Knapton ran cross country at East Fairmont High School. The 30 year old McCollam recorded runner up finishes in 2008 and 2009.

Despite the one week postponement, the event saw a record 186 runners finish the newly certified course. Temperatures near 40 degrees helped bring out a number of same day registrations. (Race organizers reiterate that the cold temperatures alone did not cause the postponement; it was the ice on the course.)

Runners came from West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Ohio and Indiana. Yough (rhymes with "hawk") High School cross country coach Dana Newlin brought several of her high school runners to the event including Brandon Holmes. Holmes won the men's 15-19 age group with a time of 1:38:10.1. Coach Newlin finished 2nd again this year in the highly competitive women's 30-34 age group which had 18 finishers.

Race organizers thank the Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission (MCPARC) for being a major race sponsor. Maintenance foreman Michael Kuhn and his crew did a great job in readying the trails for the race. Many runners commented after the race that the course was in good shape considering the recent wintry weather. Race organizers also appreciate our local Pepsi distributor for the donations of Aquafina and Sobe Lifewater.

Lost and found: a ladies warm weather head band. Please contact race director Jim Woolfitt at run2read@yahoo.com

Those who pre-registered but were unable to run due to the postponement are being given a chance to register for free for either the Run to Read Races in June or next year's half marathon. Runners are reminded to email or write a note by January 30 to take advantage of this offer.

The 12th Annual Run to Read Races are scheduled for June 12 at the Marion County Adult Ed Center. The 15K starts at 7:30am with the 5K run, 5K race walk and 1.5 mile fun run/walk all starting at 9:15am. The 6th Annual Run to Read Half Marathon is slated for January 8, 2011.

Those with comments or suggestions are invited to email race director Jim Woolfitt at run2read@yahoo.com

We thank our volunteers, MCPARC and all those who made this event possible. We also thank all the runners. This event benefits Literacy Volunteers of Marion County (LVMC), a United Way Agency. LVMC provides free tutoring to adults and children in reading, math and English as a second language. LVMC also works closely with the Marion County Adult Ed Center's GED class.