

2008

Tinkey conquers challenging course

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Grace Tinkey, a 13-year-old eighth-grader at FPD, thought there was one female ahead of her in the 32nd annual Macon Labor Day Road Race on Monday.

Her main goal wasn't to win; it was to finish in less than 19 minutes for the first time in a 5K. Running with two of her male teammates, she felt strong at the beginning and was confident she would

achieve her goal.

And thinking she was in second place among the women was the only mistake

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winner of the day.

"It's a great feeling," Tinkey said. "There are so many good runners in this area that it's an honor to win. I was so happy breaking 19 for the first time

Tinkey made on the day as she captured the women's title in the 5K, becoming the youngest

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For complete results of Monday's 32 annual Macon Labor Day Road Race, go to macon.com.

(18:32), and the weather was just perfect. This is a very fast course, also, and my friends in the race gave me a great pace to run. They left me after a while, but I was able to keep that same pace for most of the race."

More than 1,700 runners took part in the race, an increase of almost 200 runners from last year and a 17 percent increase from the year before.

Allen Black, a previous winner in both the 5K and 10K race, finished first in the 5K Monday. After nearly a year away from competitive racing, he was happy with his effort.

"It felt really good to compete again."

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RACE

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he said. "I was probably in about 20th place after the first mile, but I felt great, and I started picking them off one by one. It was a great day for running."

Savannah native and former Mercer cross country runner Lauren Grant won the women's 10K for the third straight year.

"This is such a great race, I had to come back to try and win it again," she said. "The course is very challenging. It's a lot more hilly than the Savannah races I run. I knew I had taken the lead early. I didn't run my best race, but it still feels really good to win."

Mount de Sales cross country coach Jeff Dobias captured the men's 10K race, just beating out Peyton Hoyal. Dobias won the race for the first time after finishing third last year and second two years ago.

"We have run against each other several times, and he passed me late the last time we ran," Dobias said of Hoyal. "He is a very good finisher, and that was definitely on my mind late in the race."

"I tend to run better in the cool weather, and it was very humid (Monday), so I was hoping that I could hold on. He is very good at this distance, and I was fortunate to stay ahead of him and win."