

NICSAC Belfast Marathon Team Relay Competition – 7 May 2012

The May Day bank holiday on 7th May this year failed to deliver the good weather but the persistent rain showers didn't stop runners taking to the streets in their thousands for the Belfast City Marathon. Among them were relay teams competing in the 2nd year of the NICS Athletics Club's Belfast Marathon Team Relay Competition. The aims of this event are to add a bit of friendly competition for all the teams of civil / public servants taking part and to help promote the club to potential members. In total 6 teams took part in the competition with runners from a number of departments and NDPBs taking part. DOJ, DRD, DHSSPS, OFMDFM, DARD, DFP, CPANI and AFBI were all represented. "Damkat's Whiskers" representing DOJ won the all male category with an excellent time of 2hrs 52mins and "Run The Risk" representing DRD were first in the mixed category prize with a very good time of 4hrs 15mins. The all Female category was won by the "NICSAC Female Five" representing OFMDFM with another very good time of 4hrs 10mins.



The DOJ "Damkat's Whiskers" team with the Male team Trophy. L-R (Michael Kelly), Jim Breen (DARD), Mervyn Chambers, John O'Hagan (DHSSPS), Ivo Damkat and Kieran Devlin (NICSSA). Missing from the photo is James Graham.

Prizes for 2012 were presented to the winning teams recently at a ceremony held in the Stormont Estate by Michael Kelly (NICSAC Chairman) and Kieran Devlin (Business Development Manager NICSSA Sport & Leisure).

Mervyn Chambers, captain of the interestingly named DOJ 'Damkat's Whiskers' team, commented; "The NICSAC competition definitely gave us an extra incentive to get a team together and compete in the Belfast Marathon Relay this year. As shown by the number of teams entering overall in the whole event it is great day out and very enjoyable to participate in. Despite the poor weather the public were still out on the roadside and the crowds of other relay runners add a unique atmosphere which helps everyone run just that

little bit harder. As individual times for each leg are not recorded the event really is about the team and getting the last runner across the line. NICSAC have done a great job organising this competition and I hope it will encourage other teams to enter, we have been out training for next year already!"



The DRD "Run the Risk" Team receiving the Mixed Team prizes. L-R Michael Kelly (NICSAC Chairman), Debbie Mingout, Sara Higgins, Linda Drysdale, Alan McKee and Kieran Devlin (NICSSA Sport & Leisure). Missing from the photo is Vicki Mearns.

Debbie Mingout, team captain for the DRD team said "When a bunch of internal auditors signed up to run the marathon for charity you can just imagine the jibes we got...."as long as there is documented evidence that the marathon is exactly as long as you say it is" and "who said that auditors had no heart". But Run the Risk did it and better still raised over £1,000 for the NI Children's Hospice. And, will be doing it again next year to defend our title!"

Gillian Hynes, “NICSAC Female Five” team captain commented. “Our team was both delighted and surprised to come first in the all female team category. No doubt, continued hard work will be needed to secure our place at the top for the marathon next year! As word of this competition is ‘relayed’ throughout the NICS it will surely encourage more team entries and I’m sure they will also have an enjoyable experience on marathon day regardless of the weather.”



The NICSAC Female Five team collecting the Female Team Trophy. L-R Michael Kelly (NICSAC Chairman), Mags Mathieson, Janice McCartney, Gillian Hynes, Helen Ryan, Jackie Robinson and Kieran Devlin (NICSSA Sport & Leisure).

We are sure that there were many more teams made up of civil/public servants taking part in the marathon who would be eligible to compete in our competition and we are keen to attract more teams. The competition will return next year on 6th May 2013 so look out for entry details appearing on the NICSSA website and www.nics-ac.com and if you have a team taking part in next year’s Belfast City Marathon why not enter the NISCAC competition as well.