

Keira D'Amato Shatters American Record At Up Dawg Ten Miler

Bold running from the start set the tone for a very impressive 51:23 American Record in a women's-only road race.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 24, 2020, Washington, DC: What a difference a day makes. If the Up Dawg Ten Miler had been run yesterday morning, as originally planned, **Keira D'Amato** would have faced steady NW winds of 23 mph, with gusts up to 37 mph on the multi-loop course in DC's Anacostia Park. Today dawned clear and calm, though cold—28 degrees with light NW winds of 6 mph—and D'Amato took full advantage of the opportunity being given to her. Her 51:23 American Record time for a women's-only race took 49 seconds off the existing record of 52:12, set by **Janet Bawcom** at the 2014 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile.

At the start, D'Amato immediately moved to the front of the group of five women gathered for this record attempt, with only 2021 Olympic Marathon qualifier **Molly Seidel** taking up the chase. **Emily Durgin, Susanna Sullivan,** and **Bethany Sachtleben** fell behind early, but ran together through five miles.

D'Amato went through the first mile split just under record pace in 5:11 (record pace would be 5:13 per mile), and had already established a significant gap on Seidel. At two miles D'Amato was already 11 seconds ahead of record pace (10:15), and continued to pull away from a virtual, but there-in-spirit, Janet Bawcom. By three miles D'Amato was up by 16 seconds (15:24), and she continued to pad her lead from there on. (Splits were taken from the livestream, and are unofficial.)

"I ran the first mile conservatively, then locked into a pace that was comfortable. I didn't want to run from behind," said D'Amato. "I felt confident, and at five miles I knew I was under pace."

By five miles, D'Amato had shed her headband and arm sleeves, and went on to run the second five miles some 11 seconds faster than the first five miles (25:36 vs 25:47). Her pace overall turned out to be 5:09 per mile.

Passing her children and other family members numerous times out on the course, D'Amato clearly seemed buoyed by their cheering—she even waved as she ran by them between eight and nine miles—and she was overcome with emotion when she broke the finish tape, which was held by her husband and mother.

"It was wonderful to have my family and two children here," D'Amato said. "They see me training every day, and now they see why. That means a lot to me."

D'Amato added: "It wasn't until I finished that it hit me. I'm so excited this happened. I knew I was in shape. It's magical."

Molly Seidel finished second in the race, in a time of 53:36; Emily Durgin followed her in 54:03; Susanna Sullivan ran 54:22; while Bethany Sachtleben did not finish. Neither Seidel nor Durgin had raced the 10-mile distance before today, so automatically set personal records; Susanna Sullivan set a new personal

best of 54:22 (vs 54:31 run at the 2014 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, while chasing Janet Bawcom to her American Record).

“I’m so glad we had contingency dates for bad weather built into our planning,” said Race Director Phil Stewart. “At the original start time yesterday morning, the wind was howling. Today’s conditions were ideal for record setting, and Keira was clearly up to the task.”

Pictures from the Up Dawg Ten Miler can be found at this link:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5cf336zggjqc32j/AABloZhZA_u8g0_8waYAKJr3a?dl=0

Additional photos will be uploaded throughout the day. Photo credit should be given to Bob Burgess.

The race was live-streamed on the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run’s Facebook page and on FloTrack.

Please contact Keith Peters at 307-690-6803 or kpeters@cherryblossom.org with any questions or requests for additional information.

Behind the scenes:

Though not specifically required by USATF record keeping rules, D’Amato was drug tested after the race by Clearidium. Drug testing was funded by a special grant from the Professional Road Running Organization (PRRO) and the Credit Union Cherry Blossom (CUCB) organizing committee. The PRRO circuit is a series of four classic American prize money races: the Publix Gasparilla Half Marathon in Tampa, FL, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile in Washington, DC, the Lilac Bloomsday 12K in Spokane, WA, and the Boilermaker 15K in Utica, NY. The PRRO Circuit is committed to drug free sport and was the pioneer in self-funded drug testing which has taken place at all circuit events since 2006.

Besides supporting Keira, who is a member of the CUCB organizing committee, the committee chose to support the Up Dawg Ten Miler by providing organizational and financial support, which is very consistent with its long-standing support of elite distance running in Washington, DC. Over 15 members of the CUCB organizing committee played key roles in organizing the Up Dawg Ten Miler, with Irv Newman, the President of Cherry Blossom, Inc., Event Director Phil Stewart, and Deputy Director Becky Lambros providing invaluable leadership.

Potomac River Running (PRR) also contributed greatly to the success of the Up Dawg Ten Miler, providing timing and scoring services for the event along with half a dozen staff members who worked on the event. PRR is the leading locally-owned and operated specialty running store with eight locations throughout the DC Metropolitan area.

Finally, thanks are due to the National Park Service for providing Anacostia Park as the venue for the race and the United States Park Police for ensuring that all the roads in the park remained traffic-free and safe for today's competitors.

The course was certified by Bob Thurston and Jim Gerweck, two World Athletics A-level certifiers.

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