

Imperial 10-Miler: Husband and wife take top honours in

Friedrich and Maisch both show their class

THE Friedrich family turned back the clock by achieving a husband-and-wife double at yesterday's rather windswept Imperial 10-miler.

It is now six years ago that German national Richard Friedrich won his first local honours in the same race, and after several quieter seasons in between, he is truly embracing what he calls his 'second running mid-life crisis'.

And he is not alone.

As Ulrike Maisch harked back to the middle of last decade by taking women's honours, also in the running were two other familiar faces from that era, albeit middle-distance specialists back then, Will Bodkin and Mike Batiste.

With Bodkin having ended his own four-year hiatus to dominate the 2020 season and Batiste also on the comeback, it created an intriguing start-line picture.

Yet Friedrich showed his true lasting quality to win clearly in 53min. 53sec.

After the former Munich Marathon winner had crested the signature Imperial hill and then reached the two-mile marker, he was already 20sec. clear of Bodkin, who would have been a real challenger if not for recent calf issues.

Despite north-easterly winds adding further resistance to the uphill opening miles, Friedrich looked remarkably smooth.

He still led comfortably onto the west coast at Perelle, prepared for three fast miles with the wind at his back.

Bodkin was bounding along over 1-30 behind but comfortably clear of the field – where a real battle for third was unfolding.

ATHLETICS

by Jamie Ingrouille

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Batiste was heading the chase from two much-improved competitors, Sammy Galpin and Chris Norman, while Nick Mann was hanging just off the pace.

Then disaster struck – for Batiste at least. An untimely hamstring issue took him out of the race, while Galpin found a second wind along the west coast finish.

After Bodkin finished in 56-33, Galpin followed another 2-06 behind, with Norman and Mann also breaking the coveted one-hour barrier convincingly.

Friedrich's lasting thoughts were about how hard it was to find a rhythm on the course.

'Today it was so difficult – obviously the hill takes a bit of rhythm away anyway, but even coming towards the Mallard, it was difficult to find that pace that challenges you but you can maintain,' he said.

'I struggled to find that rhythm almost all the way to Perelle.'

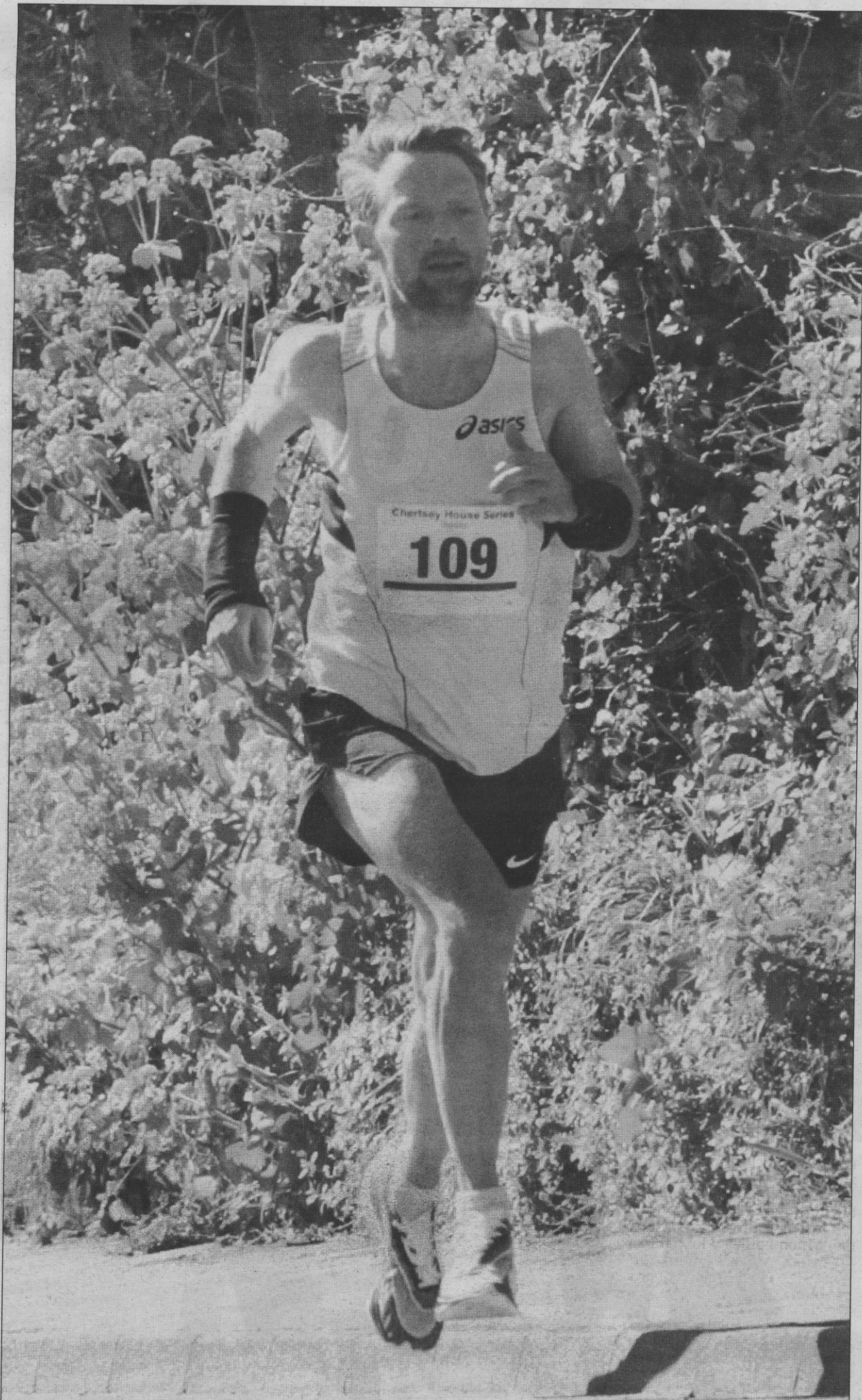
But, despite finishing 39sec. slower than he did six years ago, he was pleased with his effort.

'At the end of the day, it's not a time-trial – it's not all about the time – and you race the guys that have turned up today,' he added.

'The fact that I've come out first, it's never a given. It's good if you win a race.'

Meanwhile, former European marathon champion Maisch continued her own welcome return.

In her first appearance since



Richard Friedrich striding to victory yesterday morning.

(29478130)



Guernsey Athletics stalwart Paul Ingrouille (394) was among the runners.

(29478118)



Michael Batiste (389), Sammy Galpin (118) and Chris Norman (171) with a small gap on Nick Mann. (29478132)