

The Minami-Engle Road Show.

By Bill Engle

One year after our inaugural appearance as a four member team in the Sherwood Marathon and Relay in Rhode Island, we traveled to Burlington Vermont for a repeat performance at the Vermont City Marathon and Relay. Shu had done the marathon in the past so Kathy, Mary and I depended on him for strategy.

Since this relay has five legs

combination, the last leg of 5.6 miles which is mostly on a bike path along Lake Champlain. Mary did the second leg of 5.4 miles, Shu the third of 6.4, and Kathy the fourth of 5.5 and handed off to me.

The morning of the race started off with very light showers and a temperature of 45 degrees. What to wear? I decided on lightweight tights and a light rain jacket for the first leg with a change to warm weather togs if the temp climbed as expected. Kathy dressed warmly also. We carried enough



one of us had to handle two of them. It has been a long time since I was in the army so I forgot the rule about never volunteering for anything. So I ended up with the double duty. The first leg was only 3.3 miles so I quickly opted for that one. I felt that my ancient body would not be able to handle consecutive legs so I volunteered for what I hoped would be the best

changes of clothes for almost any eventuality. The Minami's did about the same. A unique feature of the VCM is that the first three exchanges are very near to the race start point. The fourth exchange (mine) however is out in the boonies and you have to take a bus to it. I planned to lug a bunch of stuff with me in case the weather changed. I also had to lug

some clothes for Kathy to change into when she finished her leg.

Since I was starting the race and finishing it Shu, our captain gave me possession of the plastic coil which we carried on our wrist and handed off to the next runner and the championship chip, the day before the race. I made sure that I attached the chip to my shoe the morning of the race. On the bus from the motel to the race start I realized that I had left the coil in our room. Oh to be disqualified in a relay race for lack of a "baton". We located a volunteer who was giving out last minute race packets and she gave us a replacement. Nuts, now we had to actually run the darn thing. I tried!

The first leg looped through downtown Burlington and was fairly flat. Since most of the field was marathoners I had to fight my way among runners to get to my 5K pace. There still were a lot of marathoners running faster than I was. When I got to the first exchange I had trouble picking Mary out of the hundreds of runners lined up along the road. Finally her smiling face appeared and I got rid of the coil.

Mary had an out and back route. She described it as a long slight downhill out and an endless steep uphill back. While Shu was waiting for Mary at the exchange I was on the opposite side of the road to alert him when she was in sight. When I looked back at where Shu was standing he was gone. A few seconds later he reappeared, bare chested, and started to put a singlet on. The rain had stopped and the temperature was rising. He just finished dressing

(Continued on page 11)