

SPORTS

SECTION

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THURSDAY

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THE WINNSQUAM ECHO
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Belmont annual racing tradition returns Aug. 10

BY BOB MARTIN

BELMONT - For 51 years, runners from the Lakes Region and beyond have been participating in the Belmont 10-Mile Race, which will once again take place on its original course design on the morning of Belmont Old Home Day on Aug. 10.

The numbers for the race vary year to year, but last year there were about 50 runners. However, the rainy weather may have led to some runners taking the year off. Belmont Special Events Coordinator Gretta Olson-Wilder explained that runners tend to come back year after year to be challenged by the landscape of the race, which combines winding back roads, flat stretches and several hills.

Notably the Bean Hill area is where some runners in the past have called "Heartbreak Hill," and can be difficult for the average runner.

"The biggest thing, I think, about our race is that there are so many 5K races popping up everywhere," said Olson-Wilder. "But the thing is that 5Ks tend to be flat and not very challenging and gratifying. If you want to challenge yourself a 10-mile road race, going



Aaron Hayward ran the course of the Belmont 10-Mile Race, finishing fifth last year. This year's race is on Aug. 10.

through back roads and some hills, that is a challenge."

Olson-Wilder said normally there are 100 runners or less, noting that there are some other rac-

es then tend to fall in the same weekend. She said this amount of runners tends to work best.

"A lot of people have this race on their bucket list," Olson-Wilder. "One

lady did the 5K we do in March, the Lepechaun Leap, three years in a row. Then she decided to do the 10-mile race last year and she got her

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Matt Sawyer of Eliot, Maine won last year's Belmont 10-Mile Race.

RACE

CONFIDENCE UP AND WILL BE BACK THIS YEAR AGAIN. We have some people who come from out of state just for the challenge.

Runners have already begun registering for this year's race and she said there are many who come from the local area, but also some coming from places like Connecticut, Maine and beyond. The race will be timed by Yankee Timing of Nashua.

The race was started more than five decades ago by Sue Roberts, Bob St. Lawrence and Ken Kilts. It is known as the

oldest race in the state that is run on its original course, and among the oldest in the country in this regard.

The race begins at 8:30 a.m. with registrations taking place in the parking lot of Belmont Middle School on School Street beginning at 7:15 a.m. A registration form and additional information about the race and other Belmont Old Home Day events can be found at <http://www.belmontnh.org/belmontoldhomeday.asp>.

Forms are also available at Belmont Town hall. For additional information contact Olson-Wilder at 998-3525.