

Richardson runner shines at Komen race

Jekot finishes first for six straight year among runners who have bested breast cancer

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PLANO – For an unprecedented sixth consecutive year, Elizabeth Jekot finished first among breast cancer survivors at Saturday's Susan G. Komen North Texas Race for the Cure.

She ran in memory of her mother, who died of the disease May 7.

In a powerful and predominantly pink show of unity, more than 12,000 friends, families and co-workers – including approximately 800 survivors – converged to run or walk the 5K and 1-mile races.

The event raises awareness and funds to battle breast cancer. It's held annually at the Plano Headquarters of EDS, an HP company, and the Campus at Legacy.

Jekot of Richardson finished in 26 minutes, 27.6 seconds. The second survivor, Robin Ritchey, 42, of Murphy needed 28:43.6. Sally Sayles of Dallas was third in 29:53.

"I'm proud to be part of the pink and to do something for my mom," said Jekot, 46, an 8 ½ -year survivor.

Saturday's race proved both emotionally and physically challenging for Jekot, who has degenerative osteoarthritis in her left hip. Her doctor recommended she rest but permitted Jekot to run Saturday.

"I wanted to run this one for my mom," she said. "I tried to hold back."

Jekot, the medical director of the Elizabeth Jekot Breast Imaging Center, said she has devoted her life to eradicating breast cancer. Her older sister was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 32. Jekot, who was doing her residency in radiology at the time, decided then to specialize in the early detection of breast cancer.

■ **Men's winner ends spring strong:** Chris Strait of McKinney ended his season successfully.

Photos



Ben Torres / Special

Elizabeth Jekot, founder of the Elizabeth Jekot, M.D., Breast Imaging Center, stands during the national anthem before the start of the 2009 Susan G. Komen 5K Race for the Cure.

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BEN TORRES / Special to DMN

The pack of runners takes off from the starting line for the annual Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure in Plano. More than 12,000 participated this year, including about 800 breast cancer survivors.

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Strait, 35, captured the overall men's 5K title in 17:05. He was the first runner with an electronic timing chip to cross the finish line. Logan Sherman, 23, of Richardson finished the flat, fast course faster but without a chip. His time, approximately 16:10, wasn't recorded or counted.

"It makes it a better way to end the season with a victory," said Strait, who ran in memory of his grandmother, who died of breast cancer.

■ **Supporting a friend:** Longtime runner Kim Stark of Rockwall clocked a career best 18:17 to win the women's 5K title. Stark, 34, has focused the last year on improving her time. She also ran to support Michelle Henderson, a friend recently diagnosed with breast cancer.

"When you see someone your age [with cancer] with young children, it hits close to home," Stark said.

■ **Briefly:** Betty Murray has survived the longest since her bout with cancer – 36 years – among the participants. ... Nastia Liukin, the 2008 individual all-around Olympic gymnastics gold medalist, fired the gun to start the races as one of her Honorary Race Chair duties. ... Newly elected Plano Mayor Phil Dyer described the event as "an unbelievable gathering of people for a remarkable cause. Everyone is touched by it." ... Endurance athlete Shanna Armstrong of Lubbock finished fourth overall in 21:26.

SURVIVOR WINNERS

1. Elizabeth Jekot, 26:27.6

2. Robin Ritchey, 28:43.6

3. Sally Sayles, 29:53.0

MEN'S TOP OVERALL

Chris Strait, 17:05.8

AGE-GROUP WINNERS

14-UNDER: Michael Trejo, 20:02.1

15-19: Dane Conley, 18:08.1

20-24: Matt Atkinson, 18:20.9

25-29: Alan Ball, 18:59.8

30-34: Tim Brown, 19:58.6

35-39: Dan Clubb, 18:26.1

40-44: David Rowe, 20:12.5

45-49: Gordon Gammie, 20:10.6

50-54: Irwin Fairclough, 19:46.2

55-59: Lion Caldwell, 21:38.9

60-64: Bruce Hill, 24:20.1

65-69: Wally Capps, 22:27.0

70-OVER: John Platt, 31:03.3

WOMEN'S TOP OVERALL

Kim Stark, 18:17

AGE-GROUP WINNERS

1-14: Brittany Martin, 23:15.9

15-19: Leanne Hill, 23:09.9

20-24: Natalie Merrill, 20:42.1

25-29: Wendy Ragle, 18:33.3

30-34: Elizabeth Meraz, 19:45.8

35-39: Emily Willemin, 21:45.9

40-44: Luiza Do Nascimento, 19:55.3

45-49: Marie Swanson, 22:58.8

50-54: Deborah Mahoney, 24:21.6

55-59: Kim Bohonsky, 25:49.2

60-64: Edna Clemens, 29:35.7

65-69: Lattralle Thompson, 26:54.4

70-OVER: Etta Mauldin, 55:31.7