



Date: 26 March 2018

Release: immediate

Runners test their mettle with great results

After the disappointment of a series of race cancellations the previous weekend caused by the return of the snow, Weston Athletic Club's members wasted no time in getting out racing again last week.

The biggest race of the week was the all-important pre-marathon tester, the Gloucester 20. Used by club runners to gauge their readiness for spring marathons, the 20 mile route attracted 14 Weston runners. Conditions were cool with no rain and a light breeze – perfect running weather. Weston's first runner to complete the three lap course was Kieron Summers. Kieron finished second overall in a spectacular time of 1.55.50, with every mile under six minutes, and also won his age category. Ian Connock followed ten minutes later in 2.05.29, and Richard Brent in 2.16.31. Joined by Steve Kibblewhite, Weston's first four men ensured the male team prize as well.

Susan Duncan was the club's fastest female and she finished the race in 2.25.21 putting her on target for a very strong race at London next month. Genevieve Drinkwater was the next to finish in 3.02.38, followed by Sarah Wheatley in 3.14.41.

Meanwhile, 15 of the club's members travelled to Butleigh for a much shorter and much muddier challenge. The Butleigh multi-terrain race follows a 6.5 mile route across fields and through woodland with three hills thrown in along the way. With conditions underfoot wetter than usual, runners soon found themselves carrying the extra weight of muddy legs and shoes as they battled their way around the course. First to finish for the club, and in an impressive sixth place overall, was Matt Wheeler in a strong time of 46.06. Stuart Diamond took second club spot in 48.50 and Neale Jarrett third in 50.25.

Nia Davies was the next club member to finish, and first among the club's women, in 53.47. Geraldine Hope followed under the hour in 59.27 and Helen Diamond just over the hour in 1.01.10. Paul Snelling took the prize for his age category with his 56.54 finish.

The March five mile prom run enjoyed better conditions than the past couple of months, but was still chilly for the 289 runners who took part. It was a Weston AC one-two for the club's fastest runners with Chris McMillan claiming victory in 26.27 and Kieron Summers bagging second spot in 27.36 and also winning his age category. Benjamin Haines crossed the line in 28.12 to claim third club spot.

Susan Duncan was the club's fastest female finisher with her time of 32.35. Phil Richards followed under a minute later in 33.22, with Nia Davies close behind in 33.36 and a new personal best time.

In the junior one mile run, it was Ollie Campbell who finished first for the boys in 5.26 and Stephanie Brooks for the girls in 5.44. The three fastest boys and three fastest girls all finished extremely fast in under six minutes each. Charles Broadhurst crossed the line in 5.29, William Sandiford in 5.47, Keira Devereux in 5.48 and Poppy Burton-Dickie in 5.59.

The next race organised by the club is the sixth prom run of the season on Thursday April 26. The main five mile race starts on the seafront near the Tropicana at 7.30pm and is preceded by the one mile junior race at 6.45pm. Runners can enter on the night or online at www.westonac.co.uk/promrun.

ENDS

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