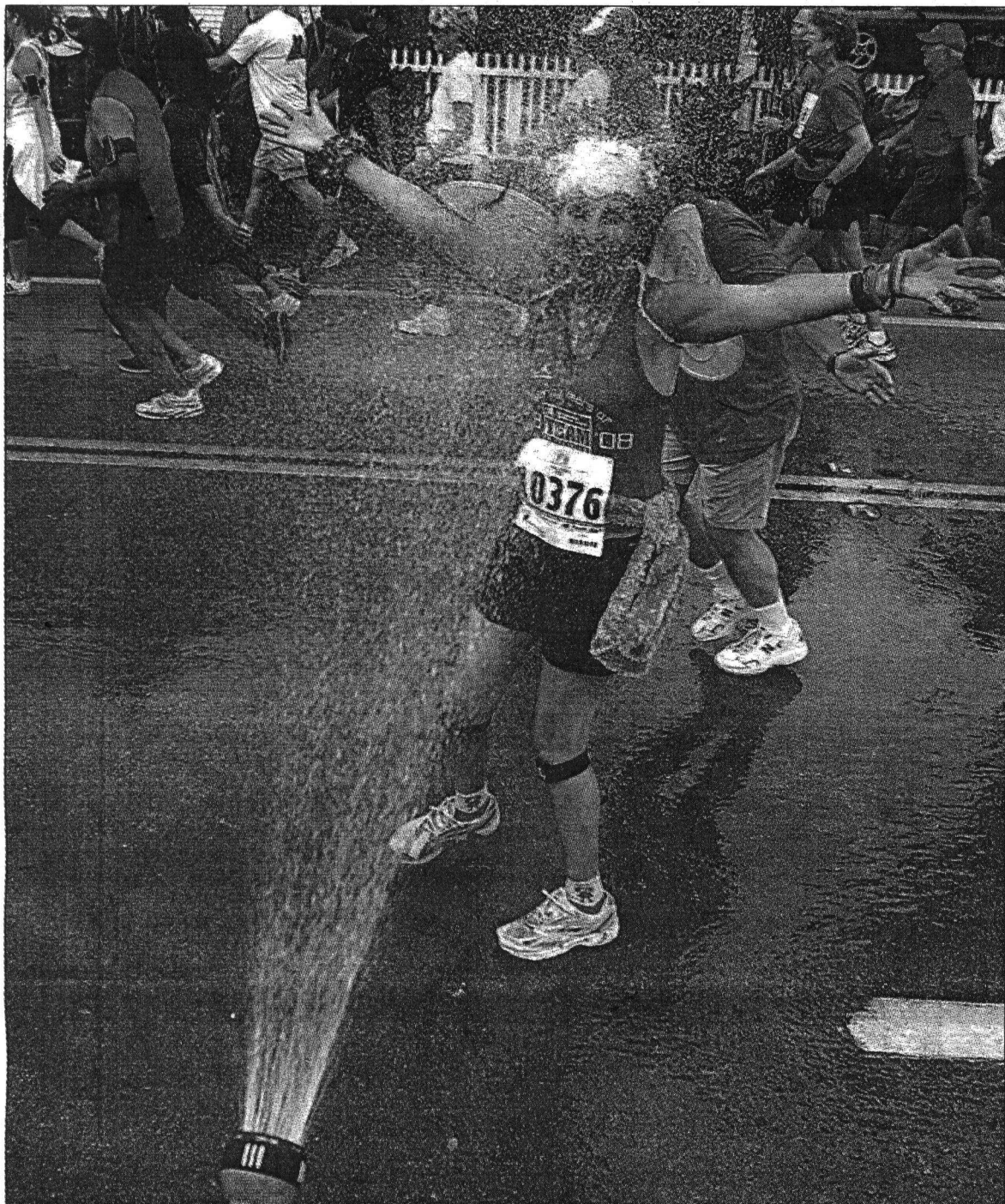


WHARF TO WHARF

FANCY FOOTWORK



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

A Wharf to Wharf runner cools off courtesy of a hose held by Peter Guilhumet along East Cliff Drive during Sunday's Wharf to Wharf.

Mother Nature cooperates as thousands enjoy cool temps while running from Santa Cruz to Capitola

Wharf to Wharf

By RAMONA TURNER

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CAPITOLA — The weather on the coast Sunday morning was foggy, drizzly and cold — in other words just perfect for the 37th annual six-mile Wharf to Wharf footrace.

"It's a good thing because there's less sweat evaporation," said Rayette Andrews, the Dominican Hospital nurse who coordinated the volunteer medics. "The runners are self-hydrat-

ing."

More than 15,000 people walked, ran or did a combination of the two during the race, a summer tradition for many runners and a major fundraiser for school sports programs countywide.

This year's race was won by Kenyan Simon Cheprot, 19. The women's winner, also 19, was Meseret Mengsitsu of Ethiopia. Each collected \$3,000. Second- and third-place finishers collected \$2,000 and \$1,000 respectively. The top local finishers were

Jacob Evans of Aptos and Mikayla Murphy of Santa Cruz.

No major problems were reported, Andrews said, though medics did care for several runners who needed minor attention. One racer collapsed from exhaustion after crossing the finish line, while another was injured after running into a fire hydrant, she said. Most of the help offered runners came in the form of Band-Aids, ibuprofen and ice packs.

SEE RACE ON A2



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

Michelle Segovia of Scotts Valley gallops down East Cliff Drive as she takes part in the Wharf to Wharf race on Sunday.

RACE

Continued from A1

At Pizza My Heart, near the finish line in Capitola, many race finishers were self-soothing with hot slices of pie, a strange sight at 10 a.m.

"Runners ... have been up for so long (today) it feels like it's later," said Tim Silva, a co-owner of the pizza-to-go spot for about 10 years. "(The race) does really well for us."

Pepperoni slices, as well as those with plain cheese, were the best-sellers, he added.

The Wharf to Wharf, which starts near the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf and snakes along the coast to Capitola Wharf, is dubbed the "Best Little Roadrace in California." Thousands of spectators lined the route Sunday, with bands set up at many intersections and in drive-ways. The race draws runners from all over the world and this year's event sold out in about eight weeks, according to race officials. While

TOP RUNNERS

MEN

1. Simon Cheprot, Kenya, 27:06.

WOMEN

1. Meseret Mengistu, Ethiopia, 30:45

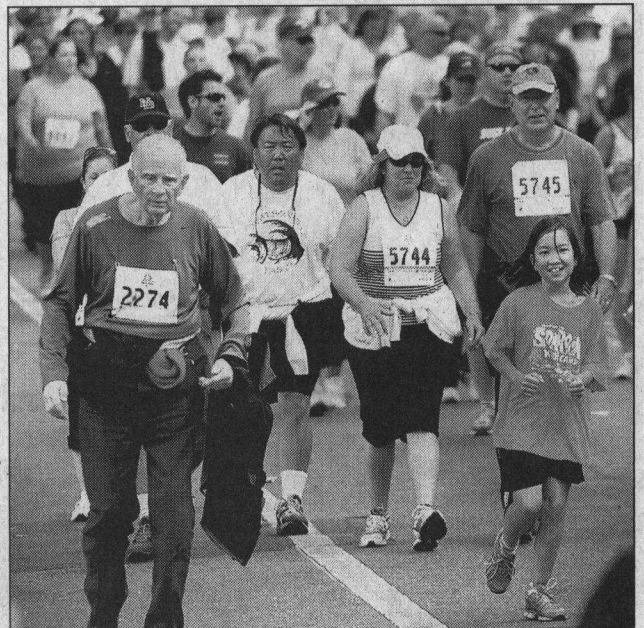
TOP COUNTY RUNNERS

- Men: Jacob Evans, Aptos, 30:27
 Women: Mikayla Murphy, Santa Cruz, 35:40

15,000 runners had numbers, at least a few thousand more ran the race unofficially as "bandits," according to race officials.

Rose Cawaling of Watsonville said each year she dutifully logs onto www.wharftowharf.com to sign up her husband for the event that gives an estimated \$1 million economic boost to Santa Cruz County each year.

Cawaling said her 49-year-old husband, George, started doing the race years ago after his sister, an avid runner, couldn't do the race one year



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

Young and old participate in the Wharf to Wharf on Sunday.

so she gave her brother her number so he could run in her place.

Now, he's entering races all over the place, including the Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon in San Jose coming up in October, Rose Cawaling said.

After the race, the Cawalings planned to walk to the car, stop at a nearby produce stand for some fresh fruit and go home to enjoy some family time, Rose Cawaling said.

Registration for next year's race opens April 1.