

Event Reports

The Windy City (aka world record city) Chicago Marathon By Brian Bigelow

The bags were all packed and ready to go by the door. Where's Tom, my wife Kathi queried as we were finishing all the last minute details. Oh, he'll be here any minute I said. She said you better call to make sure. So I did just to assure her that he's probably on his way. A groggy hello after the answering machine picks up as I'm in the middle of hanging up the phone. The phone rings, it's Tom, saying the phone call woke him up. Well we will see you at the airport in an hour I said. Kevin and Beth pull up a few minutes later as I'm realizing I can't find my house keys. Oh well, Kathi has hers so we'll be ok. We drive to Shu and Mary's to get Yuki and our chauffeurs for the ride to the airport. Everyone is in good spirits as the sun hasn't risen yet and pre marathon energy is in the air. After airport good-bye's we are in the terminal wondering where's Jack and Dr. Steve and Cindy. We met up with Julie so our group is almost complete. We are on the plane now and still no Jack, Steve or Cindy. Finally as the last few people are boarding the

plane we see Jack with a smile on his face so big that a Cheshire cat would be jealous of. We'll find out why later. Then Dr. Steve and Cindy arrive and luckily we all sit together facing each other with lots of leg room. The plane trip is filled with excited talk and repeated offerings for broccoli from Kevin. He even goes so far as throwing a piece at Jack, missing and hitting the woman next to him who makes a less than favorable face. We find out that

one steward has run several marathons and he talks with us for quite awhile about the course in Chicago. We arrive in Chittown and pay for a van to the hotel. There are ten of us so we take over the next available van and leave a crowd of people in the windy cold airport sidewalk. At the hotel we can't check in for a few hours so its off to the LaSalle Banks Marathon Expo. It's hard getting ten people moving in the same direction but we find the Expo buses leave from one block away which is way cool. I don't always talk like that. The Expo is huge and well organized and not too crowded since it's only Friday. By the

My prayers have been answered. I wonder what Khalid is doing right now or Moses for that matter. Race morning is cold and dark as we head out to the start by taxi, and foot. The wimpier people in the group took a Taxi. Ha Ha. I guess I should take a break here and explain Jack's beaming appearance on the plane. Well he is absolutely head over heels in love with a certain Melissa. That's all I can say for now. See 251 for details. Also every time we are at a restaurant or paying for something someone says to Tom put it on the card and we'll catch up with you later. It becomes our standing joke for the weekend.



Jack Noyes, Yuki Minami, Brian Bigelow, Beth Phelan, Julie Hanover, Kevin Gagnon, Tom Conley

way there are painted cows all over the city of Chicago including the Expo(it's an art/history exhibition honoring the cow's role in the great Chicago fire for you history buffs). We get lots of pictures, goodies, etc at the Expo and head back to the hotel to relax. Saturday we are all in different directions taking it easy getting ready for the big day. It's been very windy since we arrived but the forecast calls for a calmer wind and a nicer day for Sunday.

with the current world record holder (R. DaCosta) and the previous two years winners in Khannouchi(97) and Osoro(98) present not to mention Moses Tanui a two winner of Boston. We all finish the race from first timer Julie (who set's a pr) to marathon veteran and gold card carrier extraordinaire Tom. Some satisfy a goal and others miss by a few minutes. But that is the nature of the marathon. It's a mental

The marathon and 5k are experiencing exponential growth in the past few years and race morning is like an army assembling for battle as people (35,000 strong) stream to city center for the start. The race is exceptionally well organized and the start goes off without a hitch on time. There is the largest assembly of sub 2:08 marathoners in history for an American marathon

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Event Reports

Novemberfest

By Bob Thompson

The Wednesday Evening Church Group (WECG) elevated the Novemberfest Trail Run and Party to a new level. With generous sponsorship from Pfizer (Viagra), The Club National, Coldrunning.com, Senecal Beverage, Skyview Cafe and Brewery, Bigelow Chiropractic, Sport Loft and Saucony this was truly a CLASSIC event.

Viagra spokesman Bob Dole literally rose to the occasion and arrived just in time to greet runners at the start of the run. Steve Rogers of the NH 1st Regiment of the Continental Line got things off with a bang promptly at 11:33 am. Each and

every runner enjoyed the spring-like weather and the beauty of Nashua's Mine Falls Park.

Former Gate City Strider President, Steve Doyle, traveled over 1800 miles to work at the water/beer/mimosas/cheese/crackers/beef jerky stop which was a highlight to many a runner. Several runners returned to the refreshment stop after the run for a cool down. A few runners even brought their own chairs to the water stop to catch some rays before finishing the run. Skip Cleaver almost presented Doyle with a beautiful plaque in appreciation for years of service to the running community,

but he forgot it at home.

Fran "last call" Dwyer walked away with the first of many unusual door prizes.

All of the runners feasted on a smorgasbord of goodies such as hot chicken soup (our chef had a bone on for several days), homemade chili, spaghetti and meatballs, beans and dogs, hamburgers, pickled eggs, whoopie pies, brownies and cookies and even a cold beer or three.

Thanks to all of the volunteers and runners who once again made Novemberfest a special occasion. •

USAT&F Junior Olympic Cross Country

By Bill Spencer

The Nashua PAL Junior Olympic cross-country program, although not a part of the Gate City Striders, is strongly supported by Striders. On Nov 20th, the PAL teams participated in the Region 1 Championship at Van Courtlandt Park in New York City. The Bantam girls, coached by Strider Debbie Fraser, were the first to run. Striders Nicole Slane and Juline McGuirk placed 2nd and 3rd, well ahead of the rest of the field. Also placing for the team was Brittney Plante and Mindy Adams, non-Striders who were regular participants in our summer kids program. Needless to say, they took first place.

The next race was the Bantam boys, coached by Strider Mark Fraser. Scoring

for them were Striders Michael Peabody, Chris Merra, and Craig Pellitier. When all the points were counted, they were overwhelming winners. The Midget girls, coached by Shaun Scanlon and Bill Spencer were next. Striders Michelle Weysham (2nd on the team) and Sydney Moland (captain and 6th on the team) led their team of 8 runners to another first place finish. The difference between their first runner and fifth runner was only 46 seconds, with the remaining 3 runners right behind them.

The Midget boys had the misfortune of going up against an exceptional team from Maine and despite the efforts of Striders Anthony Merra, Patrick Rush, and Mark Fraser had to settle for 2nd

place. Next up were the Youth girls. Samatha Moland was the only Strider on this team, which finished 3rd. The last PAL team to run was the Youth boys coached by PAL coordinator and Strider Mike Soucy. Geff McGuirk was the sole Strider on this team which finished 2nd.

In addition to the designated coaches, Mike and Cathy Merra, Nancy Peabody, Jullie McGuirk and Bob Pellitier were regular assistants at the daily practices and the Strider parents and grandparents all showed up to cheer the teams on. The next step is the National Championship in South Carolina on Dec 11th. The 3 first place teams (and their coaches) as well as several individuals; including Anthony Merra will be making the trip. •



Gate City Striders Eboard

Shaun McMahan
Laurie Lambert
Beth Phelan
Bill Spencer
Damian Rowe
Stan Klem
Jerry Rocha

Event Reports

Seacoast Century Ride (Part 2)

By Ed Deichler

Saturday of the ride weekend dawned slightly overcast and mild. This looked like a good day to get in an early run before rushing through the chores and heading over to the seacoast. I picked one of my routes that is mostly flat and all residential so I could save my energy and not have to worry about cars. With a couple of miles to go, I was surprised to hear thunder and see lightning streaks off to the east so early in the morning. I smiled haplessly as I recalled that the Seacoast events actually covered both days of the weekend. The clouds and lightning were greatest in the direction of the coast so I knew it was going to be wet. The forecast for Sunday was cool and clear so I was glad to see bad weather passing through now. Running in the rain is not bad but it can be quite tricky in the rain on a bike.

By mid-morning the day had cleared and turned nice and mild. Ah, I thought, this is going to be a great weekend! Around 2:00 I threw the bike and out bag in the back of the car and headed over to the coast.

I have been the NH seacoast only once in the 14 years I've lived here and that one visit was over 12 years ago. I remembered a strip of highway hugging the ocean with the usual cluster of vacation cottages nudging the established mansions. The Leukemia Society had booked a block of rooms at the Hampton House Hotel, a 4-story place in Hampton Beach that is about a mile from the ride starting point. I pulled the bike out and re-attached the front wheel, making sure I didn't get in on backward. (You laugh, but this was the first time I've had to remove the wheel.) My wife thought I was dumber than usual taking the bike up to our room. She changed her mind, however, when she saw everyone else doing the same thing.

After check-in, we headed downstairs to join some of the other riders and mentors in the parking garage area. Harvey and "California" Dave Johnson were going through the procedures for changing a flat. I had not suffered a flat during the months

of training especially with the high-pressure, anorexic tires on the bike. Harvey showed us how to position the tire and slip a screwdriver under the bead and deftly peel it off the rim in a smooth, steady turn. The trick was to keep the other bead from coming off to avoid more work and hassle. Re-inserting the bead proceeded more slowly since he had to be careful not to nick the new tube.

I found out later that technology has changed cycling in more ways than aerodynamics. One of my teammates sported brightly colored tires that looked like he had run over a couple of garter snakes. These high-tech tires were made of kevlar fabric to provide the material's trademark strength and durability in a very lightweight tire.

My wife and I went for a stroll along the seawall after chatting with some of my ride members. The bright sun and light ocean breeze may me feel restless and agitated that I had already run for the day. Stick to your plan, stupid, I said; you're going to need the energy for tomorrow.

We met up with the other riders in the lobby later that evening to be bussed over to a local restaurant for a pasta dinner that the Leukemia Society had arranged. The trip took nearly an hour but no seem to mind since we rode in trolley-style tour buses. The dinner was a buffet style collection of several pasta dishes, breads, fruits, and desserts. Well, it looks like riders and marathoners have a lot in common, I thought. There were about 40-50 of us altogether, including the Leukemia Society workers who joined us. I was surprised to see a number of folks were from California. I learned that the Lake Tahoe Century Ride, held in early June, is a much larger event with hundreds of riders, many from the San Francisco area. Some of them were returning the favor for the New England riders who had taken part in the Tahoe ride. I learned that many of my teammates were also first-time century riders and were mildly apprehensive about finishing the ride. (Funny, I remember the same kind of

feeling before my first marathon.) After dinner we huddled around waiting to board the buses on what was now a very cool night.

Race day. Brilliant sun. Heavy dew. CHILLY. Oh well, I had figured it would be cool in the morning so I brought along a windbreaker and an extra shirt just in case. I noticed many of the riders wore tights that are thicker than running tights. This made sense since ones legs can feel much colder on a bike than while running. I didn't think I would be too cold without tights but I began to have second thoughts when some riders showed up with ski masks. It looks like I better stay REAL close to the group to block the wind, I thought.

Our start and finish area was the Hampton Beach State Park at the southern end of town. I was surprised to see our group swell to over a hundred riders. I had forgotten that the Seacoast Century event is shared by a number of groups, which makes for an interesting and varied journey. My plan was to stay with the guys I had trained with since they had done this ride before and could keep me from my notorious fast start habit. I had no trouble finding "California" Dave decked out in his wrap-around shades (what else?) and a screaming red-and-yellow SPECIALIZED riding jacket. We traded the usual glad-hand slap, fist-bops, and some other cultural greeting oddities. I also met up with Tim, Mark, Harvey, and the other riders whom I had trained with. As 8:00 approached, we donned our helmets again, checked our gloves a la Garciaparra and clacked over to the starting area. The whistle blew and the air was filled with the sound of clipping in and shifting gears. Underway, at last!

The first leg of the trip led us south into Salisbury, MA. The roads were wide and smooth thanks to a summer of paving and reconstruction. I stayed with a pack that moved along at a 20 mph pace until we made a turn into a residential area. The streets were bumpier with some holes forc-

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When I arrived in San Francisco a few days prior to the race, I recall gazing out over the bay at Alcatraz Prison and the adrenaline began pumping. Not a big deal, I thought, it's not as far out as I had imagined. Hours later, as I drove across the Golden Gate Bridge enroute to relatives, I looked down to my right, suddenly panicking. "You gotta be kidding!" Now, Alcatraz Island seemed marooned far out into the bay. My emotions played havoc with me. . "I know I can do it. . I hope I can. I think maybe on a good day. I recalled reading how the race director of 19 years, and the original Escape From Alcatraz founder, Dave Horning, carefully studied the tide & current tables to pick the best day to swim from Alcatraz into the bay (low tide) and even on race day, he knows what time the slack tide ends and the flood tide begins. Note: Flood tides are not good things to swimmers. On race day, some 500 athletes clad in back wetsuits & hoods marched before dawn to an awaiting ferry boat which would carry us out to Alcatraz. My heart was pumping. It felt like surreal. Navy SEALs on a secret mission to retake Alcatraz from a Marine Corp general gone wild? It was still dark. The boat churned slowly, cutting through the fog as it approached the back side of Alcatraz. We all got our final "marching orders" from director Dave. Then the boat's four hatch doors sprung open and into the water we

In the last newsletter I told about my experience in the Hood to Coast Relay. I asked Mike Dionne to let me know how our NH version of this relay worked out. Here's his response. On October 1st and 2nd, more than 350 runners competed in the first annual Running Times Reach the Beach (RTB) relay, a 200-mile running

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as well as physical battle and a hundred things have to come together just right for those few hours to be successful. Well come together they did for Khalid Khan-nouchi as he shattered (can you hear the glass falling) the world record and the women's marathon finish was the closest in recorded history. Wow, what a race, wow, what a city or in the immortal words of Harry Caray "holy cow" what a day it was in Chicago. The not so windy city, well for this day anyway.

Cast of Characters in order of Appearance I think.

Brian Bigelow aka 249

Kathi Bigelow aka "I'm running the 5k"

Tom Conley aka "put it on the card, I'll catch up with you later"

Kevin Gagnon aka "this is my last marathon"

Beth Phelan aka "ha ha, I already qualified for Boston at Demar"

Mary "who's driving with me" Minami

Shu "sure I can drive your new pick up truck" Minami

Yuki Minami aka "you can fit in my pocket"

Julie Hanover aka "stage mama" (ask her for details)

Jack Noyes aka "check out my vaselined calves"

Dr. Steve Birnbaum aka "disco dancing man"

Cindy aka "I'm a psychotherapist and they're all nuts" last name withheld for client therapist confidentiality. •

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The weather was still cool but fatigue began to set in. I had learned to stand periodically while riding to flex other parts of my legs and to provide relief elsewhere. Now I found it difficult to peddle once I stood up as my legs started to wobble. My experiences in the few marathons I've run told me what was coming next if I didn't relax and slow down. The thought of turning into a human pretzel at the finish was more than enough to make me back off.

With 10 miles to go I found myself rocking forward with each stroke to help my legs. The wind seemed much stronger but I knew it was not. I was unable to close on some of the other riders to take advantage of drafting. Just a few more miles and I could rest. I raised my head and noticed the "Hampton Hotel" sign on the side of the building. Only a couple of miles to go! With that uplifting thought I found some remaining strength and picked up the pace a bit. One more turn and I could see riders swinging to left up ahead. The entrance to the park grew larger before my appreciative eyes as I wearily swung into the park

entrance. I dismounted awkwardly and stood for a few minutes to let my legs get used to the ground again and make sure I wouldn't collapse and fold up. A few short steps told me I was fine - I had done it!

Postscript: It has been 2 months since the ride but the experience is still fresh. I have incorporated more cycling into my workouts, using it to warm up before runs. The injuries have finally healed and running is enjoyable again. Our group exceeded our goal for the Leukemia Society, sort of a thank you for the great support the Society provided from the first training rides to the victory dinner afterwards. I've been asked to join the group for the Lake Tahoe ride next year. I have other commitments for a while but maybe someday.

I've learned a lot about cycling and how similar it is to running. Many of the folks I rode with are avid mountain bikers, just like runners enjoy trail runs and hashes. You can bet I'm going to be looking for some biathlon events next summer.

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!! FAMILY FUN !!

The Minami's have that skill honed to perfection.

Each one took first place in their respective age group.

Mary, Yuki and Shu at Dave's 5K in Dracut

ADRIAN J. LEVESQUE, JR., D.D.S.



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ing us to slow down. We were riding along at an easy pace when I hit one a small bump and heard something pop loose behind me. I looked back to see my spare water bottle rolling across the road. I turned around to retrieve it, annoyed that I was now falling behind and would have to sprint to catch up. Surprisingly, it proved easier than I thought to pull the group back. When I caught up, I realized that everyone was riding slower than before I lost the bottle. Dave said that we had a long way to go, it was cold, and the real fun would come this afternoon. (I could hear the taunt now: "You're mine, dude!" when I hit 70 miles or so.)

We hit the turn around point in Salisbury and headed back to the starting area. We reached a trailer one of the riders parked at the start a little after 9:00 AM. It was beginning to warm up so that riders started shedding tights and heavier jackets. As we got under way again, I noticed Dave's tattoo on his left calf had changed significantly since our last training ride. The red lightning bolt and "SPECIALIZED" at the top of his calf were now joined by a sweeping red and yellow row of flames rising from his ankle and engulfing his soleus. I can just imagine him with a companion tattoo on the right leg and his flaming red and yellow jacket and matching helmet: It's a bird; It's a plane; It's CAPTAIN SPECIALIZED! This guy needs help!

We settled in again in a steady caravan heading up the coast. The sun bounced across a calm sea at low tide and steam rose from the exposed rocks. It made it hard to keep our eyes on the road; indeed, I found myself hitting the brakes frequently to avoid the rider in front of me.

Eventually, we came to one of several steel grate drawbridges that required us to dismount and walk across. "Captain" Dave's "what, me worry?" look turned to fear as he approached the bridge. I wondered what was wrong and then I recognized the problem: The bridge grates were about 2 inches square, almost the same size as the radical toeclips on Dave's riding shoes. We couldn't help but laugh as Dave gingerly worked his way across the bridge. Once we got across, someone mentioned that there was a wooden walkway on the other side that we could have used.

Back in the saddle again, we continued north. We went by a beautiful golf course on the right that is the Wentworth-By-The-Sea course. I had heard radio ads for this exclusive area and I could easily see why it was so desirable. A little further along we came upon a tired-looking building that looked like a place out of a Stephen King novel. Snuggled up to the road behind a tall fence was an architectural masterpiece that had not seen maintenance for some time. I found it sad that the Wentworth Hotel was left to rot next to such a wealthy playground.

We were about a third of the way through on our ride as we passed down a small hill when it happened. I mentioned earlier that I had a hard time keeping my distance and paying attention. Sure enough, I got distracted and clipped the tire of the bike in front of me. I went flying as the bike buckled. Luckily, my clips disengaged as soon as I hit the street. I slammed on my hip and instinctively turned my head to avoid leaving my face on the road. My head bounced like a billiard ball leaving me momentarily dizzy. My left hip and elbow felt numb but I knew they would be burning in a few seconds as blood oozed out of the ripped skin.

I sat up slowly and felt around to make sure nothing was broken. By this time half a dozen riders were around me trying to help me up. I hobbled around to make sure my hip still worked ok and took off my helmet to clear my head. I was relieved not to have anything sticky run down my face. I noticed one rider seemed more upset than I was and I asked why. She said that she had to lock it up and go sideways to avoid running over my neck or I would have been history. Dave offered me a couple of big yellow pills (why is everything yellow?) and told me they were anti-inflammatories. I reluctantly took them and said that if I started talking like him, I was turning him in to the police.

I gingerly re-mounted and stayed WELL BEHIND the pack for the next leg of our ride. We made it in Portsmouth and crossed over into Maine. A few miles further and we came to our "sag" station at Fort McClary Park. The Leukemia Society folks set up refreshments in one of the picnic areas for us to fuel up. I kept walking around as much as I could to avoid getting

stiff. By now the sun had warmed things enough to take off the windbreaker and show off the special riding jersey that each team member wore. Many of us had the name of an individual to whom we dedicated the ride embroidered on one sleeve.

We got underway again following a course that was getting hillier and began to wind in and out of narrow streets along the sea. We had to be careful not to miss the arrows along the road or risk a jam as everyone tried to make a U-turn. My tripodometer told me we were getting near the half way point. A couple of turns in the road and in front of us loomed the beautiful Cape Neddick lighthouse. At one end of the parking lot our support crew waited with power drinks, sports bars, and cameras. Halfway!

We started back on the return leg feeling refreshed that less than half the ride lay ahead. Another stop at the sag station and off again. As we entered Rye, I found myself working harder to stay up with 4 or 5 riders. I finally realized that I was in with a sprint along the ocean. I concentrated on the back of the rider in front of me, ignoring the cars we passed as we pushed our speed into the high 20s. After a few miles of buzzing along, I noticed the lead rider dropping back and falling in behind me. A few more miles and the next leader pulled out and drifted back. After a couple more lead changes I was behind the current leader. I was getting the hang of drafting pretty good and realized that it was my turn to take the lead. As we made a turn inland, I made my move and stood up to sprint past the leader - right into a HILL!

I knew I had to keep going so I hunched over and dug in for a power climb. My quads burned when I finally plopped down as the road leveled out. I kept cranking and slowly recovered as my legs stopped griping. I held my speed as close to 25 mph as I could for several miles and several more hills. As we reached a level spot I heard an exasperated voice plead, "Why are you going so hard, man?" With a smile I turned to Dave and growled, "You're mind, dude!" and threw in one last sprint.

As we worked our way back to the shoreline we slowed down as traffic increased. We now around the 80-mile point and the winds had shifted into our faces.

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1999 RRCA New Hampshire Grand Prix

By Bill Spencer

Total Team Scoring after all 1999 races									
Men					Women				Club
	Open	Mastr	Senr	Vetrn	Open	Mastr	Senr	Vetrn	Total
Athletic Alliance	78	21	70	-	40	28	-	-	237
Club Northeast	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Coastal Athletic Assn	9	24	-	13	18	19	-	-	83
Gate City Striders	51	75	53	121	61	66	77	-	504
Granite State Race Tm	42	74	60	49	99	51	48	-	423
Greater Derry Track Cl	50	11	11	59	9	37	-	6	183
Lake Sunapee Running	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	35
Rochester Runners	13	34	77	28	5	47	30	-	234
White Mountain Milers	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	4	9
	243	274	271	270	232	253	155	10	1708

GCS won the Men's Masters for the fifth straight year; this time by a single point over GSRT.

GSRT ended AA's four year reign atop the Women's Open.

GCS won its fourth straight Women's Seniors.

GCS got its third win in four years in both the Women's Masters and Men's Veterans.

GDTC got its second consecutive Women's Veterans victory.

AA took the Men's Open for the second straight year.

RR got its second win in three years in the Men's Veterans.

Newcomer GSRT's first, three seconds, and two thirds were not enough to beat GCS's four firsts and two seconds for the overall total.

