

Doughman race: Eating on the go, go, go

Published: May 27, 2012

[COMMENTSE-MAILPRINT](#)



With a 5 minute advantage due to their fund-raising amounts competitors like Erin Cutrell, left, of Raleigh with the group Victorious Secrets, and other crammed peanut butter and banana sandwiches with homemade marshmallow fluff from Dain's Place in their mouths before a 7.8mile bike ride. The 5th annual DOUGHMAN Race took place in downtown Durham on Saturday, May 26, 2012. It benefitted the SEEDS organization, which is an education community garden that helps to teach organic and sustainable gardening. There were 83, 4-person teams that biked, swam and ran, while stopping to eat between each event at the Durham Central Park.

Corey Lowenstein — clowenst@newsobserver.com

- **STORY PHOTOS:**



- More information The Doughman festivities continue Saturday night with a banquet/block party at Motorco, 723 Rigsbee Ave., from 7 to 10 p.m. featuring food and drink from Durham restaurants and breweries. Tickets are available at the door, \$25 with alcoholic beverages and \$15 without.

Powered by



By Dan Kane — dkane@newsobserver.com

DURHAM — They arrived in butterfly wings, Mexican wrestling masks and college graduation gowns. They ate fried-green tomato sandwiches, vegan tacos and Cuban sliders.

They were competing in a mini-triathlon.

If that doesn't jibe, you don't know Durham. Or more specifically, the fifth annual Doughman Race that drew more than 80 four-person teams to the Bull City's downtown for a morning of running, swimming (stretching that one a bit, but more later), biking and eating.

The race celebrates silliness but is surprisingly competitive, and this weekend it will raise more than \$25,000 for SEEDS, the Durham nonprofit that supports sustainable agriculture and environmental stewardship. On Saturday morning, the winning team, the Bull City Running Club, finished off the route and the local cuisine in a little over an hour and 10 minutes.

The team was one of the few that was all business, dressed in standard road-race gear. Duncan Hoge, 23, of Chapel Hill did the anchor leg – one of two, 2-mile runs – after chomping down the Cuban slider. The key to victory, he said, was drinking plenty of water to help wash it down.

It was his first Doughman, and he had heard about the nonsensicalness of it, but he had been warned by veterans on his team that a win had to be earned.

“I did not expect it to be that competitive,” he said. “You come out and you see a bunch of goofy-dressed people, but yeah, it's a serious event and you've got to take it seriously.”

He was happy to win the vaunted Doughman cup, but he vowed to wear a costume next year.

A group of three Duke graduate students and an employee cooked up Doughman over beers at Dain's Place, a Ninth Street bar and restaurant. It is one of the sponsors and its team a top competitor.

“The absurdity sort of took hold, and this is what we have now,” said Emily Egge, 33, the Duke employee who is now SEEDS' executive director. “It's for charity, it's for fun, and it's to celebrate Durham. The people who come back year after year really understand that.”

The race started out with a banana, peanut butter and fluffernutter sandwich and an 8-mile bicycle ride, followed by a vegan taco and a “swim” lap in the downtown YMCA pool that required participants to use an inner tube. (This is the part of the competition where participants tend to lose their costumes.) Two running legs followed with the first requiring the intake of a fried-green tomato sandwich and the second a Cuban slider.

There's a final mini-lap around a downtown parking lot in which the whole team has to down a dessert. Mouths are checked at each lap to make sure the food is consumed before the contestants can begin biking, running or swimming. Those who vomit are disqualified.

James DeFilippi, 34, of Arlington, Va., has made all five Doughmans as part of a family team. They were dressed in graduation caps and gowns this year. In prior years they have dressed as cereal box mascots and Little Orphan Annie characters.

"It's different and fun," he said. "Most races are very competitive, and this is too, but there's a twist to it."

Bill Zuercher, 41, of Durham, can attest to that. He belongs to one of two teams of chemists from GlaxoSmithKline in Research Triangle Park. They dressed as Mexican wrestlers, with masks and capes. His team was named El Gigante; the other El Diminuto.

After finishing his leg, Zuercher ruminated on the fact that the sandwich he ate included lettuce, a dastardly vegetable for competitors.

"It was delicious," he said. "But it was not something you could eat really fast."

Kane: 919-829-4861

Read more here: <http://www.newsobserver.com/2012/05/27/2091734/durhams-doughman-competition-is.html#storylink=cpy>