

Brazoswood Graduate wins Family Fitness 5K

By Bill Shaw
The Facts

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LAKE JACKSON — Hurricane Ike spoiled the originally scheduled Family Fitness 5K Run/Walk on Sept. 13, but runners took advantage of the almost perfect weather Saturday to wipe out three of the four records set in the last running of the contest in 2005. Brazoswood graduate Weston Caceres, a sophomore on the Texas A&M cross country team, posted a record-breaking pace that put him 2:18 ahead of his closest competition at the finish line.

Caceres, 19, finished the out and back 3.1-mile route from Family Fitness in 15 minutes and 43 seconds, a 5:04-mile pace, breaking the record set in the 2005 contest by 2:39.

“I went out at a 4:57 pace and just stayed relaxed,” Caceres said. “For me it was sort of a tempo run — easy enough. I didn’t get any lactic acid buildup, but still a hard run. It was a 5K PR (personal record) for me. The weather was perfect for running. I had a fun experience at this Family Fitness race.”

Lake Jackson Intermediate student Xavier Jimenez finished second overall in the contest in 18:01, a 5:49 pace that also beat the previous 18:21 contest

record posted in 2005.

“He (Caceres) took off from me at about the half mile,” Jimenez said. “He kept increasing his lead, and I was pretty much by myself from there.”

Brazoswood sophomore Josh Raymond, 15, finished third overall in 18:47, a 6:04 pace that put him 46 seconds behind Jimenez.

“I finished the first mile in 5:37 and was trying to make sure I didn’t get caught by the runner behind me,” Raymond said. “It was an OK time (for the race) but not my best. I was stiff out there because of the cool weather.”

Stewart Crouch, 46, was the runner on Raymond’s heels. Crouch finished 16 seconds behind Raymond in 19:03, a flat six-minute pace that won the male masters (40 and older) title and broke the previous masters record by 1:05.

“I caught up with Greg Jones at about the 1-mile mark and ran with him for about 100 yards, then pulled ahead and maintained my pace,” Crouch said.

Jones, 33, finished 4th overall 56 seconds behind Crouch in 19:59 and placed first in the male 30-39 age division. Lake Jackson runner Abby Artley, 32, finished sixth behind Jones in 20:47, a 6:42 pace that broke the

female contest record by 56 seconds.

“I just ran with the boys in the first mile; my husband (Donnie) was with me for a while,” Artley said. “I think I started off way too fast; it was a little cool, and my lungs weren’t used to it. It was a good run and a PR. I didn’t want to turn around to see if there was anyone behind me; I was afraid I might fall or something.”

Donnie Artley finished ninth overall in 21:22 and won third place in the 30-39 age group.

Second-place overall female finisher Janneke Maas, 51, liked her time. She finished 18th overall in 25:18, a 8:10 pace.

“It’s a good time. I usually do a slower 26-minute 3-mile,” Maas said. “Abby was way ahead of me. I was pretty much on my own.”

Finishing 22nd overall, Celia Castillo, 37, of Lake Jackson shadowed Maas and crossed the finish line in 26:12, an 8:26 pace that earned her third place in the overall female competition.

A veteran of Family Fitness Bootcamp, Linda McGown, 48, finished her first race and won top honors in the female 40-plus masters competition. McGown finished 32nd overall in 29:21, a 9:28 pace.

“I’ve just been running since this summer; my mother (LaVerne Lippman, 72) talked me into running the race; she won second in the 60-and-over division (in 33:02),” McGown said. “Merie (Abercrombie) and Tracy (Page) prepared me in boot camp. This is a big surprise. I didn’t think I would finish. I was scared.”

“In boot camp, she (Linda) was one of the better runners,” Lippman said. “She had the will to run. I knew she had it in her; some do and some don’t.”

Another boot camp veteran, Beate Damm of URS, a global environmental firm, provided the trophies for the overall and age-group winners because she lost 66 pounds in the train-

ing. Damm also ran her first 5K and won third place in the female 40-49 age division. She finished 42nd overall in 32:55, a 10:37 pace.

The Family Fitness 5K is part of the 10th anniversary celebration of the facility. Kelie Mays, Family Fitness general manager, decided to renew the contest after a three-year hiatus to celebrate the anniversary and intends to continue with the run annually.

“We will probably move it to this time of the year because of hurricanes and the good weather we have in November,” said Mays, who finished the 5K distance himself in 26:51 to place third in the 40-49 age group.

The Family Fitness boot camp that McGown, Lippman and Damm attended is free for members and nonmembers and trains on Saturday mornings year-round. For information, call Page at (901) 896-9370 or Abercrombie at (979) 297-1739.

Major sponsors were Lillian D. Lockett, M.D., Park Place Sports, URS Corporation, “Dude” Payne, My Computer Crew, The Medicine Shoppe, Michael Martin Insurance, Don Davis Dealerships, Gulf Chemical Metallurgical, Abercrombie Photography and The Wooten Law Firm.

Overall and age group finishers are available at www.barrahome.net. Race photos are available at www.abercrombie-photos.com.

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