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Wednesday July 09, 2008

Winner makes right decision at Bay Days 5-miler

Paul Heysle | The Chronicle-Telegram

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BAY VILLAGE — High gas prices proved costly to at least one runner at the 34th annual Bay Days 5-miler — three-time defending champ Rick Bement.

The rising cost of fuel caused Fred Kieser to think twice about making his annual road trip down to Canfield, with the 37-year-old Cleveland resident opting for Bay Days instead.

It was a good choice for Kieser, the head track and cross country coach at St. Joseph Academy, who peeled away from Bement after the first mile to win the event decisively in a time of 24:18.2.

"I never did it (Bay Days) before," said Kieser, the 2005 Rite Aid Marathon champ. "Everyone's always done it, so I thought it would be good to change things up. I didn't want to spend the gas money to go all the way out to Canfield, which is where I normally go. I felt like it was cost-efficient to stay in town."

"I went out with Fred and tried to hang on, but that lasted only a mile," said Bement, 28, a 1999 Olmsted Falls High graduate and Columbia Station resident. "It's hard just running by yourself, but that's just how it turned out today."

Bement defeated Kieser twice late last year. But this year, Kieser is healthier and in better shape. His race resume includes a 14th-place finish at the 2000 Olympic Marathon Trials and 13th place at the 2004 trials (2:17:21).

"I'm not unhappy with the time, but I think I could have run faster," Kieser said. "I died the last two miles. My mileage is up, so my legs are dead. I'm home from vacation (camping in Colorado and Utah for two weeks). I upped my mileage there, too. I trained right through it. I'm tired."

Lorain's Dave Leonard, a 29-year-old Amherst Middle School teacher and former Clearview cross country coach, finished third. Last year, he was second by only a second behind Bement (25:42).

A slow start by Avon Lake's Katie Nowak, 21, was enough to give Rocky River's Jocelyn Rood, 31, the upper hand in the women's division. Nowak started slowly, but roared back with a 5:50 clip over the last four miles. Still, it wasn't enough to catch Rood, who set a personal record after giving berth to her first child, a son, Jackson, six months ago.

"I'm very pleased with this kind of time a few months post-baby," Rood said. "The weather wasn't too hot today, so that part was great. Usually it's very hot during this race. I would have been happy with a six-minute pace (30 minutes), but I surprised myself today."

A 1995 Magnificat High graduate, Rood was fourth at Bay Days in 2006 (32:42) and second in 2004 (31:40).

"I saw her (Rood) at the third-mile mark. She was still about 20 seconds ahead of me," said Nowak, a 2005 Avon Lake High graduate. "I simply started out too slow and it cost me. It was just too much time to make up."

Nowak was second at last year's Bay Days in 31:23.

Plagued by injuries the past two springs, Nowak finally got healthy. She finished second in the 1,500 (4:30) for Bradley University in the Missouri Valley Conference meet. She also ran a personal record 2:12.8 in the 800 this spring.

Rob Juergens, a 44-year-old Avon Lake resident and head Shoremen boys cross country coach, won his fourth masters title in five years, placing fifth overall (26:09).

A total of 520 runners competed at the event, which included the children's mile fun run. Race times for age group winners were incomplete. Complete results are available online at cwrrc.org.

Contact Paul Heysle at 329-7135 or ctsports@chroniclet.com.

Male overall

1. Fred Kieser, Cleveland, age 37, 24:18.2
2. Rick Bement, Columbia Station, 28, 25:21.9
3. David Leonard, Lorain, 29, 25:30.7
4. Steven Benesh, Cleveland, 28, 25:39.6
5. Rob Juergens, Avon Lake, 44, 26:09.6
6. Kevin Michalske, Westlake, 34, 26:13.3
7. Ken Sullivan, Ellsworth OH, 20, 26:19.7
8. Mike McKenna, Bay Village, 40, 27:14.4;
9. Chris Snyder, Westlake, 33, 27:17.6
10. Aaron Rood, Rocky River, 32, 27:36.3
11. Vince Molosky, Tallahassee FL, 28, 27:43.1
12. Ben Szporluk, Cleveland, 43, 27:48.0
13. Brian Gibbons, Cleveland, 19, 27:51.8
14. Jason Zangmeister, Fairview Park, 22, 28:24.2

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15. Nate Norris, Avon Lake, 33, 28:33.0

x – Note, due to technical issues, times/places may be incorrect beyond fourth place.

Female overall

- 1. Jocelyn Rood, Rocky River, 31, 29:02.7
- 2. Katie Nowak, Avon Lake, 21, 29:37.2
- 3. Jessica Zangmeister, Fairview Park, 17, 30:18.0
- 4. Wendy Roberts, Lakewood, 29, 32:33.1
- 5. Alix Heinicke, Bay Village, 20, 33:24.8
- 6. Anna Bowles, Augusta GA, 15, 33:37.6
- 7. Kathy Link, Avon Lake, 14, 33:39.1
- 8. Marie Caputo, Strongsville, 42, 34:42.8
- 9. Kera Carter, Cleveland, 42, 34:56.7
- 10. Sarah Bowles, Augusta GA, 12, 34:58.8
- 11. Gabriella Kreuz, 16, 35:04.8
- 12. Stephanie Black, Bay Village, 18, 35:07.5
- 13. Patti Sunagel, Elyria, 50, 36:03.8
- 14. Jenni Bittinger, Bay Village, 29, 36:10.2
- 15. Maureen Scullin, Cleveland, 49, 36:26.1

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