



October 10, 2010

The fifth annual Wayland XC Festival, presented by Baldwin Insurance Agency, was held on Sunday, October 10 at the Wayland High School. It was a perfect day for running, with blue skies and temperatures in the low 60s.

With the new high school construction well underway, the course had to be re-routed this year. This presented challenges for race director Eric Bucher. Bucher said that he wanted to maintain the unique character of the course. "The land around here is perfect for cross-country running. With open fields, wooded trails, challenging hills and even some sand we have a great collection of elements to utilize for the course," said Bucher. "We came up with exciting courses for the runners."

The event included three events, two youth three kilometer (1.86 miles) races and an open five kilometer (3.11 miles) race.

The youth races were well attended, with over 160 young runners competing. Bucher, who also coaches a youth running club, the Nitehawks, was pleased with the turnout. "I have a passion for this sport and I love to share it with these kids. To see so many young athletes participating in our cross-country race makes me very happy," he said.

In the five kilometer race, Jennifer Barron of Wayland represented her home town well. Completing the course in 18:57, she was the third woman finisher overall and first in her age class. After finishing the race, Barron commented, "That was really fun." Other top Wayland finishers included Maggie Hojlo and Kiersten Lippmann, finishing first in their age classes. Hannah Brigham and Michael Malecki, also of Wayland, finished second and third, respectively, in their age classes.

Bucher was also appreciative of the sponsors that supported the event. "I am very pleased with the support of our local businesses," he said. Dave D'Orlando, principal at presenting sponsor Baldwin Insurance Agency, was on hand to help out. Bucher went on to say, "Without the support of Baldwin Insurance Agency and our gold sponsors Wayland Kitchens, Russell's Garden Center and Middlesex Savings Bank this event would not be possible." Bob Baker, the owner of Wayland Kitchens, was also at the event to assist, helping with setup and working at the registration table.

One of the sponsors, Alexis Avila, owner of Prepped and Polished, also ran in the 5k race. After the race Avila said, "I am happy to support the Wayland XC race and I always love running it." Silver sponsors of the event included Mahoney's and The Village Bank. Quentin Nowland of bronze sponsor Lynch Landscape and Tree Service said they were "glad we could help sponsor such a great event."

Proceeds from the event benefit the Wayland High School cross-country team. The team was on hand to work at the event as volunteers to help things to run smoothly. Wayland High cross-country coach Suzanne Williams said, "This is a great way for the athletes on our team to give back to the sport and to the community." Phoebe Morss, a freshman on the cross-country team and last year's record-breaking winner of the youth race, was happy to be there to help out. Morss said, "It is exciting to see all of these runners out on our course."