

Manitou Marathon Men

Carpenter runs to 11th win, Parker not far behind

By Jeanne Davant

Matt Carpenter may have felt Father Time nipping at his heels during Sunday's Pikes Peak Marathon.

The only thing hot on the 46-year-old runner's trail, however, was fellow Manitou runner Daryn Parker.

Carpenter won his fifth-straight marathon just edging Parker by 83 seconds.

"I'm pretty excited," Carpenter said. "I'm really excited about (Parker) too. 'One, two, Manitou' is what we were saying."

Carpenter finished with a time of 3:51:34, while the 29-year-old Parker clocked in at 3:52:57.

Parker, racing in his third marathon, placed second last year. He felt great about his performance, but just wished things turned out differently. "Matt's a strong runner and a legend in the sport," he said. "It felt really good to be in striking distance. It would've felt better to be 84 seconds faster than I was on Sunday."

Carpenter was pleased with his run up the mountain, but coming down was a different story.

"The downhill was hell," he said. "The issues I'm having are more related to age and injuries. Things catch up to you. I don't care who you are, Father Time is going to catch up to you."

Despite not completing training he would've liked to have prior to the race, Carpenter remained focused and persevered through the last few miles. It's not often that Carpenter has to worry about runners catching up to him.

"In some years, I've never seen anyone behind me," he said. "I assumed (Parker) was coming because I was going so slow on the way down. I barely finished when I heard them cheering for number two."

Parker knew, based on time updates, that he was gaining on Carpenter, but only caught sight of him on the turnaround.

"I just kept working to stay motivated on the downhill and cut the distance more," he said. "I really concentrated on staying hydrated on the way up and drinking as much as I could on the way down. I knew the last six miles were going to be hot and kind of a death march."

With the affects of age becoming a factor, Carpenter's not sure how many marathons he'll compete in.

"I have thought about do you go out on top, or slowly dwindle away," he said. "I have to see how the injuries and the body heals up. In most sports, especially running, they call the 30s old. As long as I can still enjoy it, I think I'll keep at it."

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