

Saucony Sponsors Race Series May, 1996 | Bangor



Bangor Daily News:

BANGOR - Saucony has taken over the primary sponsorship of the former Bangor Daily News Charities road racing series, which begins with Saucony's own 5K road race in Bangor on May 5.

The NEWS discontinued its sponsorship of the race series, along with several other events, during a recent reorganization of the paper.

The rest of the Saucony Sub-5 Road Race Series will feature nine races from Saturday, June 22, to Sunday, Nov. 24.

Pete Dauphinee, the assistant manager at the Saucony Spot-Bilt Factory Outlet store in Bangor, will be the director of the May 5 race and was responsible for approaching the company headquarters, Hyde Athletic Industries in Peabody, Mass., about sponsoring the series as well as the race.

"I thought it was strange we didn't sponsor a local race," said Dauphinee, referring to the fact Saucony is the third-leading producer of running shoes behind Nike and Asics. "I knew the NEWS was hoping someone would take the series over. So I called the headquarters in Massachusetts and they asked me how much I needed." The magic number was \$1,770, of which \$570 will be paid out in cash to the top finishers in the May 5 race. The other \$1,200 is for the series.

Dauphinee said his company is holding the Saucony race on May 5 because there is a shortage of early spring races.

The Terry Fox Run used to be held the first week in May, but after it was shelved for a year in 1993, it came back as a fall race in 1994. The Epstein's Five Aces 5K was held on the first weekend in April when it began in 1985, but, according to

former race director Tom Manship, it was snowed out one year, so it was moved to Mother's Day.

However, the Epstein's race ended three years ago "because the Levi Strauss Co. wanted to redirect its advertising and budget to do other things," said Manship.

Brewer High School track coach Dave Jeffrey, the director of the Turkey Trot race in Brewer, said there are a couple of reasons for a limited number of early spring races.

"It's tougher to train in the winter. So most {serious} runners don't round into shape until July and August. They aren't in peak condition until late in the year," said Jeffrey. "Another part of it is a lot of the people involved in directing road races are involved in spring high school track programs. It's really hard for a coach to put on a race in the spring."

But road racing in Maine is experiencing a "mini-boom," according to Lance Tapley, the publisher of Maine Running and Fitness magazine.

"The number of road races in Maine has gone up the past few years," said Tapley. "A race or two disappearing in the spring has probably been made up for by another race in the fall."

In addition to an increase in the number of road races, Tapley said he has been seeing an increase in the number of baby boomers getting involved in running.

"That whole generation is getting older and they are more conscious of their health," said Tapley. "Age tends to do that."

They're trying to get fit." However, he said you don't find many road racers in their teens or 20s.

"A lot of teenagers are involved in cross country and are oriented toward that," said Tapley. "And the ones in their 20s who are right out of college are trying to get settled in life and do other things athletically."