

Cameron Stephens wins 36th annual Rose City 5K Walk

By David Almeda

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THOMASVILLE — After rain dampened last year's edition, the sun was out and shining for the 36th annual Rose City 5K Walk on Saturday.

With a time of 30:45, Thomasville's Cameron Stephens took home his fourth title after surpassing second place winner Dominique Reddick of Barwick towards the end of the race's first leg.

Pam White of Tallahassee won her second female title with a time of 33:45, 14 years after winning her first in 2003. She finished five seconds ahead of last year's female winner, Sheila Roberts of Cairo.

Stephens made his return to the race after sitting last year out. The title is his first since a three-year stretch of wins from 2012-2014.

"It's good to be back in it," Stephens said. "I enjoy the competition. It's a beautiful course with good directors. I couldn't have asked for a better morning."

Stephens finished second to eight-time winner Joel Carter during his last appearance at the race in 2015. Carter did not race this year, but that didn't mean Stephens had no hurdles to overcome.

"I've been nursing a hamstring for the last two months," Stephens said. "I was able to get up early this morning to stretch it out and warm up some right before I got here. I did a little jog right before the race started. It was a little tight but not too bad."

Finishing second in the race with a time of 32:57 was Reddick, who was busy amping himself up with some dancing right before the race began. He got off to a very fast start, jumping far ahead of the rest of the pack to start the race before Stephens caught up to him. Despite missing out on first place, he was very excited to get into the top five for the first time in three tries.

"I've been working out more often — Bike riding, more fast walking," Reddick said. "Getting second place, it was great this year."

Finishing behind Stephens and Reddick for the fastest time among male Thomas County residents were Todd Bennett (33:13), Robert Gaston (34:14) and Wesley Hutto (35:36). Jennifer Reynolds topped list of the fastest Thomas County women with a time of 34:40. Following her was Emmy Tancsics (34:48), Pam Howell (35:21), Kellie Odom (35:39) and Britney Moore (36:26).

The John Ellsworth Stephens award for oldest participants went to 83-year-old Ed Titus and 80-year-old Helen Huddleston, both of Thomasville.

Recipients of Archbold Wellness Trophies for best participation were announced before the race, with Thomas County Federal winning the overall award. Four others were awarded according to number of employees: Thomasville YMCA (25-99), Senior Life (200-349), City of Thomasville (350-499) and Archbold Memorial Hospital (500 and over).

The Thomas County School award went to Hand in Hand. Rotary Club of Thomasville won the most improved award, and the race director's award went to Thomasville National Bank.

Thomasville Kiwanis Club won the William H. Raney Civic Club award.

The races will continue Saturday, with the Rose City 10K and one-mile runs set to take place at 8:00 a.m and 9:30 a.m., respectively. Late registration is still open to potential participants.