

Large turnout takes part in 39th Hit-N-Run Pee-Wee Run

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
July 10 2017 5:47 AM





ALTON – A large turnout gathered together at Alton's Gordon Moore Park bright and early Sunday morning to take part in the 39th Hit-N-Run Pee-Wee Run put on by the Alton Road Runners Club as part of the club's annual Summer Running Series.

The non-competitive run consisted of a quarter-mile road race-type run for runners aged 6 and under and a half-mile run for those aged 7-14, with a T-shirt and drinks available for those who took part; following the run, a raffle was held for the participants, who had a choice of prizes available to them, including tickets to Raging Rivers water park in Grafton and six bicycles.

“This was a really good one,” said Road Runners Club president and East Alton-Wood River track/cross-country coach Russ Colona of the renewal of the nation's oldest run of its type. “We had a huge number (of participants), the weather was fantastic (temperatures in the low 70s for the start of the event); it always goes like clockwork – we've got some great people here.

“Hit-N-Run supplied enough outstanding gifts – everyone went home happy.”

This year's run was the 35th Colona and his wife Kathy have run. “We started at 8 and got done by 8:45; you can't beat that for racing and handing out 150 raffle prizes.”

The run introduced youngsters to road racing; the club's Summer Racing Series started June 10 with the Alton Memorial Hospital Family Run at Godfrey's Glazebrook Park, which introduces kids to cross-country type running as the event is held on grass, and concludes Aug. 6 with the Dash-N-Splash at EAWR's Memorial Stadium, which introduces participants to track running; it's followed by a pool party at the Wood River Aquatic Center next door to the EAWR campus.

“That way, every kid gets to experience every kind of running we do,” Colona said. “It works out really well.”

The Pee-Wee Run has become a summertime tradition in the Riverbend community. “It's been going on 39 years; that's a long time,” Colona said. “The kids of the kids who started running are running now; we're even getting third generations now. It's a great event. Our oldest daughter, who's now 40, ran this when she was three; we (Colona and his wife Kathy) took over a couple of years after she started it. We enjoy it

“Hit-N-Run does an outstanding job with the T-shirts and the drinks; that saves us a lot of legwork.”

Participants have come from the Alton-Wood River area as well as towns like Carrollton and even participants from the Missouri side of the Mississippi River. “They come from all over,” Colona said. “This is a lot of fun to do.”

Many kids who have run in the Pee-Wee Run have later taken up running and run for Colona and for other area high schools and even in college. “There's been some outstanding runners (who have taken part in the run previously); we had a girl who ran here for years who went to O'Fallon High School and got a major scholarship to a school in Texas,” Colona said. “She's doing well down there.”

For more information on the upcoming Dash-N-Splash event, visit www.altonroadrunners.com.



