

Monday 25th September 2017

Big increase in numbers for Barns Green Half Marathon and 10k races

On Sunday, Barns Green hosted its 35th annual half marathon and its second 10km race. Over 2000 runners registered for the two races. The Barns Green Half Marathon started at 10am and twenty minutes later the second ever Barns Green 10km race started with over 550 runners. The 10km route includes about 6km of the half marathon route with a couple of new elements including an extra loop in the grounds of Christ's Hospital School and a fast downhill to a new finish in the village.

Local Horsham MP, Jeremy Quin acted as official starter for the Barns Green Half Marathon. The male winner of the half marathon race was Neil Boniface from Horsham Joggers in a time of 1 hour 10 mins 15 secs with Paul Navesey second and Kevin Rojas of Brighton & Hove City AC third. The women's race was won by Bethan Male in a time of 1 hour 27 mins 41secs with Sue Fry of Hailsham Harriers second and Dani Tarleton from Arena 80 AC third. After the race, Neil Boniface, who won the inaugural 10k race last year said, "I am thrilled to have come home first. It is the 3rd time I've won here. Last year I switched to the 10k as preparation for another race but it is good to be back running the half marathon. The course was great and the organisation as always very good".

Sunday's 10k race was started by Wendy Buckingham representing St Catherine's Hospice. The race was won by Bernie Spannagl of Horsham Blue Star Harriers in a time of 33 mins 11 seconds with Jamie Corbett of Worthing & District Harriers finishing second and Russ Mullen from Haywards Heath Harriers third. The winner of the Barns Green women's 10k race was Kat Owens who completed the course in 40 mins 42 seconds. Louise Clarke from Horsham Joggers was second, with Polly Adams from Royal Manor of Portland AC third.

Once again the Barns Green Half Marathon and 10k enjoyed excellent autumn weather and running conditions were very good for the athletes. On the day, 140 volunteers gave their time to help with car parking and marshalling and the many other jobs necessary to make sure everything ran smoothly and the runners enjoyed the experience. This unique village event raises a lot of money for charity and local sports clubs and societies. The official charity this year was once again St Catherine's Hospice and this year's event is expected to help raise almost £10,000 for the wonderful work that they do.

Commenting on the event, Race Director, Vernon Jennings said "I couldn't be happier with the way that the day went. Launching the new 10km race last year was not easy and presented my committee with some testing challenges. However, we saw a 50% increase in runners from last year, the majority of whom were female competitors. There was a 13% increase in the number of runners in the half marathon which is also very pleasing. This will enable us to give donations to all the local clubs and societies that help us to stage the event and also boost the money that we can donate to our wonderful charity, St Catherine's Hospice. I would like to thank our local residents for their great support and cooperation and understanding with regard to the road closures during the races".

Entries for next year's Barns Green Half Marathon and 10k, with an early bird offer, are already open. The date is Sunday 30th September 2018. For further details visit the website; **barnsgreen-half.org.uk**

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