



News Release

Sunday 9 October 2011

12,500 Runners Race Through London in the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon

12,500 runners came from across the UK and 30 countries around the world to race through the streets of London today in the hugely popular Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon with 40,000 spectators and supporters cheering on the participants.

Beating three Olympic Gold medalists and fitness enthusiast Nell McAndrew to the finish line, Sam Farah was crowned this year's winner, finishing with a time of 1:08:39. Farah, a baker at Waitrose at Tower Bridge, joins the 2010 winner, Edwin Kipkorir, on the trophy sculpted by master craftsman Mark Wilkinson OBE, from an Oak Burr found in one of London's Royal Parks,

Starting and finishing in Hyde Park, the victor ran the scenic 13.1 mile route through four of London's beautiful Royal Parks (Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, The Green Park and St James's Park) and past some of the capital's most iconic landmarks including Buckingham Palace, The Houses of Parliament, The London Eye and The Royal Albert Hall. Farah said: *"The Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon is a race which I have looked forward to ever since entering earlier this year. To cross the line in first place to the magnificent roars of the crowd was an experience I will never forget."*

The first female to cross the line was fell runner Tish Jones, who completed the race in 1:23:28. Jones said: *"It's such an honour to take part in the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon. It's such a great event, running through London's Royal Parks and the crowd proved to be a great source of motivation for me from start to finish."*

A wealth of celebrities also took on the half marathon challenge with Nell McAndrew, dressed as a forest fairy, the first to finish with an impressive time of 1:25:20. She was closely followed by Sky Sports presenter Charlie Webster with a time of 1:49:59. Other famous faces appearing amid the crowd of runners included Adrian Moorhouse, Mark Goodier, Jonny Searle and soap star Angela Griffin.

Sara Lom, Chief Executive of the Royal Parks Foundation comments: *"The Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon has rapidly become an iconic event in Britain's sporting calendar. It's not every day that runners get to take in the iconic landmarks of the UK's capital city, combined with the beauty of London's Royal Parks in full autumnal splendor. Race day has a great atmosphere and feel-good factor for runners and spectators, motivating thousands of people to enjoy a healthier lifestyle and raise millions of pounds for charity."*

"This year we hope to raise more than £2million for vital causes around the UK. Since its launch the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon has helped raise more than £8million for charity, benefiting more than 200 charities including 95.8 Capital FM's Help a Capital Child, Mind, Scope and UNICEF."

The half marathon field included 17 runners over the age of 70, as well as dozens of charity entrants in a range of costumes, including a dragon, a panda and even a giant squirrel!

This year's Pulse3K race for 11-16 year olds was the largest field to date with almost 400 young registrants from 209 schools. The new route started in Hyde Park and took participants on a 3km course into Kensington Gardens before finishing under the main Half Marathon gantry to the cheers of the crowd.

The fastest boy, Merhawi Yemane, 14, from Elmgreen School, finished Pulse3K with a time of 9:57, successfully retaining his title and shaving 12 seconds from his 2010 time. He commented: *"It's such a great feeling to be crowned the fastest boy in Pulse3K. The atmosphere all the way round the course was amazing, and I will definitely be back next year to hopefully retain my title."*

The fastest girl, Georgia Tuckfield, also 14, from Walthamstow Academy, followed quickly behind and completed her 3km challenge with a time of 10:41, also retaining her title from 2010 and beating her previous time by a massive 31 seconds.

Renowned for its carnival like atmosphere, race day also featured a family friendly Food & Fitness Festival in Hyde Park for the 40,000 spectators. Visitors sampled delicious gastronomic delights throughout the day and took part in a number of taster sports activities including Badminton, Parkour, Fencing, and an Army Assault Course. Live music on the main stage from the cabaret theatre inspired act, The Ruby Dolls and soulful band The Musgraves proved hugely popular too for runners relaxing after their race.

The Ballot for next year's Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon will open on **Wednesday 18 January 2012**. To receive information about the ballot launch, register interest for the 2012 race online at www.royalparkshalf.com. Registration for next year's Pulse3K race will open early 2012, register interest at www.pulse3K.com.

-Ends-

To download photos of the event with accompanying captions please go to www.rb-create.com and click on the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon icon. Password: 091011

For more information please contact Lauren Garner or Alex Ferguson at Pitch

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