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New York runners win St. Charles 5K at Pease

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Demesse Tefera was the overall winner in the 17th annual St. Charles Children's Home 5K Road Race on Monday morning.

Deb Cram photo

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PORTSMOUTH — The heavy rain disappeared for most of the race, but it left its mark before the start of Monday morning's 17th annual St. Charles Children's Home 5K Road Race.

Ethiopia natives Demesse Tefera and Hirut Beyen made the trip from New York, topping the men's and women's divisions, respectively, in a field of 947 finishers.

The 31-year old Tefera won the overall crown by crossing the finish line at Martin Point's Health Care in 15 minutes, 31 seconds. A pair of 33-year-old runners from Dover finished behind Tefera: Daniel Hocking placed second (15:58) and Nathan Huppe finished third (16:28).

"It was a very good race today," Tefera said. "There was rain today, so it slowed you down, but it went very well."

Beyene, 21, broke away from second-place finisher Heidi Westover after the first mile to win the women's division. Beyen ran in 16:50, which broke the women's course record that was set last year by Kaitlyn D'Orazio (17:27).

Westover, 32 of Walpole, finished in 17:05. Larissa Park, 32 of Somerville, Mass., placed third (17:16).

"It was a very hard race, there were a lot of slop; a lot of puddles, but it was very good," Beyene said."

All proceeds from the race went to benefit the St. Charles Children's Home in Rochester.

Tefera has been competing in elite divisions all over the country and is preparing for November's New York City Marathon. Tefera finished 11th overall in the 2008 New York City Marathon, finishing in 2 hours 19 minutes. Tefera is hoping to break 2:08 this year.

With a personal record of 13:45 in a 5K, Tefera said he just had "a nice jog" on Monday, but that was good enough to put distance away from the rest of the field pretty quickly.

"I just wanted to take it slow," Tefera said. "The rain was really tough; you kind of sank into the puddles. But it was a very nice course."

Tefera's win in April's Rutgers Half-Marathon in New Brunswick, N.J., highlights his season.

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This was the first race of the Hocking, the 2011 winner of the race, after he'd been battling a hip injury, a stress fracture to his femur, and a sore Achilles" heel. He hopes to be ready for October's ING Hartford Marathon

"It feel good just to be out there; it's hard to refocus and be mentally sharp," Hocking said. "I felt good, but (Tefera) was just at a different level today."

Beyene said she has battled in the past with Westover, a perennial top runner in New England, and they usually take turns finishing first. Monday was Beyene's turn after the pair battled side-by-side through the first mile.

"(Westover) is strong," Beyene said. "We were together through the first mile, but after that I was ahead. I felt comfortable through the whole race."

Beyene finished second in the women's division in May's Pittsburgh Marathon and plans to run in New York City as well.

Monday's race was special Jeff Fazio, who is attempting to run 50 5k's in every state within a year. Fazio, 39 of Harrisburg, Pa., originally began running to get in shape, but has been inspired to accomplish a grueling feat because of a co-worker, Dee Gerber, who has had muscular dystrophy since birth and is now regulated to a wheelchair.

Gerber as Fazio to "think of her after he finishes each first mile," and that has fueled him. Fazio has completed 11 states and said he should have 27 states done by January. Next weekend, Fazio will run in Michigan on Friday, followed by races in Chicago and Indianapolis four hours apart on Saturday.

"She keeps me motivated going through the states," Fazio said. "It's been grueling, just with logistics. It's been interesting. I've been sick this week, but no matter what, I'm going to do it. Dee can never run, so I'm not going to let it slow me down."

Tefera, Hocking and Huppe were followed in the men's top 10 by Ross Nickerson (16:31) of Falmouth, Maine; Eric Williams (16:35) of Concord; Rob Edson (17:19) of Hanover; Justin Soucy (17:20) of Hudson; Colin Lee (17:23) of Dover; Michael Frayse (17:27) of Derry; and Bobby Hammond (17:37) of Flanders, N.J.

Following Beyene, Westover and Park in the women's top 10 by Carly Dion (17:24) of Biddeford, Maine; Heather Mahoney (18:27) of Westford, Mass.; Amy Bernard (18:31) of Hampstead; Alexandra Swiatocha (18:55) of Mahopac, N.Y.; Lesley Hocking (19:03) of Dover; Jacqueline Gaughan (19:20) of Exeter; and Caroline Fischer (19:59) of Merrimack.

Male age-group award winners were Maddox Jordan (seven-and-under, 24:33) of North Berwick, Maine; Ryan Young (8-11, 19:43) of Merrimack; Hammond (12-15); Tristan Smith (16-20, 17:58); Colin Lee (21-25, 17:23) of Dover; Bartley Mullin (26-30, 18:07) of Rutland, Vt.; Soucy (31-35); Jonathan Alizio (36-40, 18:26) of Chester; Frayse (41-45); Williams (46-50); Francis Lamy (51-55, 20:01) of Chester; Mike Barry (56-60, 19:27) of Northwood; Scott Abercrombie (61-65, 20:10) of Salem; Rick Stetson (66-70, 21:22) of Duxbury, Mass.; Gary Reuter (71-75, 25:58); Robert Madden (76-80, 42:30) of Derry; and Clifford Smith (81-85, 37:58).

Female age-group award winner were Maranda Ramini (seven-and-under, 29:57) of Sanford, Maine; Caroline Fischer (8-11, 19:57) of Merrimack; Gaughan (12-15); Anna Noble (16-20, 20:13) of Rochester; Caryn Pepin (21-25, 22:44) of Derry; Mahoney (26-30); Bernard (31-35); Jamie Good 936-40, 20:28); of Meredith; Cindy Edson (41-45, 20:09) of Hanover; Lisa Klasman (46-50, 20:45) of Bedford; Julia Martinage (51-55, 20:53); Lynn-Marie Fawcett (56-60, 21:47) of Chester; Judy Laimaire (61-65, 24:01) of Wolfeboro; Susan Murphy (66-70, 32:26) of Rochester; Sachiko Burkinshaw (32:47) of Londonderry; Jeannette Perrin (76-80, 45:07) of Nashua; and Isabel Pike (86-90, 45:55) of Epping.

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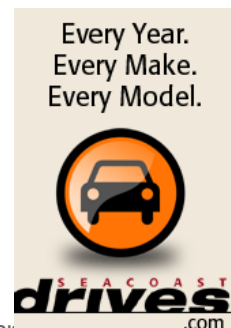
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