

Southern California Man Moves From Cheering Section to Winners Circle Sunday at the Disneyland Half Marathon

***Japanese woman becomes first international winner;
Commemorative 10th Annual Medal awarded to all finishers;
Disneyland Half Marathon 10th Annual party kicked off celebratory weekend events***

ANAHEIM, Calif. (September 6, 2015) – James Lander from Fullerton, Calif. ran and won his first Disney race this morning at the 10th annual Disneyland Half Marathon presented by Cigna. He led the field of nearly 15,000 runners and crossed the finish line more than six minutes ahead of the second place winner from Sao Paulo, Brazil, 35-year-old Valdir Aparecido Bueno.

Lander, 36, used to stand on the sidelines and watch his wife run multiple Disney races but decided this time, he wanted to get in on the action. So he did. And won, finishing in 1:08:56

“I’ve loved this race, even though I had never done it before, because everyone has an amazing time,” said Lander. “I see people laughing and smiling the entire way versus most races where everyone looks like they are killing themselves. It’s a special thing! It’s really great!”

Lander has run competitively for years. He’s a local chiropractor and claims that running “is just part of what chiropractors do.” He used to be on a professional marathon team, winning many times, but now runs a couple of half marathons and local races a year to support the community.

Momoko Tanaka, 29, from Urayasu-shi, Japan, wrote her own chapter in the race’s annals today coming in first place for the women, finishing in 1:21:30. This is the first time in the race’s 10 year history that an international runner has won. Tanaka finished just ahead of last year’s female champion, Jennifer Berry, 34, from Denver, Colo. Berry crossed the finish line in 1:23:21, beating her prior year’s time by 12 seconds.

All half marathon finishers take home unique 10th annual medals to commemorate the occasion. More than 400 “legacy” runners ran this weekend, completing all 10 Disneyland Half Marathons since the inaugural race in 2006. The half marathon traveled through Disney California Adventure Park, Disneyland Park, the streets of Anaheim and Angel Stadium.

Runners celebrated Thursday night with a Disneyland Half Marathon 10th Annual party. Guests experienced select attractions, Disney entertainment and character meet & greets in Disneyland Park West Side. As the event coincides with Disneyland’s 60th Anniversary Diamond Celebration, the party gave runners exclusive viewing of Disneyland’s “Paint the Night” Parade which is part of the 60th anniversary celebration.

More than 29,000 runners from across the nation and 28 countries gathered in Southern California to celebrate the 10th

annual Disneyland Half Marathon Weekend. The weekend of events also included the Disneyland 5K, *runDisney* Kids Races and the *runDisney* Health & Fitness Expo.