

## Editor's Column By Bill Spencer

The major article in this issue explains the new GCS Strider Forum. When I first joined the Club many years ago, I had a daily ritual of logging on to the GCS BBS that Alan Rube had set up. It was wonderful way of keeping up with what was going on in the Club as well as getting together for group runs. With the advent of the Internet and our own Web Site, the BBS was discontinued and a YAHOO group was established. That group was unable to duplicate the convenience of the old BBS and many of us stopped using it. The new Forum, which replaces the YAHOO group should be as successful as the old BBS was and I would encourage all our members to join it.

Bob Thompson's Randum Thoughts article, covers not only many of the fun things that have occurred in the past months, but also gives the dates for the two major events that mark the close of the track workouts and the start of the Fall racing season. That is "Last Supper" after the last track workout and Novemberfest to usher in the Fall.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the next monthly meeting. Runners Alley will be there with several Shoe Representatives to talk about their products. That meeting is at the Merrimack YMCA.

On the racing scene, Check out our Club standings in the NH Grand Prix series and plan on running in the last two races. We will need a major turnout if we are to recapture the Championship.

Lastly, in the Youth section, I mention the impact our many youth runners are having on the NH Cross Country programs. It is really thrilling to go to a major meet and see so many of our kids running in the front pack. Fitness University and the Pal and Flash programs have been major contributors to their development.

If you experience problems with the delivery of the newsletter call our membership chairperson. This newsletter is sent third class mail. There is no forwarding by the post office, so make sure we have your correct address. Advertisements are gladly accepted.



Striding Along is published 6 times a year by members of the Gate City Striders, Inc. of Nashua, NH. For correspondence or a membership application, please write to:

Gate City Striders  
PO Box 3692  
Nashua NH 03061.

Visit our Web Site  
**WWW.GateCity.Org**

USA Track & Field Club # 157  
AARC Club # RC12

### Our Mission Statement

The Gate City Striders is an athletic and social organization dedicated to the promotion of running and fitness at all levels. Members vary in ability from beginning joggers to competitive marathoners.

### Membership meetings

3rd Wednesday of month at the Merrimack YMCA.

### Track workouts

Wednesday nights, Nashua North High school, April thru October. Weekly runs are held elsewhere throughout the year. Youth workouts on Monday and Thursday nights. See calendar for details.





## President's Column

By Bob Pelletier

# The Inverted Pyramid - IV

Hello fellow Striders. There is much to celebrate within GCS as we go to press with this column in late September.

You should all be congratulated for your participation and performances in the New Hampshire Grand Prix State Racing League series. A total of 97 Striders have worn the team colors for at least one NHGP series race during the season with the two critical October races at Manchester and Rochester approaching. This is a great participation rate and the team energy has been evident on race days. We are the team with the target on our backs as we maintain our 40 point first place lead on Rochester after the Lake Winnepesaukee Relay. Bill Spencer and his age graded team are to be congratulated on their performance at Winnie. They picked up an important 65 points to maintain our lead. Please keep the dates of Saturday, October 19 for the Citizens Bank 8K in Manchester and October 26 for the Free Fall Classic 10K in Rochester on your radar screens. You know that Rochester will be throwing the kitchen sink at us for both of these races. Their racing team recruiting efforts are now well into Maine and Massachusetts. Try to make the time to give our coaches Dave Camire, Sharon Yu, and Brian Withers along with Competition Coordinators Traci and Walter Swanbon a pat on the back for their efforts this NHGP season.

Your efforts to rebuild the open division teams through word of mouth invitations to track night and other GCS events are paying huge dividends. At the Labor Day Franctown 5 Miler your Women's Open Division Team placed seven out of the top division finishers led by the course record setting performance of RaeLyn Crowell. Several new faces for both the Men's and Women's Open Divisions have appeared in recent weeks at track night. We continue to add strength and depth in our other Masters, Seniors, and Veterans Divisions.

Please make it a point to check out our newly introduced user friendly club forum at our web site. You can weigh in on virtually any subject of interest within the club and the running community. It is a great new communication tool. There is a quick 2-3 minute first time only registration process and after that you are on board, only needing your pass-

word to post and reply. Over thirty Striders have registered in the first couple of weeks that it has been up. Our goal is to get that number to well over one hundred as it intended to be the primary form of day to day communication within the club.

Stealing a line from Chef Emeril we have "kicked it up a notch" this fall for your monthly meetings. Over seventy Striders attended our fall kickoff dinner on September 24 at Martha's Exchange Function Hall to hear the inspirational talk by Dick Hoyt and watch the NBC TV feature film on TeamHoyt while enjoying a night of dining out. We have our popular shoe manufacturer evening scheduled again for the evening of Wednesday, October 15 at the Merrimack YMCA at 7:30 PM hosted by our friends at Runners Alley of Manchester and Portsmouth. If you did not get a chance to make it last year you missed out on a night of free pizza, free shoes, and gift certificates. This is the chance to finally find, "the shoe for you", as the experts will be present. Looking beyond October, we are planning to entertain you at monthly meetings with other creative speakers through the winter. Come on by for a fun night out.

Applefest 2003 will have come and gone by the time the newsletter reaches many of you. The preregistration numbers are through the roof and all attendance records will be broken this year thanks to the fine work of Chet Rogers and his committee. Key committee members Emily Strong and Pat Keisselbach greatly appreciate the strong show of volunteer support from the membership.

Finally, I can't thank you enough for your patience as we have weathered three separate track workout site changes this summer. Our last night of track will be Wednesday, October 29 at Pennichuck JHS. The new Nashua South High School track is just about ready to go. We will be certain to settle back in on our usual turf next spring. The track surface is identical to "Air Nashua North" which we got to enjoy for part of this summer before its abrupt construction closing. Stay safe and have fun out there!

### "Ask the President"

Feel free to forward questions to me at: Pelletier.R@attbi.com You should indicate if you would like your question printed in an upcoming issue. I will reply to all questions, suggestions and comments. This feature is designed to help keep the board and I informed and updated on any matters needing attention, improvement, or action while giving you a chance to air your opinion on any running or club related matter.

## September Club Meeting

The guest speaker at our September General meeting was Dick Hoyt. For those members that could not attend that meeting, this is his story.

### The Team Hoyt Story by Dave Delay

In 1977, fifteen year old Rick Hoyt went to a basketball game at Westfield State College in Massachusetts. At the game he learned about a college student recently left paralyzed in an automobile accident. There was to be a 5 mile benefit road race to help pay the student's medical bills. Rick was deeply moved. He wanted to participate in the race and let the student know that life goes on. When he returned home that night, he asked his father, Dick Hoyt, to help. You see, Rick was born with cerebral palsy. He is unable to walk and talk. If he was going to enter the race, his father would have to push him.

Even though he wasn't a runner at the time, Dick agreed to enter the race. On race day, Dick loaded his son into a standard wheelchair – hardly built for speed or distance – and Team Hoyt lined up at the start. Most people thought they would start with the other runners and then drop out after a short, symbolic jog. Defying expectations, Dick and Rick finished the race that day.

It was the first of many athletic achievements including 22 straight Boston Marathons, 62 marathons overall, and 185 triathlons (6 at Iron Man distances). Dick has pushed, pulled and carried his son in over 900 separate events. Still going strong, Dick calculates Team Hoyt has covered a distance equal to two times around the world. Frankly, this was the story I came to hear at the Gate City Striders general meeting this September when Dick Hoyt was our special guest. I learned their athletic achievements are only part of the story.

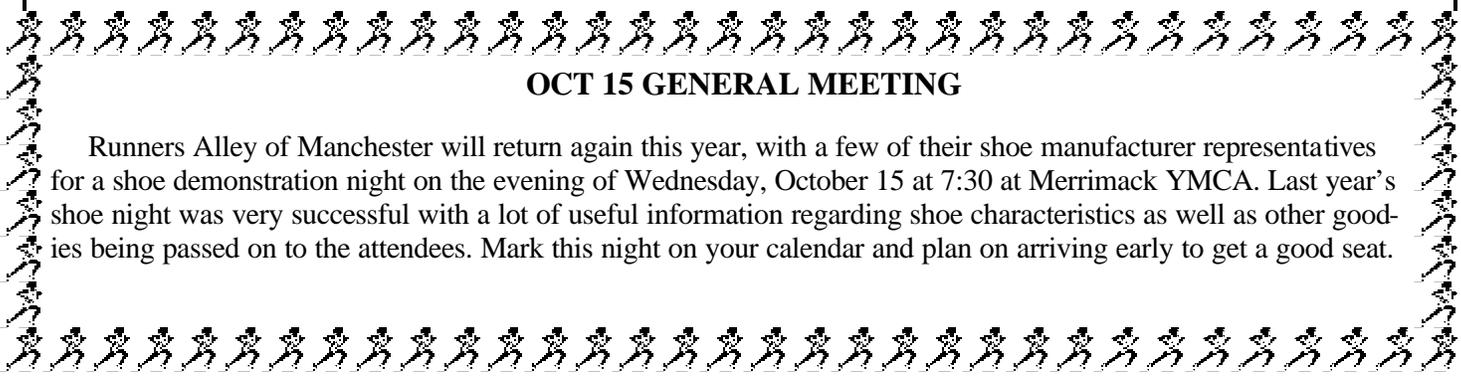
That Rick even dared to think about entering that first race is a testimonial to his courage and to his parents' determination to let Rick live a normal life. When Dick and Judy Hoyt brought the newborn Rick home from the hospital in 1962, they knew something was wrong. After a series of tests, the doctors gave them the prognosis. Rick was a vegetable. The doctors recommended institutionalizing him for life. His parents disagreed. They knew Rick was severely disabled, but they also knew he was aware, intelligent and able in his own way. They determined to keep him at home and give him every opportunity possible.

Throughout Rick's early life, his parents fought to break down barriers. Because of the conventions of the day, hardly anyone believed they could care for their quadriplegic son at home. Despite the almost round the clock care Rick needed, they persevered. In time, their family grew to include two more sons. Determined to treat everyone equally, they included Rick in all family activities – even taking Rick on camping trips and carrying him on hikes in the mountains. When doctors told them Rick would never communicate, they asked researchers at Tufts University to build a computer to help Rick speak. The result was the Tufts Interactive Computer (TIC), a machine that let Rick type sentences with controlled movements of his head. Because school officials didn't think Rick belonged in school, his parents taught Rick at home for several years. Finally, in 1975, they convinced reluctant school officials to enroll Rick in a "mainline" public school.

Along the way, Rick picked up the habit of breaking down barriers too. He finished public school and went on to graduate from Boston University. He now lives independently in his own apartment in Boston. He works at the computer labs at Boston University and Boston College. He also helps children with special needs at Children's Hospital and on occasion "speaks" to audiences about integrating people with disabilities into everyday life.

Before the September meeting, I didn't really understand the message of Team Hoyt. It's not about Dick's incredible athletic achievements. In fact, Dick is very humble about his role in Team Hoyt. He says, "Rick is the competitor. I am just loaning him my arms and legs." When the other athletes are tiring in the running segment of a triathlon, it is Rick that exults in picking them off one by one. Rick is the heart and soul of Team Hoyt. He has fulfilled his parents' dream of living a normal life and has shown the way to countless other people with disabilities.

Team Hoyt's next big challenge is the October 2003 Iron Man Triathlon. At the Strider meeting, Dick told us it would be covered live by ESPN and rebroadcast by NBC in December. For more information about Team Hoyt, check out [www.teamhoyt.com](http://www.teamhoyt.com).



## OCT 15 GENERAL MEETING

Runners Alley of Manchester will return again this year, with a few of their shoe manufacturer representatives for a shoe demonstration night on the evening of Wednesday, October 15 at 7:30 at Merrimack YMCA. Last year's shoe night was very successful with a lot of useful information regarding shoe characteristics as well as other goodies being passed on to the attendees. Mark this night on your calendar and plan on arriving early to get a good seat.