

Skiers avoid obstacles at Loppet

Posted By Shawn Slaght

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Shawn Slaght/Banff Crag & Canyon. James Bannon, 55, of Banff makes his way down the Bow River on the final leg of the Lake Louise-Banff Loppet Saturday.

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The track was in good shape, but strong winds made things difficult for the Lake Louise-Banff Loppet on Saturday.

"It was very challenging," said Kathy Davies, who skied legs five and six for N & M Team Solda. "There were pine needles, trees branches and lots of obstacles all over the place."

"There was a lot of snow blown into the track, said Davies' teammate Maria Hawkins. "So it made it really, really slow."

The 71.2-kilometre race started out early in the morning at the Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise and ran a total of six legs, along the long 1A highway, ending on the Bow River near Central Park in Banff.

In the individual categories, the overall winner was Darryl Mekechuk with James Bannon in second and Marg Fedyna in third

Fedyna was the winner of the female under-50 with Morwenna Lane in second and Charlene Anthony in third.

Brenda Howe was the winner of the female 50-plus category followed by Chris McDonald in second.

Mekechuk won the men's under-50 category with Eric Trouillot in second and Philip Roadley in third.

In the male 50-plus category, Bannon crossed the finish line in first place along with Eric MacAvity in second and Ken Hill in third. Altogether there were 28 individual racers.

In the team results, the overall winners were the N & M Team Solda consisting of Davies, Hawkins and Bannon. Second place went to the Arctic Foxes Team of Cathy Harris, Jackie Wilson, Jean-Pierre Bohard and Nancy Pollard. The third place finishers were the TNT team of Peter Neumann, Bob Truman and Cheryl Tryon.

In the male team category, Team Lane, consisting of Bryan Lane, Gavin Lane and Mark Shaw, were the winners. Second prize went to the Bow View Boys team of John McIsaac and Jim Hendry. The team of Jesse Clark, Guillaume Nolet and Andrew Couch came in third.

Winning the mixed team race was the Arctic Foxes followed by the Mix It Up team of Liz Demers, Marie Grenon, Davine Martinson, Heidi Nelsen and Holly Nusse. The third place team was the Fluirrels team of Peter Kinsberg, Karen Kinsberg, Tony Dopf and Mira Kunes.

The N & M Team Solda won the mixed 40-plus team category with the TNT team in second place. Third went to the Golden Explorers team of Joan Dolinsky, Jeff Dolinsky and Bruce Fairley.

In the women's team category, the Tri Girls team of Jessica Stichelbout, Susan Calder and Sarah Fabbri were the winners. The Harper/Forrest team of Sabrina Harper and Tannis Forrest took second place. Third place went to the Banff Thunder team of Karen Arif, Elizabeth Arif, Tanis Hampshire, Jane McDonald, Suzanne Gilles-Smith and Joanne Haalcik.

The Feragen Times Two team of Shirley and Kayla Feragen took home the top prize in the family team category. Second place went to the Two Much Fun team of Michelle MacDonell and Don Haven. The Mixed Lanes team of Morwenna Lane and Sibylla Lane came in third.

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