

## First-time race had hiccup, but course was nice and cause was good

By Fiona Green



A cool Saturday morning (Oct. 22) was perfect for racing and there were plenty of events to choose from on the race calendar. Keen to try something new, I picked the inaugural Sick of Sickle Cell 5K, which took place at the Quanah Parker park in Fort Worth.

It was an ideal location for a race. The course was scenic and relatively flat and, with a modest crowd of around 90 runners, the paths were never congested.

Unfortunately, there was some confusion regarding the route and mid-way through the race, volunteers sent the lead runners on an extra loop in the park, which effectively added an extra mile to their distance. After realizing their mistake, they guided the slightly slower runners onto the correct course.

The event was not timed and awards were given only to the first male and female runners to cross the line, regardless of which version of the course they ran! Organizers apologized for the mix-up and assured runners that this would be corrected for next year.

The event was organized to raise money for Camp Jubilee, a week-long camp held in Meridian, Tex., for children suffering from Sickle Cell Anemia. Javier Atkinson, one of the organizers (pictured on right with Charles Terry and Nichole Scott), explained that he had become involved as a camp counselor after learning about it from a friend who had the disease. Sadly his friend, Christopher Odom, has since passed away but Atkinson still volunteers at the camp every year along with several others who were in attendance on Saturday.

In moving speeches they explained how volunteering at the camp had touched them profoundly and invited anyone interested in becoming involved to do so.

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## Oct. 20-23 Highlights

By Charles Clines

\* On a fairly cool, but quickly warming, Sunday (Oct. 24) morning, **Jonathan Swiatocha**, 24, of Keller threw down some heat to win the **Fort Worth Runners Club's Mercury 10K**. Showing that the genes have been shared in this running family,

Swiatocha finished with a 32:54.6 to win by almost four minutes. The race for female overall was somewhat closer as **Kristy Deavers**, 43, won with a 46:13.1, holding off **Cathy Buchanan**, 54, of Fort Worth by about 30 seconds. 54-year-old **Charles McIlroy** of Weatherford was third overall finisher with a 38:38.1. It's not uncommon for McIlroy to finish among the leaders, or win – he has at least two overall and two masters awards this year in area races. Swiatocha hasn't competed often this year in area races, but he has won at two other overall awards.

\* The **Toews, Sarah** and **Christian**, both 28 from Denison, won the 5K overall female and male awards at the **Zombie Apocalypse** run in Denison. Sarah clocked in at 20:35.6 and Christian finished with a 17:15.5 on Saturday (Oct. 22).

\* At the **LGRW Double Trouble 5K and 10K** on Oct. 22, **Erik Halldorson**, 14, of Argyle bested 11-year-old **Riley Nedrow** of Justin for the overall award. Halldorson zipped to the finish in 17:43.4 with Nedrow nine seconds behind. **Jeff Hillhouse**, 40, who was 11th overall with a 19:10.4 won the overall male combined award (10K and 5K). He was eighth overall in the 10K with a 41:40.4. The female overall combined winner was **Victoria Repice**, 45. She logged a 47:07.6 in the 10K and a 21:57.8 in the 5K. She won the female 45-49 5K age division and took the female masters award in the 10K.

\* **Keith Pierce**, 36, of Lewisville has won many awards, including three Cowtown Marathons, while 10-year-old **Emma Hoang** of Flower Mound could be on her way to such a successful running career. Both won overall awards at the **Nebraska Furniture Mart Halloween 5K** in The Colony with fast results times. Hoang, a member of **Dawn Grunnagle's SpeedKIDZ Elite** team, won with a 19:28 and Pierce, who has been competing in triathlons, blazed to a 14:11.2. According to the SpeedKIDZ website, Hoang's PR for the 5K was 21:34. Pierce has dipped below 15 minutes before, but it has been a while since he has been under 15, which might point to a short course. Or not. Both are outstanding runners.

\* **Brent Woodle**, 31, of Carrollton continued his fine year by winning at least his seventh overall award by earning another at **The Colony Half Marathon & Green Dragon 5-Miler**. He won the half with a 1:15:28.

\* **Clint Bell**, 37, of Dallas reeled off his seventh consecutive overall victory (if my count is correct) by winning the **AHMO Thriller Run 5K** in Wylie with another sterling time, 15:25.3. **Jonathan Cantu**, 14, challenged and finished with a 15:37.8. This was at least Bell's ninth overall victory in the area this year and he was coming off a Thursday victory at the **Long Run** in Dallas, where he ran a 17:06. **Sheila Natho**, 50, of Dallas won the female award at the Long Run with a 20:21. She has won at least six masters awards and one other overall award this year in area races.

\* **Gabriel Zambrano**, 22, of Fort Worth added to his overall award collection by racing to a 15:01 at the **WOKC Spooktacular Sprint for the Children 5K** in Grand Prairie. Zambrano won four times in September and again the first week of October. This latest victory brings his yearly total to at least eight overall awards. And **Magaly Soto**, 40, also

had to make room on her growing trophy shelf by winning the female overall award with a 19:24. This was at least Soto's ninth overall victory this year. And she won by about 12 seconds over **Amanda Moore**, 30, who has at least two overall female victories this year.

\* The **Friends of the River** race on Thursday evening presented an unusual distance of 6K, but there was a familiar winner as **John Valentine**, 24, of Fort Worth earned the overall award with an 18:13.1. Among Valentine's victories this year include the **Dash Down Greenville** and the recent **Rahr Oktoberfest 5K**. The female winner was **Neringa Kaulinaite**, 33, who was featured here in July by Fiona Green after winning the Some Like It Hot 5K in Fort Worth. Kaulinaite was born in Lithuania and has lived here several months after moving from London. She began running relatively late after her fiancé suggested it might be a way to meet people and stay busy. She has certainly found her calling as she finished with a 23:41.5.