

Worcester Telegram & Gazette
Saturday, April 29, 2017

Runners, beer lovers join forces in Worcester for Craft Brew Race

Saturday

Posted Apr 29, 2017 at 5:27 PM Updated Apr 29, 2017 at 6:14 PM



Stories from Headlines Network

By [Cyrus Moulton](#)
Telegram & Gazette Staff

WORCESTER — As runners crossed the finish line, they happily rehydrated not with a refreshing cup of water, but rather with a cold, crisp pint of beer.

Wait, what?

“It’s all about replacing the carbs,” said Steven McKeown, 58, of Leicester. “You burn off the carbs, you have to replace them.”

Roughly 1,500 runners, walkers and beer aficionados gathered Saturday on the Worcester Common Oval for the Craft Brew Race, Worcester — a timed 5K race, walk and craft beer festival.

This is the third year that the event has been held in Worcester, and it attracted athletes and more than 40 breweries from across the region. The event also included food trucks, lawn games, and live music.

Preservation Worcester, the designated nonprofit for the event, provided volunteers and received \$3 per runner, according to Deborah Packard, executive director of Preservation Worcester.

Matt Gray, president of event organizer Gray Matter Marketing, said the Craft Brew Races — of which there are several run a year throughout New England, including Stowe, Vermont, Portland, Maine, Newport, Rhode Island, and New Haven, Connecticut — expand both the running and the craft beer-drinking demographics.

“We have dedicated runners and then others for whom this might be their first race or the only race they run in because of the carrot dangling at the end, which is the beer festival,” Mr. Gray said. “It is also an opportunity to introduce people to new breweries...it puts together passions we know our team has and runners have.”

Stephanie Brownell, sales manager of Worcester’s Flying Dreams Brewing Co., LLC, on Park Avenue, said the event, like other other beer festivals, was “crucial” to marketing their suds.

“There are so many people in this event that are from the city or just outside the city that don’t know about us and don’t even know we’re in the city,” Ms. Brownell said. “It’s crucial to getting the word out.”

The athletes seemed to appreciate it, too.

“The beer is a very good added touch,” said Craig Mitchell, 26, the race winner and a Worcester resident. “It’s good to hydrate.”

Bob Jackman agreed.

“In general, runners and beer just kind of go together,” said Mr. Jackman, who ran in the race and then manned the booth of Foolproof Brewing Company, of Pawtucket, Rhode Island. “This is the perfect event for that.”