



# 2018 Vitality London 10,000

## FARAH SCORES SIXTH TITLE AS TWELL TAKES HER FIRST WIN

Great Britain's Olympic legend Sir Mo Farah won the biggest ever Vitality London 10,000 today, while Steph Twell took her first victory in the women's race.

Farah treated the enthusiastic London crowds, who had turned out in their thousands to watch the race, to a masterclass in 10km running as he outsprinted young British runners Richard Allen (29:48) and Matthew Sharp (29:50) in the final 500m to take his sixth Vitality London 10,000 victory, and the British road 10k title, on his first appearance at the race since 2013.

Twell also dominated in the women's race, finishing in 32:34, almost half a minute ahead of Gemma Steel (33:00), while 2017 champion Jo Pavey completed the podium with her third-place finish in a time of 33:12.

First across the line today was David Weir, who finished in 21:52 to successfully defend his men's wheelchair title just a day after winning the Vitality Westminster Mile.

The women's wheelchair race was won by Mel Nicholls, who improved on her second-place finish in the Vitality Westminster Mile yesterday to take her first Vitality London 10,000 title.

Vitality ambassadors Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill and Lord Sebastian Coe set the masses on their way as more than 14,000 runners crossed the Start Line of the race on The Mall to make this the biggest Vitality London 10,000 in 11 editions of the event.

As they headed along The Mall and through Admiralty Arch in bright sunshine, Farah looked supremely comfortable as a group of six runners – which included Richard Allen, Jonathan Mellor, Mohamud Aadan, Matthew Sharp and Abdulle Abdishakur – ticked off the first few kilometres of the race.

But once the group had passed the halfway point, just after the Bank of England, Farah started to lift the pace and dropping first one then two runners to reduce group to four, then three, until Allen and Sharp were the only two men able to stay with the four-time Olympic gold medallist.

With 800m to go, Farah moved up a gear to move into the lead, making the final turn into Spur Road and on to the Finish Line alone, to the delight of the crowds who had turned out in huge numbers to cheer their hero to victory in 29:44.



“The pace was nice and comfortable and I really enjoyed the race,” Farah said afterwards. “I was happy with the win, which is the most important thing, but it was nice to be able to run alongside club runners who look up to you.

“It’s good to forget about who you are – and what you have achieved – and just enjoy the moment, which is what I did out there.

“I think it’s important to help these runners and encourage them. Everyone is inspired by someone; I was inspired by someone, so it was nice to be able to run alongside them and talk to them, to share a story, share what you have gone through.”

There’s no doubt the runners who ran with Farah appreciated his support too. “It’s not often you get to run side by side with Mo Farah through the streets of London; it was an absolute pleasure,” Allen said afterwards.

“We were both at the front with two kilometres to go and Mo said, ‘We’ve made a gap, see if you can run alongside me,’ but he was running so fast I couldn’t hang on. It was an amazing experience.”

The new British women’s road 10k champion Steph Twell also relished the chance to compete in front of London’s amazing crowds, saying afterwards: “The Vitality London 10,000 is definitely one of the most inspiring races in the city.”

“You are taking in so many sites, and that really keeps you going during the race, along with the crowd support here today. There are a huge number of runners who are trying it for the first time or coming back again.”

Twell led the women’s race from the gun, using the energy of the London crowds to push her on: “The atmosphere out on the road was electric and everyone supporting really got me round.

“I took in everything and coming up to St James’s Park I knew I had to finish strong in front of Buckingham Palace. I made sure I took it all in and just tried to keep my rhythm going.”

Runner-up Gemma Steel lost contact with Twell and Pavey during the first half of the race but the Charnwood AC runner caught sight of the two leading women around the 6k mark, and gradually closed the gap between them.

“Steph and Jo led from the start, so I was thinking I’d be lucky to get third, and I certainly wasn’t expecting to come second, but I ran my own race and when I saw Jo that spurred me on.

“I thought I’d bide my time and not go too early but I seized the opportunity and overtook her at around 8k. After that my next goal was to try to get under 33 minutes but I got 33 flat. I’m just finding my way back to racing so I’m pleased with second.”

Pavey was also pleased with her performance at her first competitive race since winning the 2017 edition of the Vitality London 10,000.



“I haven’t raced properly since this race last year so I was thrilled to be out racing,” said the 44-year-old from Devon, who was forced to take a break from racing after tearing her plantar fascia last year.

“I love this race; it’s awesome. The crowds are great – they really keep you going – and it’s such an exciting route. I’m getting old but still enjoying it!”

While the warm conditions proved challenging for the runners, the wheelchair racers loved the heat, which men’s champion David Weir described as “a real bonus.” He finished in 21:52, well ahead of Danny Sidbury (23:26) and Michael McCabe (26:35).

“I felt good today,” said the 39-year-old. “I led from the start and opened up a lead to keep my average time up, which I’m pleased with as it’s a very technical course, and the bumpy road surface knocks your rhythm too.

“It’s always an honour to race around the streets of London. There was great support out there today; people recognised me and shouted when I raced past, which is always nice.”

Women’s wheelchair race winner Mel Nicholls crossed the Finish Line opposite Buckingham Palace in 27:35, just edging out Nikki Emerson, who was given the same time. Liz McTernan finished third in 33:53.

“I’m not a quick starter, so I wanted to go as hard as I could at the start. Nikki Emerson is phenomenal at the start, so my goal was to catch up with her at some point.

“I managed to catch her at around 2k, but by the last kilometre she still had quite a lead so I thought she’d got it.

“The last stretch was really exciting. Everyone on the streets cheered and it’s such a great atmosphere. To take it on the line, I was a bit gutted because I felt Nikki really deserved it, but that’s racing, isn’t it? You have to take the wins when you can get them.”

Dame Jess summed up the sense of camaraderie at the race, saying: “The atmosphere is just amazing. It’s great to see so many people excited about running and enjoying it together in the one place.

“Being at the Start Line – and starting all the waves – was amazing. I love seeing everyone enjoying being active. Lots of people use this event as a goal to work towards and then seeing them achieving it today has been really inspiring.”

She looked on as 14,475 finishers crossed the line to make this the largest Vitality London 10,000 yet, smashing the 2017 record of 12,438 by more than 2,000 runners.

### **Top Three Finishers**



#### Men

1. Sir Mo Farah, 29:44
2. Richard Allen, 29:48
3. Matthew Sharp, 29:50

#### Women

1. Steph Twell, 32:34
2. Gemma Steel, 33:00
3. Jo Pavey, 33:12

#### Men's wheelchair race

1. David Weir, 21:52
2. Danny Sidbury, 23:26
3. Michael McCabe, 26:35

#### Women's wheelchair race

1. Mel Nicholls, 27:35
2. Nikki Emerson, 27:35
3. Liz McTernan, 33:53

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