

Hope River Run

The weather was slightly on the chilly side for the Hope River Run 8K on Saturday (March 17), and that made it perfect for running.



Although guest runner Gilbert Tuhabonye was first across the finish line in 25:59 (gun time), the former Abilene Christian All American and lone survivor of a civil war massacre in his home country of Burundi ceded the victory to runner-up Cain Williams. Tuhabonye, who helped present awards, was designated the Grand Champion.

Cain Williams

Williams, 31, a former TCU runner and now a rep for Mizuno, won in 26:26 and pocketed the \$100 awarded to the first place male and female finishers. Lisa Haglund, 25, a Swede who ran for UT-Arlington, repeated as the women's champ with a 30:50.1 (gun time).



Lisa Haglund

The almost perfect running weather (about 45 degrees and no wind), which contrasted to last year's cooler and wet weather, attracted more than 400 participants for the 8K and 1-Mile Kids' Run. The four-year-old race no doubt will continue to grow if the runners' compliments of the event continue to spread. Almost everyone likes the loop course on the trails, that includes some gravel sections, making it feel like a cross country event especially by starting and finishing in a grassy field. Women's masters winner Fiona Green said it's the best organized race in the area.



Gilbert Tuhabonye

Cain Williams, who graduated from TCU in '97, said he hadn't been competing much in the past months because for one thing, "I have a 15-month-old daughter, so things have changed. My running has just begun to pick up again. I'm just kind of having fun with it and since Mizuno is helping sponsor the run, I said "What the heck, I may as well run while I'm here."

Williams, an Aledo resident, never challenged Gilbert Tuhabonye for the lead, and said his time was "OK, but slower than I was running a couple of years ago. This is the first time I've really run anything hard in the last year or so."

Lisa Haglund, who has lived in the U.S. for six or seven years after moving from Sweden, said her time was "OK" but slower than her winning time of last year when she clocked a 30:17.3.

Tuhabonye had spoke about his experiences in his country's civil war the night before the run. He had been attending school with a mob of Hurtas attacked. He survived despite being set aflame and sustaining burns over most of his body. He not only recovered but became one of his country's top runners and starred at ACC in Abilene.