

MINNESOTA MASTERS 15K TAC CHAMPIONSHIP
September 23, River Roads, Minneapolis & St. Paul

After six years in the suburbs, the Eleventh Annual Minnesota Masters 15K returned to the river roads of Minneapolis and St. Paul, taking runners up one side and down the other as it did in its formative years. The great course and near-perfect weather (40o with winds of 10-12 mph) no doubt contributed to the great times. Two U.S. age-group records and three single-age records were set in the race, which served as the National Masters Championship of The Athletics Congress. Mary Storey, 66, Riverside, Calif., took 1:50 off Pat Dixon's three-year old mark of 1:17:07 for Women 65-69 and Ellen McCoy, 70, St. Paul, Minn., ran a 1:22:55, a full five minutes under the four-year old record of Judy Simon for Women 70-74. The new single-age records were run by Norm Green, 58, Wayne, Penn., 52:33; Gaylon Jorgensen, 61, Henderson, Nev., 54:49; and Ed Benham, 83, Ocean City, Md., 1:12:43. Green carved nearly a minute off Alex Ratelle's eight-year old record, Jorgensen was 19 seconds under his own mark run earlier this year, and Benham knocked more than 25 minutes off the record on the books.

Overall winner was Mark Gibbens, of Madison, Wis., who took Grant Towns and Dan Conway out with him but left them far behind after the first 5K and finished with the first sub-50:00 in this all-masters race since 1985. No woman was able to crack the one-hour barrier this year, for only the second time since 1982. Generally there was little competition within the age groups, every runner taking aim at his or her own goal. For the age-group record batterers, this led to financial reward as well as personal satisfaction. A prize-money purse of about \$1,500 was split up on an age-graded basis, runners' times being handicapped with the U.S. record for their age/sex group. The purse was donated by eight-year sponsor Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and this year's special sponsor, ICI Americas Inc.

Besides such record-setting runners, the Masters 15K gives prizes in "Novice" divisions to runners who have never won their age group in any race, ever. Congratulations to Keith Tvedten, Jim Ogg, John Bond, Lee Johnston, Kitty McClelland, Catherine Agee, and Kathy Buehler, who have now broken this habit. Novices are identified by an "N" after their age-group place in the lists below.

Runners seemed to enjoy the new T-shirt design as much as the weather and the course. The subtlety of the design may have escaped some of them; it's supposed to depict two runners going over the hill into the sunset.