



## 2017 Vitality London 10,000

### Pavey bounces back as Butchart retains his 10K title

Andy Butchart produced a front-running masterclass to retain the British men's 10k road title at the biggest ever Vitality London 10,000 in central London this morning while there was an emotional return to form for Jo Pavey who became the first triple winner of the women's crown.

There was a moving moment before the start too, when The Mall fell silent as the pre-race buzz of more than 12,000 runners subsided into a minute's silence in support of the victims of last Monday's suicide bombing in Manchester.

Event Director Hugh Brasher introduced the tribute, calling on the runners to "remember the 22 lives lost and the scores of people injured."

"As we run, as we have fun, as we enjoy this bank holiday weekend, we ask you to remember those lives lost, those injuries sustained, those families torn apart, and above all that love overcomes hate."

It was a case of will overcoming tiredness for Butchart, who arrived in London late on Sunday weary from a tough 5000m at the Eugene Diamond League on Saturday night and a delayed journey back to the UK.

But the confident 25-year-old showed little sign of the lead in his legs as he powered away from the start and cruised alone through the scenic course from The Mall to the City of London before striding back to Buckingham Palace where he crossed the line in 29:18, 50 seconds slower than his personal best victory in 2016.

"I was just chilling today," said the ever-relaxed Scot afterwards. "I'm lucky to be here to be honest because my BA flight was cancelled."

"My head feels good but my legs are tired. Last year was a bit quicker but the crowds were unbelievable today, twice as big as last year."

Pavey also put her bounce-back victory down to the "amazing" support she received along the crammed course.

The five-time Olympian, who triumphed here in 2011 and 2015, was delighted to get back to winning ways after a tough few months in which she was forced to drop out of April's Virgin Money London Marathon with cramps and could only place fourth at the British 10,000m track trials a week ago.

"I was bitterly disappointed after the marathon because I felt like I'd let everyone down and I really wanted to put in a better performance today to make up for it," said the 43-year-old after front-running from the gun to tape in 32:57.



“It was very humid out there but the crowds were amazing. The support down The Strand when I was running for home was incredible,” she added.

“It’s such a fun event; I love this race. It’s great to win for a third time and it’s always nice to have another British title.”

While Butchart was the class act of the men’s race, there was an able supporting role for the shock of the day, Abel Tsegay, as the Invicta East Kent athlete chased the Rio Olympian hard through the second half to claim second in 29:26, breaking his PB by more than half a minute.

“I am delighted with the performance,” said the 20-year-old former Eritrean who closed a 50-metre deficit to eight seconds by the end. “I broke from the rest at 8k then just kept my pace, but Andy was so fast today.”

Andy Maud of Highgate Harriers was third in 29:45, while GB international marathon runners Sonia Samuels and Charlotte Purdue pursued Pavey through the streets of the capital to claim second and third in the women’s race.

Samuels clocked 33:18 on her London 10,000 debut while Purdue was happy to finish 14 seconds behind after placing fourth last year.

Samuels, who ran the marathon for Britain at the Rio Olympics last year, said: “10k is like a sprint for me, so even at the beginning I felt like I was right on the edge. I was positive from the start and tried to go with Jo but after a kilometre or so I thought it was a bit fast so I backed off a bit.”

Purdue was the second Briton at the London Marathon this year and will run for GB at the World Championships in 10 weeks’ time.

“I ran this race last year, and felt a hundred times better today,” said the Aldershot, Farnham and District athlete. “I start my marathon training for the World Champs today so this was just a hard session with a long cool down.”

“It’s a good event, you want to support it and I like racing here because it makes training more fun.”

Fun was the order of the day for Butchart too, whose victory was never in doubt, despite his tortuous travel less than 24 hours earlier.

Twelve months ago he beat defending champion Andy Vernon in a time that made him the second quickest Briton on the central London course behind Mo Farah and put him among the top 50 Britons of all time at the distance.

“The time was not in my mind at all today,” said the Central AC runner. “But to win here was massive. You can never knock a British championship. It’s the first one of the year for me and it’s nice to come to London to do it. To finish in front of Buckingham Palace is always amazing.”



It was an amazing day for ex-serviceman Mike Mulvey too as the army veteran set an unofficial record for finishing a 10k with one leg on crutches. Mulvey hopped through the Finish Line in 72:25, breaking the previous record by more than a minute.

“I lost my leg in an accident in the army,” said Mulvey, who was raising money for Blesma, the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen’s Association in his fourth London 10,000. “They’ve always been there for me and it’s time to give something back.

“The crowds were fantastic,” he added, repeating the theme of the day. “When you’re tired, they’re there to keep you going.

“You can’t beat this event. It’s my fourth year and I’ve done it in a world record time.”

He was part of another record feat on the day, as the 12,400 finishers made this the largest Vitality London 10,000 yet, beating the previous best by 121 after a record field of 12,438 runners had started the race.

## Top Three Finishers

### Men

1. Andy Butchart, Central AC, 29:18
2. Abel Tsegay, Invicta East Kent AC, 29:26
3. Andy Maud, Highgate Harriers, 29:45

### Women

1. Jo Pavey, Exeter Harriers, 32:57
2. Sonia Samuels, Sale Harriers, 33:18
3. Charlotte Purdue, Aldershot, Farnham & District AC, 33:32

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