

More Than Shillelagh's Flying at Paddy's

The balloon arch was missing from the 4th Annual Paddy's Pub Shillelagh Shuffle 3M, an ample precaution given the howling 50-mile per hour wind gusts on race day. So what was the fellow thinking who stored frames of insulation on his buildings roof? While runners gathered at the end of Border Street and looked down the long corridor to the first left...Hello!...the wind gusted and the sky was suddenly filled with flying insulation frames...another gust, another several airborne frames. When all the swirling frames had dropped to earth, the race started. Outside of airborne debris, the weather could have been worse; it could have been raining for an eighth straight day.

Wearing the yellow leader's jersey in the Grand Finale of the 2005 NER Pub Series, runaway men's leader Jason Cakouros, 40, of the Hurtin' for Certain Striders, could have mailed this one in. Instead, he hammered away to win in 15:18 over fellow Masters' Terry McNatt, 40, of CSU and Pub Series Masters champion, Tom Doody, 43, of Pelham, NH.

First, however, Jason had to catch Whirlaway madman, Chris Spinney, who was running like, well, like dinner for 10 was riding on his time...and it was. Spinney was in the last of his three-race 60-second challenge with Pub Series women's champion, Mimi Fallon. To wit: If Fallon could come within a minute of Spinney's time, she won dinner for 10; if she couldn't, she owed Spinney dinner for 10.

"I knew with the wind I had to get out fast because it was going to slow everyone. I ran the first mile in 4:55. If I'd run 5-flat I would have lost," said Spinney, who placed 9th in 15:57. Fallon's arch-rival in the Pub Series, Christin Doneski, 34, of Hopkinton, NH, ran a stunning race to upend by 47 seconds the 17:28 course record of 2004 Pub Series women's champion, Trish Hillery. Her time of 16:41 also put her 20 seconds ahead of Fallon, also under the previous CR in 17:01, as was former BC runner Jen Kramer, 23, in 17:14. Fourth place went to HFC's Meaghan Shaw (3rd in the Pub Series) in 17:47 with teammate Eileen Cakouros (4th in the Pub Series) rounding out the top five in 18:36.

While Fallon would place second in the race and fall a lousy 4-seconds short (Bon Appetit!) in the 60-second challenge, her time marked a four minute improvement in the women's Master's record and clinched a 2-point victory over Doneski in the overall Series – the closest women's outcome in the eight-year history of the malt and hops caravan.

Irish Tom Hurley made it back from Bermuda to catch the tail end of the festivities, quickly adorning his Paddy's long sleeved t-shirt with ceremonial mustard from the copious post-race hot dogs, proffered by the brothers O'Hara along with chicken pot pie, hot chocolate and suds galore – held on trays by Irish lasses at the entrance to Karl's VIP Alley.

Three more records were set on the day. Both Senior records fell as BAA stalwart Dr. Ken Leinbach tweaked Geary Daniels 2004 mark by one tick in 16:03 (10th overall),

and future FFF star (see Post Script) Marge Bellisle of Warren, RI, Chopped 40 seconds from Eileen Troy's 2004 time of 19:46. One division up, classy Catherine Farrell, 60, of Cambridge Sports Union (& Pub Series Vets champion) poleaxed the previous 60-69 CR by over 10 minutes in 22:40.

POST SCRIPT: The 60-second challenge dinner was held on Saturday, Nov. 11 at Paddy's. Publican John O'Hara phoned in to buy a second round little knowing that the first round had been two bottles of his better red wine (Yes!); a record \$17K was raised this year for Newton Special Athletes (many of whom ran the race), a program overseen by race director Mark Kelly of the Newton Parks and Rec. Dept; Fitzzy's Frisky Felines (Paddy's Senior record holder Marge Bellisle, former record holder Eileen Troy, 2004 and 2005 Senior runner-up Sue Maslowski, and VT's Patty Foltz) would descend on the Cape two weeks later, winning the Senior division of the Cape Cod Marathon Relay by almost an hour and placing 23rd overall out of 163 teams; Publicans John and Karl O'Hara emblazoned 20 frames of insulation with the race's logo and are currently storing them on the roof of Paddy's in anticipation of next year's race.

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Paddy's Master of Ceremonies