

First-timers beat the Bear

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785 runners participated in the 13th annual running of the Bear on Grandfather Mountain.

This year's winners were both first-time participants. With a time of 32 minutes and 33.61 seconds, 29-year-old Aaron Saft from Fletcher placed first. 28-year-old Alison Bryant of Elkin took first for women with a time of 37 minutes and 24.11 seconds. In second place were Ryan Woods of Boone and Leigh Wallace, also of Boone, in men's and women's categories, respectively. The event kicks off the Highland Games each year. The running of the Bear begins in Linville and ends five miles later at the base of the Mile High Swinging Bridge on Grandfather Mountain.