10 SUCCESSFUL YEARS OF THE TIPTON 10KM

The Otter Rail and River Run at Tipton St John celebrated its 10th successful year on Saturday 9th July, with more than 250 runners taking part in the 10km and the 1.5 mile fun run.

This popular annual event was launched in 2007 as part of the village playing field’s 40th anniversary celebrations. It’s gone from strength to strength, attracting runners from across the South West and beyond, as well as a strong turnout from local clubs.

The undulating, scenic off-road course presents several challenges, with stiles, kissing gates, river footbridges and steps to negotiate, and this year a large fallen tree to be clambered over or duck under.

Perhaps the tree, or the warm weather accounted for the course record of 34:33, set last year by James Denne of Honiton, remaining intact. Sam Hopton, of South West Road Runners, went from third place early on, to cross the line first in 36:29; with Matthew Menary, of Haldon Trail Runners, second in 37:06; and Tim Pratt of Teignbridge Trotters third in 38:07.

Times were slightly slower overall – last year 80 people ran a sub 50, this year it was around 60.

The ladies race continues to get faster – Elizabeth Dyson, of Haldon Trail Runners, set a new record by 45 seconds, of 39:50; Nicky Savill, of South West Road Runners, knocked two seconds off last year to take second place in 43:23; with Chloe Fox, also of South West Road Runners, third in 46:06.

The first local man was Philip Grove, in 46:01; first local lady was Catherine Hilton in 51:07.

Veteran awards for men went to: M40 Geoff Davey, Teignbridge Trotters, 38:35; M45 Julian Cabrera, SWRR, 40:54; M50 Mark Newson, 43:56; M55 Barry Frost, SWRR, 44:11; M60 Ian Clough, Kidderminster and Stourport AC, 48:24; M65 Graham Newton, Axe Valley Runners, 45:26; M70 John Horton, Newquay and Par AC, 48:52; M75 John Mellowdew, Axe Valley Runners, 1:01:39.

Veteran awards for women went to: F35 Sherrie Hair, Honiton Running Club, 46:52; F40 Janet Sealy, 47:29; F45 Naomi Garrick, Sidmouth Running Club, 48:30; F50 Anthea Board, Haldon Trail Runners, 46:27; F55 Jennie Sleeman,
Honiton Running Club, 54:33; F60 Angela Kerr, Axe Valley Runners, 56:36; F65 Ann Horton, 1:04:02; F70, Sue Cunningham, Sidmouth Running Club, 1:12:38.

The team trophies have become a tussle between South West Road Runners and Teignbridge Trotters. The men of Teignbridge took back the shield this year, from SWRR, whilst the Road Runner ladies claimed the trophy back from Teignbridge. As well as a perpetual shield the teams each won a special anniversary cake.

There were 196 finishers, all completing close to within 90 minutes.

Sixty-two runners of all ages took part in the 1.5 mile Jackie Box Fun Run. Individual times are not recorded, but all completed within 20 minutes, the fastest ever for the course.

First home was Sam Yearling, age 14, of Erme Valley Harriers; second was Michael Lilley, age 12, who also won the first local boy prize; third was Tom Perry, age 12, of Axe Valley Runners. First girl was Holly Eyre, age 14, of Axe Valley Runners; second Marnie Brumby, age 13, of Exeter Harriers; and third Lucie Brumby, age 9, of Exeter Harriers.

Age award placings were: boys under 10 – 1st, Henry Birchall, age 9, 2nd William Birchall, age 7; boys under 13 – 1st Ben Sheridan, age 12, 2nd Sam Eyre, age 10; boys under 15 – 1st Toby Bishop, age 13, 2nd Caleb Early, age 13; girls under 10 – 1st Daisy Durham, age 8, 2nd Elsie Wiltshire, age 6; girls under 13 – 1st Ellie Bishop, age 11, also first local girl, 2nd Daisy Grove, age 11; girls under 15 – 1st Holly Eyre, 2nd Marnie Brumby.

The event is put on by Tipton St John Playing Field Association in conjunction with Sidmouth Running Club.

The 50 plus marshals and helpers who enable it to take place are mainly from the local village community and the running club.

Race organiser Jo Earlam said: “It’s been a tremendous year – a brilliant success for our 10th staging of this increasingly popular race.”
“It’s wonderful every year to see runners coming back and how much they clearly enjoy running around our beautiful Otter valley and the glorious setting of our riverside playing field.

“I’m indebted to the marshals and helpers, many of whom have been involved from the outset. They are volunteers who give up their time to make this event possible. And are always so cheerful, friendly and efficient.

“I thank them and also our sponsors. Otter Brewery and Michelmore Solicitors have been involved from the beginning and Harrison Lavers & Potbury’s for the last two years. Having their local business support is crucial.

“I never imagined back in 2007 that we would still be going 10 years later, but we’re already looking ahead to making 2017 a special celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the playing field.

“Not only will the Otter Rail and River Run be back as part of a village summer fair on Saturday 8th July, we are also organising a women only marathon to celebrate 50 years of women’s endurance running. This full 26.2 miler and relay will take place on Sunday May 28th.

“It was exciting to be able to announce the launch of the website Women Can and that we will be taking entries from 28th July.”

Playing field chairman David Birch said the run is the biggest annual fundraiser for the community owned field, and the income was vital to meet the cost of annual maintenance and improvements. He thanked Jo for her 10 years as the race organiser.

Sidmouth Running Club chairman Terry Bewes said the club was delighted to be a part of the event, and it had been a fantastic turnout by members and those who’d helped.

“What made it more special was all the new faces and especially the beginners’ course of 2016 who represented our club in such good spirit. You made me proud to be chairman of such a great club.

“Thanks to everyone who supported this event by taking part, or helping. We hope to see you all again next year.”