

## Wet Hope and Rock

Runners hunkered under a large tent as rain fell before the start of the Hope River Run 8K, March 18, at the Hope Church off Beach in Fort Worth. The rain, which began the night before, slacked off and quit during the run, giving participants almost perfect temperatures (in the lower 50s) and an overcast morning.



Although not all who registered showed up, there were 234 finishers.



Runners for the March 19 Rock 'N Relays didn't have such good luck. Race director Lewis George said about a one-mile stretch of the course was under water, and he gave the more than 150 five-person teams (208 had registered) that showed up the option of running. They voted a resounding yes. The 21-mile relay event, which was on a two-loop course, had to be reduced to one loop when another deluge hit. Also, the decision was made after one runner had to be rescued from chest-high water, and another slipped and fell on the wet surface had to be taken for emergency care. George called it the wildest event he has produced since he started more than 10 years ago. Because the race was cut short, winners and times were based on the times of the three legs that were completed.

At the Hope River Run, the runners began on a slightly soggy field, then they turned onto a cement portion of the Trinity Trails. Runners continued over the 4th Street Dam and encountered new gravel surfaces over part of the trail. After looping back to the field for the finish, Duncan Cragg outdistanced everyone with a 25-minute, 58.9-second effort. Cragg and women's winner Lisa Haglund (30:17.31) each won \$100.

Cragg, who moved from South Africa about 11 years ago and ran cross country and steeplechase for SMU, said he felt at ease on the course that resembled a cross-country event. "That (cross country) was my event," Cragg, 32, said. "This is my kind of terrain."

He especially enjoyed the new gravel surfaces. Cragg said too many new trails are entirely cement, which is harder on runners' joints, cartilage, etc.

Cragg said if there were more gravel-type trails such as this, "you'd see more healthy runners."

Cragg said he was using the race as his last hard run before next week's Borden Uptown Run, where he'll compete in the Luke's Texas Cup. (Follow-up: Cragg won the Texas Cup.)

Besides the Rock 'N Relays having problems with the rain, the Fort Worth Runners Club did, too. The rain had stopped before the 7-mile run started on the Trinity Park Trails, but about 10 minutes into the run, the rain came, along with gusty wind. The wind knocked down the timing clock and shut it off. Thus, no results were posted and FWRC president Frank McGinty said it's not certain results will be figured out. The top four men and women were listed in the recent FWRC newsletter. Lori Ward won the women's division with a 53:02, and 13-year-old Craig Lutz was first male with a 43:23.