

Passing on the beads and hot chocolate, the DRC's Love the Loop was the choice

By Fiona Green



Saturday (Feb. 6) was a perfect day for running and runners in the Metroplex were able to choose from several popular races. There was the Mardi Gras in Fort Worth, which advertised on their site "We will be tossing Mardi Gras beads at the start, on the course, at the finish and at the party afterwards." Imagining the chaos that might ensue and the likelihood that I would be the one runner to slip on beads, I checked out alternative races.



While the hugely popular Hot Chocolate Run in Dallas was very tempting I opted instead for the DRC's Love the Loop 5K at Winfrey Point. A few days earlier I had received an e-mail announcing that online registration was closed but that a limited number of bibs would be available for those who arrived early on race morning.

John Brosius of the DRC explained that the club has experienced a significant growth in membership because of a recent increased marketing effort. Saturday's event featured a 5K and a 15K.

The 5K was easily won by 19-year-old Zach Polley (pictured), who blazed through the course in a speedy 16:37. Polley runs for Dallas Baptist University where he is coached by elite runner Jacob Phillips. He has a PR of 15:55 for the 3.1-mile distance and has his sights set on breaking the 15- minute barrier. His time Saturday was all the more impressive considering that he is recovering from a hip injury and that the course might have been a little long, according to several runners.

This didn't affect overall female winner, 40-year-old Jennifer Fundaro (pictured), who clocked a 19:42, 12 seconds ahead of runner-up Shantel Cloud, 29. Fundaro was thrilled with her win and the fact that she had succeeded in breaking 20 minutes for the first time since the birth of her son two years ago. Fundaro also was the overall female winner of last month's Frigid 5K, where she celebrated her first race of 2016 with a time of 20:16! She has a pre-baby PR of 18:09 for the 5K and is hoping that her times will continue to improve.

In the 15K, the top male finisher was Vesko Rajovic while Emelle Crutche of Houston claimed the female title.