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Holy road race, Batman! Superheroes run for a good cause in Cambridge

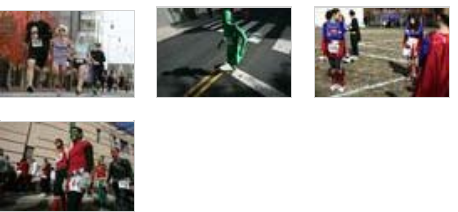
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Wicked Local Photo by Matthew Healey Runners dressed as the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles from left Andrea Love of Cambridge as Donatello, Jeff Davis of Chicago dressed as Raphael, Steve Roberts of Chelmsford dressed as Leonardo, and Nipha Roberts also of Chelmsford dressed as Michelangelo, prepare for the first-ever Superhero 5k on the corner of Sidney and Pacific Streets this past Sunday.

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By Gila Babich Wicked Local Cambridge Posted Nov 02, 2009 @ 05:01 PM

Cambridge — Hundreds of superheroes shed their civilian identities to participate in the Superhero 5K road race this past Sunday morning in Central Square.

Several Wonder Women, Batmen and Flashes ran in elaborate costumes, while others found it sufficient to tie a towel around their neck for a cape. Some runners refused to wear Superman's spandex tights in favor of Clark Kent's button-down shirts, glasses and ties that flapped behind them in the wind. Others gave up costumes altogether and jogged in proper running attire. Angels, monsters and even a Dorothy also found themselves among the crime-fighters.

"It's not as hot as it looks," said Paul Schrimpf, an economics grad student at MIT who ran in a head-to-toe polyester Green Man unitard, inspired by a character on the FX show "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia." He came in third.

"It was cool, everyone was yelling, 'Go Green Man' when they saw me," he said.

The event was held by Have2Run, a Boston-based production company that specializes in road races. Proceeds from the race went to benefit the Women's Sports Foundation, an organization that promotes sports and physical activity among women, and On the Rise, an organization that supports homeless women in greater Boston.

"They're heroes for other people, and here everyone runs as superheroes for them," said Emma Bagnell, the director of the event.

This was the first Superhero 5K, and one that Bagnell

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considered a success; 409 people registered, and 357 finished the run. The company picked Cambridge as a prime location for the race because of its big running community.

Runners won prizes for best results in a variety of categories, including best costume.

"It gave us a chance to be who we are; we don't have to hide behind a mask anymore," said Jeff "Raphael" Davis, whose green-faced, shell-wearing Ninja Turtle team won the prize for best costume in the Magnificent Four category.

"I'm just humbled to be in the presence of greatness. I saw the X-Men out there, and Batman and Robin. It's an honor."

Davis, who works as a green building consultant, traveled to Cambridge from Chicago to participate in the event with his fiancé, Andrea Love, a grad student at MIT, and a couple of their friends.

The event was a comic book-lover's dream. Patrick Cook, who entered the race as part of a Green Lantern-themed team from Lowell that consisted of his kids and neighbors, noted that this was the best way for comic book fans to spend a Halloween weekend.

"It wasn't so much the run, it was getting the family out here as a group and getting to dress up," he said. "I mean, how many times do you get to run with the Flash? I get to say I beat Superman in a race, and that's pretty cool."

Mark Gomes of Boston won the race, with a time of 18:02. He was not wearing a costume.

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