



Bunker Hill's Stephanie Pruitt Wins Women's Downtown Dash Foot Race At Edwardsville Rotary Criterium

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Stephanie Pruitt of Bunker Hill was the women's winner of the Downtown Dash race of the BuseyBank Edwardsville Rotary Criterium Festival on Saturday evening in Downtown Edwardsville, running the two-lap race on the bike course in 8:57, defeating her nearest opponent by 35 seconds.



At the time of her interview, Pruitt wasn't sure if she had won but felt she ran well and was hopeful of having won the race.

"I ran as fast as I could," Pruitt said. "It was a really nice course, everything was pretty flat, which was nice, and the clouds have come out, so it's a little cooler this evening. It was a really good time."

It was a very simple strategy that Pruitt followed for the race.

It was Pruitt's first time running in the Dash, having missed the last two events for a very understandable reason.

"I've never run this event before," Pruitt said. "I've had to work the last couple of years they've run it. But I do run races regularly."

Pruitt runs in any kind of race and is also looking ahead to a half-marathon she'll be running in outside of Dayton, Ohio.

"Anything," Pruitt said. "5K, 10K. My favorite is the half-marathon. I have one coming up in Ohio that I'm pretty excited about, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. It's the Air Force half-marathon."

The main emphasis of the Downtown Dash is fun, and Pruitt definitely enjoyed herself on the run.

"Yeah, it was super fun," Pruitt said. "I hope to be back next year."

When asked about the general atmosphere, Pruitt was very enthusiastic about it as well.

"Oh, I love it," Pruitt said. "It was buzzing. So much excitement in the air. It was a really good time."

Pruitt also praised the organizers for the set-up and running of the race itself.

"Yeah, absolutely," Pruitt said. "Everything ran really smoothly. They just have one race followed by one another all day. It's great."

For the remainder of the year, Pruitt is planning on competing in a pair of half-marathons as well as other races throughout the area.

"A couple of half-marathons," Pruitt said. "I like to do the one in Alton, the 10-mile River Run, and then, the MoCowBell in October and finish it out with some Christmas 5Ks in December."

Pruitt also has some goals that she'd like to meet while competing in the runs as well.

"I always try to lower my personal records," Pruitt said. "So, my last one was 1:33:39 in the half. I'm hoping to drop it by at least a minute in the next one. I'm hoping to drop the PR to 1:32 here in Ohio coming up."

As far as the 2023 running calendar is concerned, Pruitt will be ready for whatever comes her way.

"Hopefully, more races," Pruitt said. "I'm ready to get after it. Thank you to the Rotary Criterium for putting on this great event."