

Gasp! 113 start, 112 finish Arts Festival race

By DENNIS GILDEA

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STATE COLLEGE — There exist some people in this Happy Valley who can remember the not-too-distant past when the only guy who ran over the rills and hills of the area was John Lucas.

And we all thought he was at least a little bit crazy. Now comes a muggy Sunday morning in July and Lucas, the former Lone Ranger of Local Running, is out beating the asphalt in the company of 112 other runners in what they were calling the first (but definitely not last) Festival of the Arts 10-mile road race.

A whopping total of 113 people running from Bellefonte to State College! There were good runners and mediocre runners; old runners and young runners; husbands and wives; sons and daughters — they couldn't all be crazy, could they?

"The turnout was amazing," said Harry Groves, Penn State track coach and race director. Groves, along with former PSU coach Lucas and current State College High School coach Jack Horner, started the sponsoring Nittany Valley Track Club about seven years ago, and since that time jogging has become increasingly popular in the area.

"One of the encouraging things about the race was that about 90 to 95 per cent of the runners were from this area," Groves said Sunday after the run.

"This thing has a real future," Groves said. "I think in the next couple years it'll grow to at least 300 runners. We'll have everyone from the highly competitive, skilled runners to people who are out for health reasons."

One of those "skilled" runners was the overall winner of Sunday's race. Greg Fredericks covered the hilly 10 miles in 51:44. He was followed across the finish line near the Corner Room by Charlie Maguire (53:22), Pete Bortolotti (54:20), and former SC High runner Brian Goss (55:13).

"It was not an easy course and it was not an easy day to run," Groves said.

Even for this part of Pennsylvania, the course had more than its share of rude hills. The final two climbs on the Benner Pike before entering State College left more than a few runners gasping for air and wondering why they did it.

However, gasp though they did, 112 of the 113 starters finished the race.

"The course is going to attract more runners because it's so tough," Groves said. "A good time here really means something. It's a real test of fitness."

"Another big attraction is the Arts Festival itself,"

Groves contended. "I had a lot of the out-of-town runners asking me for schedules of the activities. And some of the prizes we offered were art objects done by the exhibitors, which I think are much more meaningful and desirable prizes than the usual medals or trophies. In the future we'll try to offer even more art objects as prizes."

Fredericks and women's open winner Jean Fink of the NVTC carted away the top prizes Sunday.

Rudy Dressendorfer of the NVTC won the sub-master's division (30-39) in 59:11 and finished ninth overall. Groves copped master's honors (40-49), while Earl Baum of the NVTC took veteran's laurels (50-and-over).

Pat Dressendorfer, Rudy's wife, won the women's over-30 division, while John Dixon of SC took the youth (under 15) title.

Fredericks took the lead near the start (a long, uphill haul), and just kept burning all the way home. He was chomping on a slice of watermelon when the rest of the field was still toiling up the roads.

Everyone who finished the run received a T-shirt, or at least they received the promise of a T-shirt. Groves ordered 88 shirts and thought that number would be enough to take care of everyone in the race. Then 113 people showed up out

of the woodwork, or wherever it is they run when they're not on the road from Bellefonte.

"This proves there's a lot of interest in this area," Groves said. "This race has got to grow."

Festival of the Arts 10-miler

Open: 1. Greg Fredericks, SC, 51:44; 2. Charlie Maguire, SC, 53:22; 3. Pete Bortolotti, SC, 54:20; 4. Brian Goss, SC, 55:13; 5. Kim Burke, Indiana U. of Pa., 55:41; 6. Dwight Kier, NVTC, 56:42; 7. Paul Martin, unatt., 57:40; 8. Dave Felice, NVTC, 58:23; 9. Rudy Dressendorfer, NVTC, 59:11; 10. Carl Bechdel, NVTC, 59:31

Sub-masters: 1. Dressendorfer, (9th overall), 59:11; 2. Bernie Greene, NVTC, 62:30; 3. Don Gannon, NVTC, 63:17; 4. Jerry Lynch, NVTC, 64:07; 5. Torry Parsons, NVTC, 64:23

Masters: 1. Harry Groves, NVTC, 62:31 (17th overall); 2. Chuck Schneider, NVTC, 70:49; 3. Frosty Long, NVTC, 74:08; 4. Bob Farwell, NVTC, 75:35; 5. Steve Gerhart, SC, 77:30

Veterans: 1. Earl Baum, NVTC, 73:53 (42nd overall); 2. Dick Smith, LH, 77:15; 3. Hersch Leibowitz, NVTC, 77:49; 4. George Hudson, SC, 86:47; 5. Irv Dulberg, NVTC, 89:46

Women's open: 1. Jean Fink, NVTC, 74:12 (46th overall); 2. Barb Black, SC, 83:19; 3. Martha White, SC, 85:55; 4. Kris Homan, SC, 95:00; 5. Bev Pazur, SC, 96:56

Women's over 30: 1. Pat Dressendorfer, SC, 89:07 (91st overall); 2. Janice Brown, NVTC, 91:13; 3. Oarie Doll, NVTC, 97:29; 4. Julia Knight, SC, 97:47; 5. Noelle Parsons, NVTC, 100:52

Youth under-15: 1. John Dixon, SC, 69:14 (26th overall); 2. Bob Hudson, NVTC, 74:12; 3. Steve Brown, Bellefonte, 75:40; 4. John Coyle 3rd, SC, 79:28
113 started; 112 finished