

Athletics Yukon's 10 km Road Race Championships

Saturday, July 26, 2008

Sue Bogle and Bill Matiation are this year's 10 km road race champions. Last Saturday morning Athletics Yukon staged its annual 10 km Road Race Championships under sunny skies and a strong south wind. The course was out-and-back with the start and finish on the Yukon River trail behind the Visitor Reception Centre in downtown Whitehorse. The turn around point was on the Schwatka Lake Road. Competing with other events like the Tour de Whitehorse cycling races, there were 19 participants.

Matiation has a lean physique that suggests that he was born to run fast. From the beginning of the race, he set a pulverising pace that gave him the fastest time of the day (39:48). Matiation's quick tempo allowed him to quickly drop all his potential challengers except second place finisher Tom Ullyett (40:16). He shook off Ullyett at the turn around point on Schwatka Lake Road by surging ahead and creating an insurmountable gap. Finishing in third place, Don White (41:35) had a battle royal with Fred Vandenoet (41:43) who took fourth place. Proving that the book *Younger Next Year* is right, both White and Vandenoet ran quicker on Saturday than the last time they ran in 10 km championships. The men's side of the event was rounded out by three impressive masters runners, Brian Mottus (51:55), Keith Lay (52:52) and Grant Macdonald (58:26).

Re-inventing herself as a 10 km runner, Bogle showed that she can wear the "yellow jersey" in that distance too. Perhaps using this event as one of her last fast runs before doing the half-marathon portion in next weekend's Yukon River Trail Marathon, Bogle had no close challengers finishing first among the women in 44:07. Showing that age is no barrier, Bogle's time this year was almost 50 seconds faster than her time in the 2007 10 km championships. Masters runners Deb Kiemele (57:10) and Heather McIntyre (58:29) beat the clock by finishing in under 60 minutes.

The most exciting finish of the event was amongst the race walkers. Four of them raced the 10 km course together in a pack, at times walking abreast. With 100 meters to go, they challenged each other in a sprint. This resulted in Ruth Hall crossing over the finish line first (1:10:34) followed 2 seconds later by Tanya Astika (1:10:36). Just two seconds after Astika were Bonnie Love (1:10:38) and Arlene Ogden (1:10:38) both in hot pursuit of Hall. Not long after that drama finished, Becky Striegler (1:12:46) roared into the finish area. Striegler was followed by Susan Dennehy (1:17:24), Catherine Simpson (1:22:45), Evi Watt (1:24:56) and Ella LeGresley (1:27:25).