



ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET, GO: Winner Craig Berg (96) leads Scott Cousins (128) and William Wu (680) at the start of the Billericay 10km on Sunday Photo by Paul Robins

BERG BEATS WEATHER AND THE OPPOSITION

Runners battle through strong winds and rain at Billericay 10km

DESPITE heavy rain and gale force winds facing the 700 runners in the 14th Billericay Striders 10km race on Sunday, it turned out to be a well contested and exciting race.

First to cross the line was the young athlete Craig Berg, 20, running for Woodford Green AC, who finished the race well ahead of his rivals in a time of 33 mins 22 secs.

Berg also wins the Waitrose Youth Shield for under-21s in addition to £50 prize money.

Second was Scott Cousins, 22, in a time of 35 mins 39 secs and third was Stephen Pettit running for Ely Runners.

His time of 36 mins 18 secs also won him the first Vet 1 trophy.

Loretta Sollars, from Billericay, running for East Essex Tri, won the ladies race in fine style having been second in 2006 and 2007 in a time of 38 mins 56 secs.

Well-deserved

Sollars, a former England Cross-Country runner, and champion triathlete also won the Ladies Vet 2 category and £50 prize money in a well-deserved victory.

Second in the ladies race was young athlete Hayley Pegg, 21, running for Thrift Green Trotters, who finished in an impress-

ive time of 40 mins 56 secs.

Third was another Vet runner, Beverley Mason, of Pitsea Running Club, who crossed the line in a time of 41 mins 9 secs.

Mason also took the Vet 1 trophy, proving that female runners really do improve with age. The Female Under-21 Waitrose Youth Shield was again won by Emily Ballard (Basildon) in a time of 46 mins 50 secs.

Veteran runners made up nearly half the 750 field and there were outstanding performances in the Vet 2 Male and Female categories.

First Male in the Over 60 category was Southend AC's Peter

Binns, while first Male Over 70 was, Leonard Parrott (Havering Mayesbrook).

The first Female Over 55 was Sue Dale (Havering 90) and the first Female Over 65 was Barbara Crowley (Thrift Green Trotters).

Race Director, David Sweet, said: "Despite such awful conditions it was satisfying to see so many of our usual competitors turn out."

Backbone

"Our marshals are the backbone of this event and standing out in torrential rain and wind is a testament to our club's commitment to this race.

"We are also indebted to our sponsors, Essex & Suffolk Water, Headlines Hairdressing, Physiotherapy in Stock and thank Brightside School and Hanakins Community Centre for such excellent facilities."

Full race results are at www.10kbillericaystriders.com.

Contact Sport...

- email: sport@gazettenews.co.uk
- phone: 01245 603339
- web: www.thisistotalessex.co.uk