

2015 Wapack Race Report

This year's Wapack Trail Race started 15 minutes late because it was discovered that a highway detour due to bridge repairs in New Ipswich, NH was not well marked and this led to many volunteers and runners getting lost on the way to the race! We appreciate the gracious acceptance by all the runners of our decision to delay the start to mitigate the travel delays experienced.

It was another very warm day in the 80s for most of the Wapack Trail Race this year. Nevertheless, this year's 68 finishers managed to break some course and age group records that haven't been broken since 2012. Runners came from all six New England States and Maryland.

Taking first place was course record holder Dave Herr, 50, of Canaan, VT. His time of 2:32:41 was a minute faster than he ran last year and he now dominates the 50-59 age group, having broken the previous age group record by 0:42:48!

Behind Dave were two newcomers to the Wapack: Dustin Meeker, 33, of Baltimore, MD in 2:41:31 and Samuel Gray, 19, of N. Hampton, NH in 2:42:31. Sam was the first male runner under the age of 20 ever to run the Wapack and he established an age group record that will likely hold for many many years to come. Sam and Dustin were right on Dave's heels when they were coming off Mt. Watatic after the turnaround, but Dave's speed and experience (1st or 2nd place in at least 10 Wapack races since 2002) left them behind over the last 8 miles. According to Sam, Dave's fine sportsmanship came through when he called him and Dustin back from a wrong turn they had made.

The women were led by Kehr Davis, 38, of N. Egremont, MA who established a new course record time of 3:02:41 by shaving 0:04:44 off her time from 2014, and thereby dropping below the previous record of 3:05:58 run by Kelsey Allen in 2012. Kehr was the sixth overall finisher. The second woman finisher, Allyson Koenig, 29, of Saco, ME posted a time of 3:41:22 in her first Wapack. The Wapack Trail Race also saw its first female runner under the age of 20 this

year. Nicole Ponte, 17, of Dartmouth, MA was the 7th female to cross the finish line and her excellent 10-19 age group record of 4:37:18 will likely stand for many years.

In the men's 20-29 age group, Tyler Labrie of Concord, NH led with a time of 3:30:05. The 40-49 age group was led by Russell Stroud of Simsbury, CT with a time of 3:29:32. The 60-69 age group was led by RD Paul Funch in 3:42:48. In the women's 40-49 age group, Mairead Pratschke, of Lowell, MA was the champion in a time of 5:37:55. Finally, in the 50-59 age group, four-time Wapack runner Tammy Godin of North Grafton, MA led in 4:10:02.

Six runners did not finish the race this year, which reflects the difficult weather conditions the runners faced in meeting the cut-off times that have been established. Even after meeting the cut-off times, several runners who finished had extreme difficulty doing so. The hot and humid weather that has settled on the race for four of the past five years has made the last 5.5 miles of this race a significant challenge. Successfully meeting that challenge is a considerable achievement of fitness and preparedness that each finisher should celebrate.

The Wapack Trail Race in 2016 will be held, as usual, on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend.