



Stubb 10k cancelled thanks to worst snow in 30 years

It was supposed to be a momentous day in the history of Stubbington Green Runners & AC as the club celebrated the 25th consecutive year of staging its annual road race. Instead, the worst snowfall in the country for 30 years left Race Director, Gary Littlecott, with no choice but to call off the race for the safety of all concerned. Tina Chantrey asked Gary about the course of events that led up to the cancellation, and how people reacted following the decision.

This year's anniversary race was going to be very special, with a steel band positioned along the final approach. However, unfortunately, the race fell foul of the worst winter weather for 30 years.

"The decision to abandon the race was soul-destroying," explains Gary. The snow arrived on the Tuesday before the race and by the following day, the services that we rely on were being affected. When the safety of the travelling runners and officials was brought into question, I had to stop it."

Centre closes doors

Gary continues: "Crofton Community Centre shut its doors because staff couldn't get into work, and the car park was a safety hazard. The schools that we use as car parks for the race faced the same problems. The course itself was a health and safety nightmare - you can imagine the half-way water station giving out ice cubes instead of water!"

Once the announcement went out that the

race had been cancelled, the initial response that Gary received was far from positive. "I was inundated with a barrage of complaints from a small-minded minority who didn't have any understanding of what it takes to make a 10k happen, or indeed what it takes to make one stop!"

Goodwill to all runners

However, the 10k entry form clearly stated that 'in the unlikely event of the race being cancelled, no monies will be refunded due to the pre-race expenses incurred'. Unfortunately, these costs, including fees to Fareham Borough Council, car parking costs, and paying for mugs and medals which are dated and cannot be reused, can't be recovered.

An emergency committee meeting was held on race day where it was decided to offer a reduced entry fee for the next SGRAC 10k, which is scheduled for 16th January 2011. The concession will apply to all entrants from the 2010 race (please keep a note of your 2010 number as it will help to validate your entry for 2011).

"Hopefully this will help to appease all the runners who have complained," says Gary. Any excess funds accumulated from the 2010 race will be donated to local charities. after all expenses have been paid.

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Snow joke: ice and snow made the 10k course extremely treacherous

The complaints threatened to damage the good reputation of both the running club and the race itself. "We were worried about how we would be perceived by runners who had paid their entry fee and got nothing for their money," says Club Chairman, Chris Hall.

