



Release: Immediate
Date: March 13, 2016

20:20 Mission

Gin-clear skies, barely a breeze, and a cool crisp spring morning set the scene for two very different 20 mile races to be tackled by Weston Athletic Club members on Sunday. The Gloucester 20 is a perennial favourite for runners looking to test the mettle of their spring marathon training. The three-lap, undulating rural road route challenges mental as well as physical stamina.

Spring had well and truly sprung for Kieron Summers who demonstrated a text book execution of consistent pacing, running his first mile as quick as his last, and averaging six minute miles to complete the slightly-longer-than 20 mile course in 2.01.18. Marathon training team-mates Guy Bradford and Darren Stacey followed in 2.10.21 and 2.11.31.

Katherine Roberts was the club's first female finisher, running a strong race to finish second in her age category in 2.37.13. Niki Fulstow followed in 2.42.14, taking her weekend mileage to 30 miles in the process, and Wendie Beardsall took third club spot in 3.06.57, showing great promise for Brighton Marathon next month. The club fielded a total of 19 runners for the event, with more women than men participating, and all completed the course in under 3.30.

Meanwhile, in south Devon, runners took on a 20 mile event of a very different hue. The Grizzly starts and finishes at sea level in Seaton, but takes in 3,500 feet of climb along the route, as well as many and varied terrain to tackle. There was little to separate the first two club members to complete the course this year, with Tobias Hinchliffe finishing in 3.07.31, and Michael Reep following just 21 seconds behind him. Marc Bostock took third place in 3.19.36, and Caroline Holt was the club's only female participant, finishing in 4.50.04.

Closer to home, club members ran the Bath Half and Steve Kibblewhite was first club member to complete the 13.1 mile course in 1.29.15. Andrew Sandiford followed in 1.33.57, and Nick Cook took third spot in 1.43.49, equalling his previous best set at Burnham three years ago.

Carol O'Leary was the club's first woman to cross the line in 1.48.41 achieving top quartile performance for her age category. Carol was followed by Elaine Eldridge in 1.51.57 and Edel Robbins in 2.05.52.

Finally, the club's triathlon section took on their first competitive event of the season at the Peaky Freaky Duathlon which starts and finishes at the Webbington Hotel. As well as 37 miles of road cycling from peak to peak, competitors also had to run 10 miles up and down the three 'peaks' of Brent Knoll, Brean Down, and finally Crook Peak.

David Stock, competing at the event for the first time, completed the event in 3.06.07. Simon Andrews followed in 3.20.51, just 8 seconds off the pace he set last year, and Mark Bowskill knocked a colossal 17 minutes off last year's time to finish in 3.23.23.

The club's next event is the seventh race in the 2015-16 Weston prom run series this evening - Thursday March 17. The junior race starts at 6.45, followed by the main race at 7.30pm. Race HQ for both events is The Bay Cafe on Weston seafront. Runners can enter on the night, or online at www.westonac.co.uk/promrun

ENDS

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