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### **Get set for a Cracker of a race**

Entry is now open for the annual 10k Christmas Cracker race at Weston-super-Mare. Runners of all abilities are encouraged to sign-up for the event which always sells out fast.

This year's race takes place on Sunday December 7 at 11am, and all runners are encouraged to wear fancy dress, or at the very least a piece of tinsel. The route starts at the Grand Pier and covers a flat course along the beach, through Uphill and back along the prom before ending on the beach again at the Pier.

Race Director Malcolm Gammon, who organises the race on behalf of Weston Athletic Club said: "The Christmas Cracker is our biggest race of the year, and there's always an amazing atmosphere on the day when the elves, Rudolfs and Father Christmases line up alongside the club runners and dash off together down the beach.

"The course has been changed this year following feedback from last year's participants, and we'll also be giving out technical t-shirts alongside the traditional mince pies to our race finishers."

As in previous years, the race will be run to support Weston Hospicecare, and participants will be encouraged to raise sponsorship money too. Olly Joseph, Fundraising Manager for the charity said: "Last year's event raised an incredible £8,797 for Weston Hospicecare. This was made up of £4,500 from Weston Athletic Club and the remaining £4,297 was raised from the 50 or so fantastic runners who chose to raise money for the hospice.

"The money donated and raised will help us to do so much for our 1,300 local patients, and could pay for 26 days of care for a patient staying in our in-patient unit. While staying with us they will receive all the physical, emotional and spiritual care they need to support them through a life limiting illness."

Weston Athletic Club is also introducing training sessions this year in the run-up to the event to help runners prepare for the event. Malcolm added: "For some people a 10k race can be a daunting prospect, so we've decided to help out this year and are planning a supported training programme starting in September, It will probably run for ten weeks and will be tailored to people who've either never run before, are lapsed runners, or would like to increase their distance to be able to run 10k. As well

as preparing people physically, we'll also give people advice on pre-race nutrition, hydration and what kit to wear when running.”

Entry for the race is available at [www.westonac.co.uk/christmascracker](http://www.westonac.co.uk/christmascracker) and anyone wanting to sign-up or find out more about the pre-race training programme should contact Jim Wotton by email [jim.wotton@westonac.co.uk](mailto:jim.wotton@westonac.co.uk) or by phone on 01934 814 208.

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