

Glen Carbon's Jon Yoch, Stephanie Pruitt Of Bunker Hill Win Men' And Women's 10K Races, Perfect Day Overall For Runners

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EDWARDSVILLE - Jon Yoch of Glen Carbon won the men's race, while Stephanie Pruitt of Bunker Hill took the women's event in the 17th running of the Route 66 10K road race, held Saturday morning through the streets of downtown Edwardsville.

The race conditions were nearly perfect, with temperatures in the upper 60s, very good cloud cover, a slight breeze and low humidity, which produced very good times and a great day for the race itself.

"Oh. we're feeling great about the race today," said co-race director Erica Hunt. "This is the best race forecast we've ever had for our run. It's our 17th year and the runners are all super happy because the weather's amazing, we had a lot of last minute sign-ups because of that. So our numbers really bumped up quite a bit this past week."

As it turned out, it was the biggest number of runners since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21 for the race, which is the second leg of the Goshen Triple Crown series.

"It's the biggest turnout we've had since COVID," Hunt said. "Numbers had gone down kind of across the board for races all over the area and so, we're starting to build back for that and the numbers have definitely have come up this year."

The fact that the participation numbers are up and are recovering to pre-COVID levels is a very promising and encouraging sign for the race itself and other events across the St. Louis area.

"Absolutely," Hunt said. "We're super happy to see so many clubs represented this year and races; it's their first time coming back out. So it's really fun to see everybody come back and do the thing that they love."





The race is a part of the Route 66 Festival in downtown Edwardsville, which celebrates the famed Mother Road of interstate routes before the national highway system came into being during the late 1950s and early 1960s. And along the way, there's encouragement provided by organization as well.

"Our primary focus with this, not only to provide a stellar race for the St. Louis metro area for the 10K," Hunt said, "but one of our main tenets for Metro Milers, who are the sponsors of the race, is that we want to give back to the running community as much as possible and other non-profits. So, what makes our race unique is that we have spirit stations lining the race course all up and down for the six miles. And they are all non-profit organizations. We send a survey out after the race, they (the runners) get to vote on who was the best spirit station that they enjoyed out there on the course. So we give back, with all of our sponsorship money and the money that we bring in from the race, a good portion of that is earmarked strictly for our spirit stations, so we can give that back to them to use for their non-profits."

That the race is a part of the Goshen Triple Crown provides a great deal of pride for the organizers.

"We've had quite a few people for the Goshen Triple Crown," Hunt said, "and I know that they love that challenge. They get an extra-special medal at the end of the challenge, which will culminate next week at the Covered Bridge Run."

Things are indeed looking up for the Route 66 race and Hunt is very optimistic about the event's future.

"Oh, I think so," Hunt said. "I think it's great. People love the race, they love the extra-special secret swag that we give at the finish line. I've had people this morning asking 'what's the swag this year?' You can't know until you cross the finish line - it's secret," she said with a smile and laugh. "We do something special; that's one of the other unique things about our race in the area, is that not only do you get a great shirt, but you're going to get something special at the finish line. You never know what it's going to be."

Yoch won the men's race with a time of 35:40, with Jeff Price of Edwardsville coming in second at 36:46, Mark Paulson of Glen Carbon was third at 36:55, Evan Blankenship of Glen Carbon came in fourth with a time of 37:18, in fifth place was Collinsville's Justin Wieduwilt at 37:20, sixth place went to Colby Garman of Caseyville at 37:43, Caleb Schoeber of Granite City was seventh at 38:08, Mark Merkel of Effingham was eighth at 38:25, James Perulfi of Edwardsville came in ninth at 39:50 and rounding out the top ten was Jason Hamilton of Edwardsville, coming in at 40:09.

In the age group results, the winner of the 13-and-under category was Charlie Brandt of Edwardsville, who had a time of 47:28, the 14-19 winner was Landon Kearby of Bethalto at 40:56, the 20-24 group winner was Oshawi Burgher of Lebanon, who was in at 40:25, in the 25-29 category, the winner was Sam Brammeier of Edwardsville at 41:02, the 30-34 winner was Schoeber, taking the 35-39 division was Blankenship, Hamilton won in the 40-44 age group, the master's division was won by Wieduwilt, in the 45-49 age group, the winner was Perulfi, the 50-54 age group was won by Bryon Goeckner of Edwardsville at 43:03, in the 55-59 category, Brian Pogue of St. Charles, Mo., won with a time of 43:56, the 60-64 group was taken by Edwardsville's Mark Bradley at 51:55, in the 65-69 age group, Del Brashares of O'Fallon was the winner at 57:28 and the 70-and-over winner was Larry Wilson of Mattoon, who came in at 59:07.

In the women's overall standings, Pruitt won with a time of 43:21, with Emily Lemke of Edwardsville second at 44:17, third place went to Angela Reckelhoff-Mueller of Troy at 44:38, in fourth place was Alexis Fischer of Glen Carbon, who came in at 44:45, Troy's Ana Keller was fifth, also at 44:45, Maddie Keller, also of Troy, was sixth at 45:11.

Edwardsville's Kayla Brown was seventh at 45:53, Cindy Purcell of Mt. Vernon came in eighth at 46:29, ninth place went to Becky Bradley of Edwardsville, who had a time of 47:08 and Miranda Willi of Edwardsville rounded out the top ten with a time of 47:10.

In the various age groups, the winner of the 13-and-under race was Katelynn Zickrick of Wildwood, Mo., with a time of 1:00:54, the 14-19 winner was Ana Keller, Fischer won the 20-24 age group, the winner of the 25-29 division was Sydney Keller of Troy, with a time of 49:19, in the 30-34 age group, the winner was Willi, the 35-39 category was won by Brown, in the 40-44 division, Katie Hanson of Bethalto won with a time of 50:01, the master's race was won by Purcell, in the 45-49 group, Elizabeth Herionimus of Florissant, Mo. was the winner at 52:43, the 50-54 division was won by Kari Stroot of O'Fallon, who had a time of 53:57, in the 55-59 grouping, Dawn Devine of Maryville won at 50:54, the 60-64 age group was won by Pamela Campbell of Hoffman, Ill., with a time of 56:30, the 65-69 division was taken by Debra Titchenal of Belleville at 1:09.44 and the 70-and-over winner was Rosie Saffell of Shipman, Ill., with a time of 57:18.



