

MINNESOTA MASTERS 15K TAC CHAMPIONSHIP
September 20, Braemar, Edina

It was the closest finish in this race since 1981 (when Dan Conway nosed out Paul Noreen by 5 seconds). John Emmons was expecting Jim Pelarske to do his "usual kamikaze thing" and blast off from the start, which would have been helped by the short downhill in the first half mile. Instead Pelarske, who had been beaten by the older Emmons twice in recent months, decided to be a little cautious. Emmons, who was watching Pelarske, suddenly realized everyone was watching him. They "crept along" at 5:30 pace through the first half mile, according to Pelarske, when Barney Klecker, just getting back into racing form, decided he'd had enough. Klecker took off, with Emmons, Pelarske, and Doug Suker in pursuit. They caught him by the 1.5 mile turnaround, and Emmons and Suker took the lead, with Pelarske following. They went through 5K in 16:38. "I felt sluggish until about the four-mile mark," he said. "Then I started to feel better, and took off." After the seven-mile mark, Pelarske started throwing in some surges. Suker dropped back, but Emmons managed to catch him at the top of the little hill at 7.5. Pelarske hammered down the other side, and Emmons picked up a sideache. "I wanted to stop and see if I could get rid of it," he said, "but I could hear Suker right behind me." Pelarske maintained the lead he picked up on the downhill to the finish.

Although no one could break 50:00 it's only been done six times in the thirteen-year history of the race and this was the first time three men have gotten under 51:00.

Gloria Jansen was aiming for 63:. For a while she ran with Carol Klitzke, who had beaten her at the 25K the week before, but decided the pace was too slow and picked it up, going through 5K in 21: on the nose. She trailed Sue Olsen early on, but decided not to worry about it and her steady pace did the trick. The class of the W45 division this year, she attributes her improvement (8 minutes better than last year!) to training with runners faster than she. "I knew I had reached a new level this year," she says, "when I ran a 1:30 PR at Bruegger's, and felt I could have gone even faster."

Four runners set Minnesota single-age records, as indicated by the boxes around their results below. Barbara Andersen broke her own Minnesota age-group record (by 2:21), thus coming out on top of the age-graded list, in which everyone's time was handicapped by the Minnesota record for their age/sex group. Her time was also a U.S. single-age record. Besides such record-setting runners, the Masters 15K also gives awards in "Novice" divisions to runners who have never won their age group in any race, ever. Congratulations to Keith Kowalsky, 40, Harold Hammond, 49, Doug Saari, 50, Gerald Onstad, 56, John Engebretson, 70, Gail Bolger, 35, Mary McMunn, 42, Joyce Pfaff, 49, and Sandra Bauer, 50, who have now broken this habit.

Thanks to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, who have now been sponsoring the race for ten years, and to Q Cumbers, who are in their

second year of sponsorship.