**Chilly Blackmore Vale Lions' half marathon success**

Last Sunday saw runners brave the chilly conditions to take part in the 27th Blackmore Vale Lions Half Marathon, at Bishops Caundle.

This year the race was not chosen as a Dorset Road Race League, and together with the pre-race icy weather, probably accounted for the number of participants being down on previous years. However there were 254 runners aged 18 to 77 who took part in the annual half marathon and half marathon Relay Race organised by the Blackmore Vale Lions Club with the valuable cooperation of Bishops Caundle Parish Council, All Saints Primary School, Bishops Caundle Village Hall and Social Committee.

Around f4,000 (final figures to be approved) is to be shared between a number of organisations in Bishops Caundle and the Blackmore Vale Lions Charity Trust Fund, which supports a wide range of charitable causes in and around the Blackmore Vale.

Weather conditions after a snowy Thursday and Friday improved over the weekend, but with a couple of areas of the course considered too dangerous the route was shortened.

On the day, almost perfect conditions prevailed for this very tough challenge, which many runners use as preparation for April's London Marathon.

Steve Way of Bournemouth AC won the men's race in a time of 1h 8m 32s; with Rachel Astington of Running for Time winning the women’s race in a time of 1h 20m 24s.

Winners: Men's overall: Steve Way, Bournemouth AC, 1:08:32; Men's 2nd overall: Toby Chapman, Bournemouth AC, 1:09:00; Men's 3rd overall: Mark Smith, Poole AC, 1:14:11. Ladies' overall: Rachel Astington, Running for Time, 1:20:24; Ladies' 2nd overall: Lin Lascelles, Maiden Newton Runners, 1:24:48; Ladies' 3rd overall: Clare Martin, Purbeck Runners, 1:25:20.

Poole Runners picked up both the Mens and Ladies Team Prize with John Towner, Chris Stafford and Steve Claxton for the men and Paula Barker, Sarah Swift and Alison Gunn for the Ladies.

There were further age group prizes won by Toby Chapman, John Towner, Steve Way, Mark Smith, Paul Rose, Michael Grist, Martin Lascelles, David Cartwright in the men's categories and Rachel Astington, Clare Martin, Becky Tovey, Sarah Conway, Patricia Everitt and Holly Harris in the women's categories.

The Relay Race was won by a mixed team called the Misfits in a time of 1 hr 3 1 min 50sec.

The major sponsors for this year's race was Dike and Sons the family run superstore of Stalbridge and the Southern Coop in Sturminster Newton.

As usual the race was very well supported by a large group of marshals, drinks providers, recorders and referees from the

road running fraternity especially Gillingham Trotters, a2e Medical Services, and Sturminster Newton Rotary Club, Air Cadets, Shaftesbury Scouts and most importantly the Blackmore Vale Lions ladies who provided all the food and drink both before and after the event. The Blackmore Vale Lions thank and appreciate all the organisations that helped make the event the huge success that it is.

See everyone again on Sunday, 2nd February, 2020.