

Danforth, Delahunty Lead Paddy's 10th Anniversary Dance

The 10th anniversary of the Paddy's Shillelagh Shuffle 3M was suffused with the grainy glory of the NER Pub Series Grand Finale on Oct. 16 as a record 2,093 entrants registered with 1,809 covering the flat, fast and certified route out to Auburndale and then to the edge of Waltham before finishing beside the warm confines of Paddy's Pub in West Newton.

None were faster than Pub Series golden goblet winner Lee Danforth of the Hurtin' For Certain Striders.

Danforth could have coasted in this affair but he loves to kick and, ala 2010, the defending Paddy's champion set up the coup de grace on the Border Street straightaway within sight of the finish. Last year, HFC teammate and Pub rival TJ Unger was the victim. This year it was former Paddy's champion and Newton North HS coach Shawn Wallace.

Like dominant sprinter Mark Cavendish in the Tour de France, Danforth hit hyper-drive to post up first in 15:22 with Wallace in his wake. Somerville Road Runner Greg Picklesimer, 45, of the Somerville Road Runners placed third in 15:36 to capture silver in the Pub Series and place as top Master at Paddy's. The top Senior (50+) crown at both Paddy's and in the Pub Series goes to SRR's Robert Cipriano, 51, who placed sixth overall in a speedy 15:59.

Beyond Danforth's display, the most devastating kick of the day involved Pub Series veterans and Whirlaway teammates Ken Warren, 49, and Chris Spinney, 51. When the gnashing of teeth subsided and the dust had settled, Warren, for the first time, placed a tick ahead in 17:19. "Brutal, just brutal," was all Spinney could muster.

Fitting that two-time Irish Olympian and original Paddy's women's victor, Sinead Delahunty-Evans, 40, would circle back 10 years and three children later. A 1500m specialist at Providence College and former winner of NY's famed 5th Avenue Mile (4:25.2), Delahunty hit the tape in 17:33. Pub Series powerhouse Mariah Tinger of the Somerville Road Runners wasn't far behind in 17:52.

Former Pub Series starlet Sarah Dupre copped the third position in 18:11 but it was fifth placer Meaghan Searbo (19:03) of HFC who forged gold in the Pub Series to dispatch her "Forever Bronze" mantle from years past. Senior course record holder Marge Bellisle, 56, took her division in 20:02 to defend her Pub Series 50+ mantle. US W67 5K single-age record holder Jan Holmquist of Burlington ran 21:26 (7:08 pace) for a new Veterans record with Pub Series Golden Gas Guzzler Award winner Patty Foltz, 63, of Stowe, VT, second in 21:56.

Just like the Old West, there always seems to be a faster gunslinger out there. The Cambridge Sports Union's Gordon McFarland, 63, of Arlington, ran 18:01 and secured divisional Pub Series glory and 6:01 pace should take the Veteran's division, right? Well, of course, if not for the presence of Paddy's 60+ course record holder and NER loyalist Bob Giambalvo, 62, of Delhi, NY. A track-trained speedster, Bob ran 17:37 for a 5:52 pace.

If McFarland is shaking his head, consider Framingham's Bob Tomassini, who takes it on the

chin every year here. You'd think at age 75 a 7:33 pace would get the job done, but not when fellow 75 year-old Cape Ironman Bill Riley struts his stuff in 20:50 (6:56 pace). The malt & hops award, however, goes to Cape Wildman Larry Cole, 77, in fourth, who dispatches three-time Septugenarian Pub Series sipper Bob Hillman (5th).

If Tomassini wises up and buys up all of Debbie's Sea Shades (in advance) then Deb McSorley wouldn't be giving husband, Bill, an excuse to travel up from Marstons Mills. Among the many vendors in the lot outside Paddy's, New Balance was a new one as the five-year sponsor of the Pub Series, although the company has been sponsoring the Paddy's race for several years and supplies shoes and other swag for the award ceremony.

Paddy's Publicans John and Karl O'Hara supplied the chicken pot pie, dogs, assorted comestibles and the Nectar of the Gods while RD Mark Kelly did the usual superlative job in orchestrating the whole shindig with the outside DJ, band upstairs at Paddy's and, again this year, kids races in the adjacent park with 175 'Yewts' taking part this year. A total of \$37,187 was raised this year for the Newton Special Athletes program.

Bob Fitzgerald

Paddy's Master of Ceremonies