



WOLLASTON



9th September 2018

This was the 6th year of the Northampton Half Marathon and it continues to be a popular event, with club runners and individuals, some of whom had never attempted the distance before making up the field of over 650 runners.

We were again supported by Wollaston BMW with the lead vehicle, this year an i3 branded with the event details, Also we benefited from a BMW electric bike for the lead cyclist to make the hills a little easier.



After a warm up from Virgin Active in Collingtree the count down was given and the race was underway. This year the 13.1 mile course remained the same as the previous year and takes runners on a tour of Northampton's beautiful architecture, heritage and parklands too. Starting at the historic Guildhall the route took the runners down the



Derngate before turning up Spring Gardens and past St Giles Church on the way to Abington Street. They then passed under the gaze of the Charles Bradlaugh statue , up the Kettering Road and through the Racecourse park, before following the Barrack Road back into the town centre. For the spectators at the Guildhall the racers passed by for a second time and down Guildhall Road to cross Victoria Promenade and into Becketts Park and Midsummer Meadow . After following the picturesque river Nene to the White Water Centre they looped back round into the Brackmills Estate

After this the runners tackled their least favourite part of the route – the hill up to the Newport Pagnell Road and then a gentle climb up to Great Houghton. The town then comes back into view and after a little bit of trail running long the disused railway line it was back to Brackmills and up to the top of Nene Valley Way before crossing the footbridge to Delapre.

After a short section of woodland the beautiful Delapre Abbey appeared into view and a sprint (well for some anyway!) round the South Lawn heralded the end of an epic journey.

By this time the dark clouds and odd shower had given way to bright sunshine to welcome the runners' home. First across the line was Richard Dowling from London representing the Good Gym Race Team with an impressive time of 1:15:20 followed a minute later by Mark Hill from the Rugby and Northampton Club with a 1:16:21 and in third place another local runner Alex Ash from Wellingborough and District with a 1:17:54.



Top 3 men – Richard Dowling (centre), Mark Hill (left of picture) and Alex Ash (right of picture)



For the ladies it was Jo Windrum with a winning time of 1:31:09 representing Northampton Road Runners, Jo's multiple running of the race clearly paying off. In second place was Kelly Barnett from Wellingborough and District with a time of 1:34:11. It was down to the 3rd place winner to give us the nail biting finish of the day with Claire Holland from Parklands Jog and Run piping Zoe Kemp to the line with less than one second between them!

Top 3 ladies – Jo Windrum (centre), Claire Holland (left of picture) and Kelly Barnett (right of picture)



As always the event serves as a fundriasing platform for many local charities including Cynthia Spencer Hospice,Macmillan Cancer Support, The Lewis Foundation, Walk For a Cause, Kids Aid, Child Bereavement UK, St Francis Childrens Society, The Hope Centre, NAYC, action for Children, NorPIP and Veterans with Dogs. All were well supported by runners raising much needed funds for these good causes.



We also must thank the charities MacMillan and Cynthia Spencer who volunteer to man the drinks station's every year and provide amazing support to the runners. Also thanks to Central Vineyard for taking care of the first drinks station.

Finally, a huge thank you to all the volunteers who turned out to support the event , manning registration, on course marshals, lead and tail bikes and the finish crew. All of the runners' race reviews have mentioned how supportive they were all around the course adding generally to the friendly atmosphere. Also we are very grateful for the support we have received from **Connor Ratcliff at the Running Shop** in Northampton and Rich and the team at the **Back and Body Clinic** in Northampton in supporting the race with their respective knowledge and enthusiasm

Hopefully the participation and charity fundraising will continue to grow in 2019

Simon Hollis
Race Director
Northampton Half Marathon

