

Marietta's Garcia sweeps both 5K and 10K races

By ROBYN DISNEY
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When Donna Garcia crossed the finish line as the top female in the 29th annual Macon Labor Day 5K Road Race on Monday, she didn't have time to celebrate or relax.

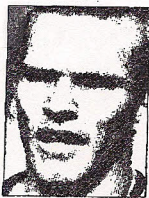
Garcia, a 37-year-old resident of Marietta, had another race to run.

She jumped in the car with her husband and coach and took off to the starting point of the 10K race.

Not only did she make it to the starting point in time but she had enough energy left to also win the 10K race.

"We got here (Sunday) and it was strategic planning," Garcia said. "We bought a map of Macon and we pretty much mapped it out. The race director, too,

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Green



Garcia

Topping the charts

Winners from Monday's Labor Day Road Race in Macon:

10K winners

Overall men: Michael Green, Atlanta, 29:58

Overall women: Donna Garcia, Marietta, 37:24

Masters men: John Tuttle, Villa Rica, 33:22

Masters women: Suni Heaton, Macon, 43:17

5K winners

Overall men: Jay Stephenson, Marietta, 14:19

Overall women: Donna Garcia, Marietta, 16:56

Masters men: John Tuttle, Villa Rica, 15:09

Masters women: Paula May, Peachtree City, 20:45

For more results, see 6C

ROAD

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told us which way to go. But it was questionable on whether we would make it. I thought there was a chance that I may be starting the 10K late. But, to me, that was the challenge of running both events was whether you could logistically get to the start. Fortunately, all of us who doubled, it worked out and I think every person who chose to double ended up making back up to the start on time."

In order to get to the 10K start on time, Garcia knew she would have to run a fast 5K time. She did, finishing in 16 minutes, 58 seconds, which was almost a minute ahead of runner-up Stephanie Herbst-Lucke. Lucky for Garcia, the 5K course is fast with only one hill just past the first mile.

"Other than the hills, once you make it over the tops of those hills, it's just smooth sailing downhill to flat most of the way," Garcia said. "They promised fast courses and they

delivered."

Garcia then got to the 10K starting point on Forsyth Road, less than a mile east of Wesleyan College. She faced some stiff competition from rested women but still beat runner-up, Jessica Kepper, by 1:12.10. Garcia's

winning time was 37:23.47.

"The best thing about this is that it gets you mentally tough for any other race that may be in the future," Garcia said. "You run one and then you have to regroup and realize you have to run another one and oh, by the

way, the second one is longer than the first one I just ran."

John Tuttle of Villa Rica also was a double winner, taking the 5 and 10K men's Masters races.

This year, 13,092 people participated in the 5K, 10K and 1-mile fun walk, and all of the

overall winners were participating in this race for the first time.

"Everything went as smooth as silk," race director Steve Cockery said. "Our numbers are a little down from last year. But I'm still pleased because we saw some fast times."

One of those came from 5K male winner, Jay Stephenson. He tied the course record with a time of 14:19, which was set by Marty Flynn in 1989.

"Sammy (Nyamongo) came out hard and that was good for me," Stephenson said. Nyamongo was third in the 5K (14:41) and third in the 10K (32:01.77). "He shared a lot of the pacing the two miles. There was a pack of four runners ahead of me, including Sammy. As we crested the hill, I pretty much maintained the same pace (4:37) while the others were slowing down just a tad. So I threw in a little bit of a surge then. For me, I felt like it was time for me to make a move because I didn't want it to come down to the last little bit."

For 10K winner Michael Green, the competition wasn't

there as he won with a time of 29:57.42, which was about 1:15 ahead of Thomas Kutter.

"I was a little disappointed there weren't some quicker runners in the 10," said Green, who is originally from Great Britain who now getting his Ph.D. at Georgia State. "I was hoping some out-of-towners would come in and push me. But it didn't happen. It was a long way to go all alone."

While the other runners admired Garcia's double-win, it wasn't something Green wanted to try.

"I lot of people asked me why don't I double because it would be good for me financially," Green said. "I wanted to run a race that made sense athletically because I do have a marathon in two weeks. So I always knew I was going to do a 10K. I missed the course record by 11 seconds (set by Kevin Moats in 1982), so I want to come back and get the record."

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