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Thack's on right track!

A RECORD number of runners completed the annual Blaydon race on Tuesday night despite strong winds affecting the performances.

Yorkshireman Carl Thackery had the honour of crossing the finishing tape ahead of the 2,500 strong field after an impressive time of 27.25m with highly-rated Kassa Tadesse and last year's winner mark Hudspith second and third respectively.

Bingley's Mark Peters was fourth and together with his wife Julie, who was sixth in the women's race, took the Me and Wor Lass Trophy.

Stewart Bell of Chester-le-Street was fifth. Derek Mullen of Sunderland in 11th place was the leading veteran ahead of Alan Dent of the host club.

Gateshead once again won the team title ahead of local rivals Chester-le-Street and Morpeth.

Winner

The women's race was won by British-based Ethiopian Birhan Dagne, 16 seconds ahead of four-times winner Jill Boltz, formerly Hunter.

Karen Shaw of Shildon was third ahead of Heather Robinson of Chester-le-Street, the first veteran.

As usual there was a host of entertainment at the start and finish of the 18th race, while well-wishers lined the route giving support to both the elite athletes and those running for fun.

Race organiser Jim Dewar was delighted with the turn out, and congratulated the runners for good performances in difficult conditions.

"We are still looking at the results but there were more

than 2,300 runners who completed the run so that has broken the previous record. Everyone seemed to have a good night and it was a superb performance from Carl Thackery that won the race.

"Our night was tinged however with the news that Paul Nunn, one of the Blaydon Harriers members, had died suddenly, and all of our thoughts are with his family."

One casualty at the race, a lady who collapsed with dehydration on Chainbridge Road, was taken to hospital but was discharged late on Tuesday night.

RESULTS

Senior Men: 1 C Thackery (Hallamshire) 27.25; 2 K Tadesse (Belgrave) 27.38; 3 M Hudspith (Morpeth) 27.41; 4 M Peters (Bingley) 28.04; 5 S Bell (Chester-le-St) 28.23; 6 T Wall (Morpeth) 28.26; 7 D Nagel (Gateshead) 28.56; 8 S Pigford (H&P) 29.07; 9 D Wardle (Chester-le-St) 29.11; 10 G Hargreaves (Gateshead) 29.12; 11 D Mullen (Sunderland) 29.13; 12 D Hilton (Gateshead) 29.16; 13 K Bell (Gateshead) 29.22; 14 M Thompson (Sunderland) 29.45; 15 W Gilroy (Morpeth) 29.58.

Veterans, Over 40: 1 D Mullen 29.13; 2 A Dent (Blaydon) 30.21. Over 45: 1 A Jenkins (Morpeth) 30.56; 2 R Smedley (Gateshead) 31.09. Over 50: 1 H Matthews (Elswick) 30.59; 2 J Bell (Elswick) 31.35. Over 55: 1 G Edwards (Lincoln) 34.50; 2 P Lancaster (Elswick) 35.09. Over 60: 1 R Phillipson (Elswick) 36.12; 2 A Oliver (Morpeth). Over 65: 1 W Ramage (NE Vets). Over 70: R Peart (NE Vets).

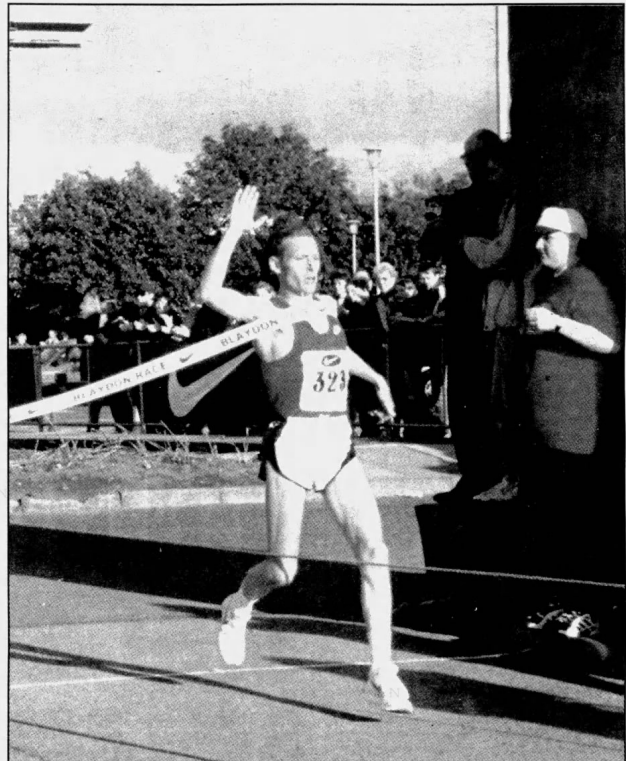
Junior Men: 1 C Palmer (Newcastle Univ) 33.49.

Team: 1 Gateshead 42pts; 2 Chester-le-Street 61; 3 Morpeth 205. Veterans Team: 1 Elswick 148; 2 Morpeth 185; 3 Wallsend 291.

Women: 1 B Dagne (Essex Ladies) 31.18; 2 J Boltz (Blaydon) 31.34; 3 J Shaw (Shildon) 33.31; 4 H Robinson (Chester-le-St) 33.35; 5 D Todd (J&H) 33.45; 6 J Peters (Trafford) 33.52; 7 L Marr (Tynedale) 34.06; 8 S Allen (H&P) 34.24. Juniors: 1 C Wilson (Morpeth) 35.52.

Team Race Women: 1 Elswick 58pt.

Veteran Women: 1 Chester-le-Street 42pt.



★ THERE AT LAST: Carl Thackery crosses the line at Blaydon after completing the six mile course in just 27 minutes