



Andrew Cook and Megan Newsom

Flower Mound coach zips to 10K victory at Zetnick Arlington Winter Run;

Wrong turn costs three runners, including Melissa Cook



When Andrew Cook lined up at the start of the 10K, it was fairly assumed he would be the winner of the Don Zetnick Arlington Winter Run on a breezy, cool Saturday (Dec. 1) morning unless he took a wrong turn. He didn't, which is something the Nos. 2, 3 and 4

runners couldn't say. One of those three runners who failed to make a turn after the fifth mile was Andrew's wife, Melissa, which probably cost her winning the women's division.

Andrew was several minutes in front of the three, so they didn't see when the lead motorcycle policeman and Andrew made the turn they missed. Andrew Bitmansour of Dallas, who was in second, said ``we just kept going. Right at the 5 turn, we saw the water stop, but after that there were no volunteers or arrows on the road. I kept looking for arrows, but nothing. We kept going straight and then I just got the strangest feeling that I'm going way off. But I looked back and the guy kept following me, so I said `OK.' But finally, I looked at my time and said `no, this is not right.'"

He figures he, Garrett Ewing and Melissa finished about six minutes behind what they would have. Was there an arrow? Don't know, but everyone behind them made it to the finish OK.

But this didn't detract from Andrew's victory as the former Texas A&M runner breezed in at 31:42 to win going away. Meagan Newsom won the women's title with a 39:26 clocking.

Andrew, the Flower Mound track and cross country coach has some impressive credentials, including winning the San Francisco Marathon the past two years and qualifying for the Olympic Trials. He bypassed the Trials in New York, though, because his Flower Mound team was competing in regionals.

``It was an unfortunate situation," he said of his missed opportunity. ``But it's not something I'm depressed about. I would have like to have gone. I will try it again, but if the same thing happens, I won't go. You spend every day with those kids, wake up every day with those kids. They depend on you and I care about those kids, and there was no way I was going to let them go to regionals just by themselves in one of the biggest meets of the year."

Andrew said he'll start concentrating more on shorter distances for a while. ``You know, after college it seems all I was doing was marathons. Now, I want to concentrate on some 10Ks this spring. I'm going to do the half marathon championships in January (in Houston). My wife and I are going to do that. I don't know if I'll be ready, but I really want to be ready in February for the U.S. Cross Country Championships (in San Diego)."

Melissa has qualified for the Trials in the 1,500, 5,000 and 10,000 meters in track and her 10K time has qualified her for the marathon trials, too. However, she probably will concentrate on running the 10K, an event she figures she has a better chance.

Meagan said the windy, humid morning made for a tough 10K. ``And the first three miles are downhill and the last two miles are uphill and into the wind, and I didn't have anything left. It wasn't my PR, but it wasn't my worst. It was better than when I ran here four years ago. It's a great race, but just not ideal weather."

She said she's planning to run the Weslstone's White Rock Half Marathon on Dec. 9, and then compete in the Chevron Houston Marathon on Jan. 13. Meagan was the 46th among 8,051 females in the Marine Corps Marathon on Oct. 28 with a 3:15:50 gun time and 3:15:46 chip time.

The 10K start was delayed about 30 minutes, and many runners said they were tight the first mile because of the wait but said it wasn't that big a deal.

In the 2-mile run, Will Brewer, a 17-year-old student at Lamar High School won the male division with his PR of 10:20. He said he was trailing a couple of other runners until the last 200 yards.

In the female division, 11-year-old Sydney Brown, one of the many members of the Lake Cities Cross Country running club of Lewisville, won with a zippy 12:20.



Will Brewer and Sydney Brown