

Clute runner breaks record in Race for the Cure

WEST COLUMBIA— Pennsylvania native and new runner-in-residence Jay Johns did what no runner has ever done before: he finished the 5K course from Jefferson Street to the Varner Hogg Plantation and back under 17 minutes and broke the course and contest record in the third annual Race for the Cure.

Johns romped the 3.1 mile course in 16:09, a 5:12 mile pace and led his closest competitor by 2:08 at the finish line.

“I just started training and working on a pace,” said Johns. “I was trying to push and made the first mile in 5:05, which may have a little too fast. With my lead, I fought mentally in the second and third miles between slowing down and having a good pace. I had a good time.”

Youngster Xavier Jimenez, 13, of Lake Jackson Intermediate School, stayed with Johns for only a half mile.

“I lost sight of him in the first mile,” said Jimenez.

Jimenez then concentrated on staying ahead of the older runner on his heels, Raul Barriga, 39, of Lake Jackson.

“I used my stride and looked behind me and picked it up when I thought he was gaining on me,” said Jimenez.

“I was pretty close to second place until mile two,” said Barriga. “He (Jimenez) sped up, and I couldn’t keep up with him.”

Jimenez finished second overall in the male competition in 18:17, and Barriga finished third in 18:38.

Wendy Parker, 30, of West Columbia finished seventh overall and first for the second consecutive year in the overall female competition in 20:33, 45 seconds faster than her last year’s time, at a 6:38 pace.

“I’m not consistent,” said Parker. “There were no women around me to help me with my pace, so I just tried to stay up with Greg (Jones). I caught up with him and passed him, but he beat me at the finish.”

Finishing 12th overall, Kelly Colosimo, 42, of Lake Jackson finished second in the overall female competition in 23:46.

“I saw (Wendy) at the beginning of the race, but after the first mile I couldn’t see her,” said Colosimo. “I was running with a guy, a marathoner (Larry Lindeen of Houston). It’s nice to have someone to talk to while you are running.”

Laurie Fisher, 43, of Lake Jackson finished 21st overall and third in the female competition in 27:48, better than her 29:19 in last year’s race.

“I was trying to tag Kelly, but she is very consistent,” said Fisher. “My strategy is that I know I slow down in the last mile, so I have to keep up a good pace through mile two.

Recovering from a knee injury, Paul Cooley, 57, of Houston finished eighth overall and first in the male masters (40 plus) competition in 21:58, a 7:05 race pace.

“I usually break 21, but I was happy with my time,” said Cooley. “I just wanted to stay ahead of (my friend) Clark Courtright.”

He did. Courtright, 48, finished 10th overall and second in the male masters competition in 22:55.

Spencer Hurley, 45, of Brazoria fought with Courtright for second place up through the last mile of the contest.

“We ran together for the first mile; right after the water stop I was able to pass him,” said Courtright. “I felt pressure from him behind me, but I was looking ahead and trying to push it and was able to pick it up in the last mile.”

“I tried to keep him in sight and thought I could kick at the end and catch him,” said Hurley.

Susan Alvarado of Lake Jackson finished first 23rd overall and first in the female masters competition in 29:32, a 9:16 race pace. She was not available at the awards presentation for comment.

Tina Gray, 42, of Lake Jackson finished 24th overall and second in the female masters competition in 31:06.

“This was my first time for a race on this course,” said Gray. “I’ve never been to the plantation before so it was nice to see that. This was a good race for me, one of my better times.”

Race rookie Cindy Volk, 47, finished 25th overall and third in the female masters competition in 31:47.

“Kelly (Colosimo) dragged me out here for my first race ever,” said Volk. “I was very apprehensive. My goal was to finish. I was pleased with my time. I won a trophy, and it will motivate me for the next time.”

Power walking faster than 10 of the 37 runners, cancer-survivor Beth Johnson, 47, of Lake Jackson finished first in the 5K walking competition in 36:47. Courtney Roberts, 20, finished

second in 42:09, and Lashawnda Hall, 27, finished third in 42:10.

Robert York, 45, finished first in the men’s walking competition in 42:56, followed by Patrick O’Brien, 15, in 47:34, and Matthew Simpson, 8, in 51:46.

“We had fewer people this year than last, but we had lots of walkers,” said Teresa Holland, cancer survivor and race organizer and director. “It’s becoming more of a family thing.”

“I thought the race was awesome,” said Melissa Alexander, race committee member. “I thought it was great that we had bicycles and people that brought their babies in strollers.”

Holland estimates the event raised over \$1500 for “the cure.”

ConocoPhillips sponsored the contest, and the City of West Columbia donated the facilities for the race. Other supporters were Don’s Guns and Supplies, Stewart’s Food Stores of Sweeny, Billy’s Garage, H. E. B. of West Columbia, and Lauren and Gage Dannelly. The group 12Deep of the United Methodist Church of Sweeny provided music for post-race activities.

Overall and age-group results are available at www.barrahome.net.