

Brian Diemer Family of Races, Cutlerville

'Dated' Diemer Diminishes Donut Damages

By Scott Sullivan

CUTLERVILLE (6/14/14) — Nothing dates you like having an annual road race named for you. Ask Brian Diemer. "You must have just been born when they started this," we told him before the 25th annual Brian Diemer Family of Races.

In fact he was 27, with an Olympic bronze medal and two of his three Games appearances in the steeplechase logged, when he and friends launched this 5K.

The Diemer continues to draw elite athletes with its rocket-fast course and prize purse, but has branched out with fun events that appeal to more-recreational runners and entire families.

This year's celebration included a pre-race pasta dinner, five bands on the course, Mobility 5K for handcycle and wheelchair athletes, junior jogs for boys and girls in many age groups and a mile run for more-ambitious kids. Then came the Cutlerville Days parade down the course finish area and daylong festival.

There was also the tweaked-each-year stuff that is just plain goofy. Diemer celebrates Father's Day eve by surprising his dad with a new way to start the race every year. This time Everett Diemer, 82, rang hand bells.

And let's not forget the Brian Diemer donut challenge. Beat Diemer — no easy feat, even though he is 52 and has ceased training to compete — and he buys you a donut. In case you're not sure where he is on the course, he has one of the Calvin College athletes he coaches run next to him, tethered to colored balloons and carrying a giant donut.

This year's \$8,520 prize purse included \$600 each for the overall men's and women's champions, \$500 for the top masters and \$100 for grand masters. Smaller payouts went to the top 10 of both sexes overall and top five masters.

Kenyan Philip Lagat, 31, now of Hebron, Ky., repeated as overall male winner, leading 1,135 finishers with a time of 14:21. He nipped Zach Ripley, 25, of Grand Rapids by a single second. Men's masters champion Sammy Cheptoo, 40, another Kenyan, paced the masters runners and was third overall in 14:31.



Photo by Scott Sullivan

Eventual winner Sarah Boyle, bib 986, leads Betsy Frens, bib 98, early in the race.



Photo by Scott Sullivan

Brian Diemer is ready to start the Mile Run.

Sarah Boyle, 28, of Brighton topped the women in 16:35, followed by Nicole Michermhuizen, 22, of Holland in 16:46 and Liudmila Stepanova, 30, of Hebron, Ky., in the same time. Luibov Denisova, 42, of Gainesville, Fla., captured masters honors in 17:43.

The grand masters winners were Brian Olsen, 53, of Jackson (16:42) and Laurel Park, 51, of Ann Arbor (17:55).

Diemer, who didn't run in his own run last year due to a hamstring injury, was pleased that his 18:05 finish cost him fewer than four dozen donuts. "If you count the handcyclists, it's more. But I'm happy with that," he said.

For complete results and more information about the 2015 Brian Diemer Family of Races, visit <http://diemerrun.com>.

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