

April
2004

18th Moonlight Run Snowless and Warm



Shenipsit Striders' Newsletter

We had the 18th version of the Moonlight Run on the relatively late date of March 6. We didn't have much luck with the weather or the snow. There was almost no snow, and we had clouds obscuring the moon most of the time. Temperatures were right around freezing.

We did have the usual turnout of Striders. Tom Curtiss, Willi Frederich, Joe King, Jim Long, Dan Wright, Jerry Stage and I were there. Clint Morse joined us, as did three friends of Skip Matthews from up in Wilbraham. It seems that every year we have some new people come out to try something a little different.

Most everyone was up for a hike, not a run, so Clint and I took off to do the running. It was a tough night to run on trails without any moonlight. It was dark enough that there was very little contrast, so we pretty much tip-toed around the course.

There were several places where there was still ice, and that was a little tricky. Then we got some surprise mud just to be sure we got a little wet and dirty.

Before starting we had agreed to try to meet at the tower, but by the time Clint and I got there no one was around. We went to the top, but the 25 mph winds were a little too chilling to stay. Besides, how much can you see when there's no moon out?

We finished up, and soon all of the separate hiking groups got in. No one was lost this year! Both Joe and Willi came out again to restore their reputations as hikers, and did not become

disoriented again. I guess this means that we have to stop giving them a hard time about last year. We enjoyed some hot chocolate, chips, pretzels, and especially the cookies that Joe brought.

Next year, though, we've got to go back to a February date to get some snow. And maybe a few more of you should show up!

**Lake Wyola Road Race
June 27th, Shutesbury, MA
Striders Picnic after at Willi and Shirley's**

Mark your calendars!

We need our best runners to take back the team honors after last year's second place. And bring your bathing suits to join in the resumption of the Watermelon fight!

The Florida Connection

Well, last year was great, 18 races (kind of too many). Ran a 10K in Maine in August and placed first in my class and ended up in the hospital. No problem, just dehydration, stupid running. January 2004, 4 races but only ran 3. We are trying to get into the 7 mile "bridge run". Marathon Key, Florida. Field limited to 1,500. Hope we make it. Beautiful run over 7 miles of water. Have a nice "Moonlight" run. Thinking of all you guys...

Russ Marth

P.S. Early March going to do the "Eye of the Dragon" 10K in Melbourne. Great run, also great bridge—long and high.

Footnote from Willi: Ant hills and bridges are the only "mountains" in Florida.

More Notes from Russ:

I've been with the Sheriff's Department for over 2 years now. As you may have guessed (from a picture Russ enclosed), I play McGruff, "the Crime Dog". Lots of fun and kids love me.

Sunrunners 10K coming up 2/22. On March 7 the "Eye of the Dragon" in Melbourne. April 3 L.O.S.T. 7 mile run on the shores of Lake Okeechobee (Lake Okeechobee scenic trail). On April 24 I am trying to get into a field of 1,500 runners to do the 7 mile bridge run in the Florida Keys (from Marathon to Little Duck Key). 6.85 miles, it's only a two lane road and they close it for 2 hours. So you have 70 minutes to finish, then they pick you up. More information as these races pass.

On TV the sports news announced a marathon in West Palm Beach in November, a first. They have hired the race director of the Boston Marathon to head up the organizing team.

2/22. Well, race day is a very nice day. Temperature at 7 a.m. 55 degrees and clear. Race time is 8 a.m. Nice turnout of 65 or so. Meet runner Sue, she's here for the winter. I remember her from last year. She's from Mystic, CT. Her husband has run one of the half marathons at Soapstone. I don't think he runs any more. I came in 2nd in over 70 age group in 60:07. Not bad, but I was hurting at the end. Think I'll slow a little. We have a new President of the Sunrunners. A younger group. The race could have been a lot better. Nothing like you guys put on! I'm spoiled.

Eye of the Dragon 10K is Sunday, March 7. Yesterday, March 1st I became a grandpa for the second time. My son Clint and his wife had a baby daughter. Got our applications for the 7 mile bridge run March 1 at 1:30 p.m. They were in express mail envelope at 3:16 p.m. Should make the field!

March 9: Space Coast Runners put on a good race. 10K over the Eau Gallie Bridge and causeway. Nice run. About 250 runners. Came in fourth, no cigar. My time was 62:55. I am trying to average 10 minute miles. Me and my friends are in for the 7 mile Bridge Run. Got the confirmation yesterday, 3/8. We are excited!

See you, Russ Marth

Sign of the Times: *Yesterday Bruce Marvonek, Bill Johnson and I were running at Bigelow Hollow. A group of 10-12 years olds on ATV's passed on a crossing trail and caught sight of us. The lead ATV stopped and the kid shouted to his friends, "look, there's a bunch of old guys running in the woods!" Their parents need to teach them some manners.....*

Another Florida Connection

Willi Frederich

Oh, boy, it sure doesn't take long to turn into a slug. All it takes is a seven day cruise in the Caribbean while being force fed.

I got up early every morning to run on the jogging track on deck 12 (5 laps = 1 mile) and to see the sunrise. Calories burned about 300. After that, to the gym for 1/2 hour or so, to bike, do situps, weights and rowing machine. Calories burned, about 250. After that to the pool and doing laps

for 15 minutes. Another 200 calories burned. Now for a quick shower to my cabin and on to the Windjammer restaurant for a great breakfast buffet of about 3,000 calories. Self control is nonexistent. It's only 9:30 a.m. and I am already 2,250 calories surplus and it only gets worse from here.

At dinner, heaven forbid that you can't make up your mind if you'd rather have salmon or prime rib. No problem. They bring you both. With dessert. One has to be very definite about what he wants, otherwise the waiter brings everything on the menu (usually 6 items). And that's just for you.

Another great pigout is the midnight buffet and dessert bar. Everything imaginable is there. Chocolate stuff in every form. Black Forest cake, cheesecake, cherry cobbler and hot apple strudel, my personal favorites. The head pastry chef was a German — do I have to say any more? So here I am at 12:30 a.m. at night with another 2,000 calories. Now what you want to do is go right to bed afterward so you don't burn any calories. They are precious and have to last 'til breakfast. Good thing that the cruise was only 7 days; but we were forewarned. They told us that we board the ship as passengers and get lifted off as cargo.

The ship "Navigator of the Seas" from Miami to Labadee (Haiti), to Jamaica, to Grand Cayman, to Cozumel (Mexico), to Miami. It was a great cruise.

So the new "slug" (me) got off the ship, but my spirits were high, because I knew that help is just around the corner. With our rental car we were on our way to see Russ and Betty in Fort Pierce. I knew that Russ would whip me back into shape. On our first run he wanted to do 4 miles of bridges. (bridges are Florida's mountains) In the past this "bridges" thing was just a big ha ha, but now I found that slugs can't do bridges very well (or even ant hills) and while we were running I was wishing Russ would slow down but I didn't say anything

(oxygen debt I guess).

Two days later he arranged to meet some of his running friends at the park for a 3 miler on dirt trails. That was nice. Around 70 degrees. Shorts and singlets — Strider singlets, that is. Nice bunch of people to run with. At the end of our run, Russ decided that he wants to do speedwork, on a quarter mile parking lot track. All the others bailed out and Willi was stuck to do speedwork with Russ. He didn't see me cuss but I must say after the workout it felt good.

Our last run was around the development where Russ and Betty live. Very nice place. We did around 4 miles with a short w.c. stop at the clubhouse. Glad we ran together. Russ is quite an inspiration. He got me back on track and if I don't go on any more cruises, then I should be OK! Trouble is, my wife Shirley may have something to say about that.

Willi Frederich

P.S. My GPS and cell phone worked to perfection. No problem, mon.

Lake Wyola Results List, Omission of Bill Johnson's Times

Editor's note: in past newsletters we've all seen the all time bests and streaks at Wyola. Bill Johnson pointed out to me that his times were not in them. So I asked former RD Willi Frederich how we could omit such distinguished times. Here is his answer.

Bill Johnson and his Lake Wyola stats. Not much to talk about, really. He ran it only twice. His best time was 29:51 in 1983. Then he left the club. He can pay back dues for the years and get reinstated on the Die Hard List or he has to start from scratch. (isn't it nice how we give him choices?)

P.S.: the reason we still have non-members

(Continued on page 4)

on the top of the list is that they are fast and did contribute to the Shenipsit Striders' record setting team.

Willi Frederich, RD

Happy Trails by Scott Livingston

Dear Readers, in the style of legendary writer, George Plimpton, I crossed over to the *other side* in order to experience and document the rigors of running a road marathon. I am writing this following the race and this printed page stands as proof that I survived and confirms that I can really suffer. When I was asked to describe the experience in one word, I simply replied, "Painful."

This experiment started more than eight months ago. Following a discussion about my family's 1983 trip to Walt Disney World in Orlando, FL, I made a comment about a twenty-year reunion. My family liked the idea and we committed to a 2003 trip to celebrate. Many great things come from being married to a runner (Debbie). On the other hand, the relationship can leave you worn out from time to time. Upon hearing about a Livingston Family pact to return to Disney World, Deb weighed in with her thoughts. She said, "Well, if we are going to go all the way to Florida, we mine as well go when they have the marathon." Just what was she implying? That she would run? That we would run? That I would run?

A marathon trip meant that we would not celebrate our twentieth anniversary vacation in 2003, but that we would commemorate it in January 2004 when the Walt Disney World marathon was due to be held. This did not seem like a big problem, but when she entered to run the race, I seemed to be sucked along as if I was stuck in a tractor beam. Drafting off Deb in any pursuit is usually an exhausting proposition, and not just because her slight frame does not offer much protection from the wind. She seems to cover all types of terrain faster than most and she is in perpetual motion. When following, I just try to hang on.

The original plan called for Deb, my brother-in-law, Steve, and I to run the marathon. After we all registered, Steve and my sister, Stacie, were forced to cancel their trip because she found out she was pregnant and the due date was too close to the trip. Undaunted, Deb and I remained signed on for the race and we were going to be joined on the trip by her brother, Tom, and both sets of our parents. They would fulfill

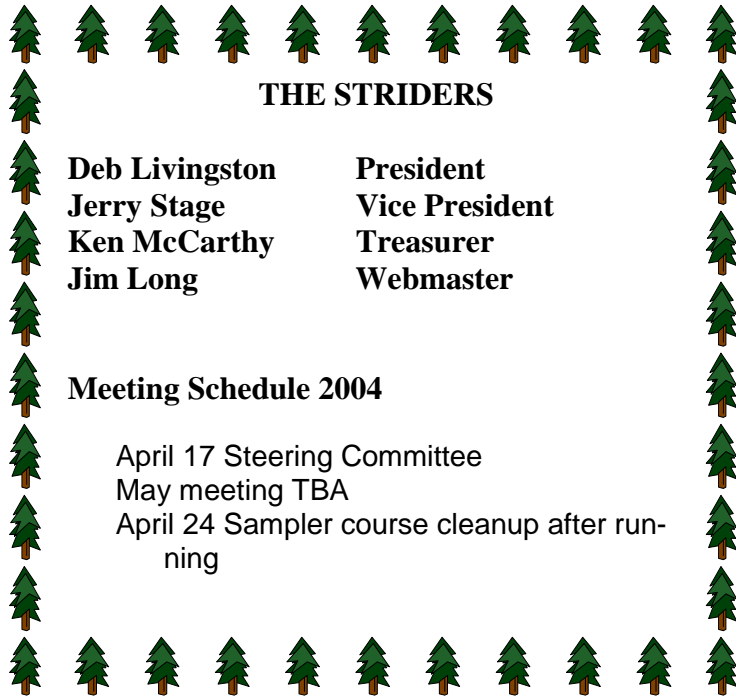
the role of loyal spectators.

Disney was my first marathon. As many of you know, I am not a runner, or at least I say I am not a runner. I ran cross-country in high school and was a good fourth runner on a solid team that won the Connecticut Boy's Class MM Cross-Country Championship in 1989. This was a great experience, but I was no Jim Ryun. My oversized wire frame glasses and double knee braces contributed to my unique look. Back then, it was cool to wear boxer shorts under your running shorts. For good luck, I ran every race in my lucky Mickey Mouse boxers that bore the autograph of famed Irish Connection runner, John Treacy. The Disney influence started back in 1989.

A typical late 1980's running ensemble also called for a backwards facing painter's cap, like Amby Burfoot would wear, and garish sunglasses in some fluorescent color. If you were out training you wore a cotton t-shirt, but it had to be inside out. No one wore polypropylene, Bergelene, Capilene or any other kind of "lene." Everyone on the team referred to each other by their *mother's* name and extreme sarcasm was in. Needless to say, running in high school was fun. I did a little running for fitness during my first year of college, but one day while in the middle of a run along the Charles River in Cambridge, my knees locked up. I abruptly stopped running altogether. Knee pain was not something I wanted to live with for the rest of my life.

I took up cycling in earnest and was very serious about riding exclusively for the next ten years, until I met Deb at the 1999 Vermont 50 Miler. *Mind you, all of this background will eventually end up in a description of my marathon experience.* The only running I did during the 1990's was on Thanksgiving Day at the Manchester Road Race. For years, it was the only run of the year. There was no warm-up, no warm down, just the race. After I met Deb, I started to run a bit again. We had some fun running together and I started doing the odd trail race, snowshoe race, or road 5K. My knees were ten years older and could handle the running as long as I did not run multiple days in a row.

By 2000, my glory days of bike riding were over and I was tired of the scene. It was time to mix things up again. After a couple years of cyclocross and a year of adventure racing in 2003, I was interested in doing something different to kick off 2004. The Disney Marathon would be different and I figured it would at least be fun to write about it. My training was meager in the months leading up to the race. Deb is a disciple of "Jack Daniel's Running Formula." When I heard about this, I figured that she must be joking. If she was going to use the Daniel's Formula, then I was going to train on beer alone! The program worked for her, but I had not trained formally in several years. My cycling form



THE STRIDERS

Deb Livingston	President
Jerry Stage	Vice President
Ken McCarthy	Treasurer
Jim Long	Webmaster

Meeting Schedule 2004

April 17 Steering Committee
 May meeting TBA
 April 24 Sampler course cleanup after running

was well off and I was just riding and running to have fun and stay fit.

I approached the marathon in the same low key way that I approached adventure racing. I figured that I could get through it on desire and a lot of GU's. My big problem was that I set an ambitious goal for a "non-runner." Knowing that this race would be my first and last at the 26.2 mile distance, I picked 2:55 as the target time with a sub-3:00 as my second goal. The first goal would require that I hold a 6:40 minute/mile pace the whole way. Disney is a flat course, so I figured that it was doable even on my twenty miles/week for ten weeks regimen. Should I have been surprised when I finally hit that wall? After all, I had run my Disney qualifying time (1:24:43) at the Martha's Vineyard Half Marathon (my longest road race ever) and that was on an average of 12 miles/week training. Even Jack Daniel's book projected a sub-3:00 finishing time.

Race day dawned and there were approximately 9500 marathoners and an additional 7000 half-marathon participants. This made the intimate crowd at last year's Savoy Trail Race look very small by comparison. Disney is a good first timer's marathon and it does not attract a large group of speedsters because there is no prize money. The race started at 6 A.M., so we had to board the bus in front of our hotel by 4:00 A.M. I got up at 2:45 because I wanted to eat and digest in time. Brother-in-law Tom helped us by performing Sherpa duties, which was awesome. The runners without helpers had to shed their warm clothes 45 minutes before the start and more than a half mile from the line. This made for a long cold walk

in the 38-degree Florida "heat." Even with Tom's help, Deb and I were frozen solid by the start of the race.

I have never seen more porta-potties in my life. Thousands of them lined the parking lots and roads near the starting area. This race would have given fellow trail running scribe, Bob Worsham, a lot of juicy stuff to write about! After the long march to the start line, several of the 4000 race volunteers sorted us into our respective "corrals" based on our finishing times which were pre-qualified when we sent in our race applications. Debbie started in the "Elite" category, which is otherwise known as the front row. They even had a warm bus for the Elite runners while the rest of us froze our butts off. I should have trained more! I started in "Corral A" a short distance behind. The gun went off with some modest fire works while Mickey and Minnie waived from the top of a platform raised high in the air.

I passed Deb around the 1-mile mark and did not see her again until the 18-mile mark when I saw her running the opposite direction. Debbie ran an awesome race. Her goal was to run under 3:10. She ended up finishing in 3:08:24, which was nearly 7 minutes under her P.R. She was as high as fifth woman on the road, but faded slightly and was caught by two women in the final mile. She ultimately finished seventh and third in her age group, which is still remarkable. She did not get the lovely Mickey Mouse trophy for being first in her division, but she was recognized for her accomplishments at the award ceremony and is to be complimented for running a smart race. She barely had a sore muscle afterwards and could have run another 26 in the afternoon. I on the other hand, suffered like a dog.

It was painful, agonizing, horrible, debilitating, and most of all, humbling. I have never suffered worse in any kind of race, though most of those races were on a bike where you can coast when the going gets tough. I have been so shattered in bike races that my vision was blurred, but I could always still turn the pedals over. The pain experienced at the end of this marathon was like none felt before. My goal was ambitious, but I was touting this race as my first and last marathon, so I had to run this one fast and I had to run it in style. In order to reach my goal, I had to hold the 6:40 minutes/mile pace for the entire race. Based on my limited training runs, this was feasible (in theory), but had not been tested beyond the 16-mile mark. 16 to 20 and especially 20 and beyond was totally uncharted territory for my legs. In retrospect, I was counting on my ability to suffer more than I should have.

I ran the necessary pace for 19 miles and then it all

went wrong. I ran the next 5 miles slightly off the pace but I would have still finished under 3 hours, which was my more conservative "second goal." Despite a hot spot on my right foot and some quadriceps pain in my right leg, sub-3 seemed eminently doable right up until the 24 mile mark. All I had to do was run a couple more 7 to 8 minute miles. How bad could that be? Well, really bad.

My legs seized up at the start of mile 25 as I entered the World Showcase at Epcot. The cumulative effect of 25 miles on asphalt and Disney concrete had proved to be more than I could take and suddenly every step was torture. I was never out of breath, but I slowed to a jog and then a walk as fresher runners raced by me. I was practically in tears and staggering with my hands on my quads for support. I have seen video of Julie Moss' famed crawl to the finish of the 1982 Hawaii Ironman. I have also seen Paul Newby Fraser's famous collapse at the end of the 1995 Ironman. Thoughts about these women flashed through my head and they were not very motivating. A lot less was at stake for me. Thankfully, there were no cameras recording my pain.

The triumphant kick to the finish was not going to happen. I was looking around for help, but it was up to me and me alone to put one foot in front of the other and make it to the finish. I could hear the roar of the crowd from across the lagoon. I kept looking back for Deb, figuring that she was going to come up from behind. I had slowed to a walk and each step was filled with muscle pain. My legs were stiff, but not cramped. It felt like my muscles had been pulled apart. This was worse than any dreaded bonk that I had experienced before. I had taken in more than enough food and water. I even carried an Endurox-filled bottle in a waste belt, in true trail runner fashion. I stared at my watch in disbelief as I walked the longest mile of my life. When I rounded the finishing corner and could see the finish line, I stopped whimpering and mustered the strength to jog in front of the thousands of spectators. I crossed the line in 3:06:15, which is respectable but not the time I set out to run. I stood at the finish, hands on my legs once again, and waited for Deb. She crossed the line a couple minutes later and I gave her a big hug.

We exited the finish area, collected our finishers' medals, posed for some photos, and weaved our way to the family meeting area. I was chilled and with Deb's help, I put on every piece of clothing that I had in my bag. I could barely get my wind pants over my running shoes because my legs had completely lost their flexibility. The ordeal was over and we headed back to the hotel for some sleep.

I trashed my body and have no desire to do it again. Looking back, it was exciting to test the limits of endurance. I have since crossed "Hawaii Iron Man" off my list of life goals, though both cycling cross country and

through-hiking the Appalachian Trail remain on the list. Can you even imagine running 26.2 after swimming 2.4 and riding 112? I cannot and I have the utmost respect for those who have done it. There will be other goals and other races.

Who knows if there is another marathon in my future? I have sworn them off for now. My mind seems to be built for the challenge, but not my body. Sport has always been a spiritual experience for me. Pushing the limits is something I enjoy. Thanks for allowing me to share my experiences with you.

-February 2004

You can get to the Disney Marathon Website at this address (just in case you want to sign up for 2005):
<http://dwww.disney.go.com/wideworldofsports/index>

You can search the results here or from the previous link:
http://www.signmeupsports.com/Upload/UploadView.asp?EventID=18874&Profile_ID=3269&origin=e

Editor's note: last month I was able to put in the preliminary race report from Scott, but I thought that the full feature would be a good follow-up.

Empire State Run-Up

From Richard Bolt

Dear Mountain Runners,

Below is Paul Low's account of his first Empire State Building Run-up. Paul Low is the 2002 and 2003 USATF Mountain Runner of the Year and a member of the Teva US Mountain Running Team. Paul is currently a graduate student at UMASS Amherst. See Paul at:

<http://www.geo.umass.edu/grads/low/>

Race: Fleet Empire State Run Up
Date: February 3
Location: New York City, NY
Distance: 86 fl.
Time: 11:11
Place: 4th

Comments: The Fleet Empire State Building Run-Up (FESBRU) is a race that I have wanted to run for a few years now. As a mountain runner, stair racing has intrigued me as a juxtaposition of the sacred and the profane. Mountain running is sacred. The races take place on courses that were, depending on your philoso-

phical bent, created either by millions (or billions) of years of plate-tectonic-driven orogenic processes, God, or both. Race courses, as a matter of necessity, take competitors through unspeakable natural beauty and often finish in locales so perfect that one can't help but consider amending some future will in order to ensure that your ashes are one day scattered in such a place. Running inside, no matter what the occasion, is profane- even something so viscerally enlightening as the employ of nothing but muscle, sweat, and a little bit of luck to climb over 1000' in a matter of minutes. Actually, the lobby of the Empire State Building has some really nice granite and the view from the observation deck is unique, stunning, and, dare I say it, beautiful. In between lays a stairwell painted dark gray and a few service corridors whose design was not exactly aesthetic in its intent. The stairclimb as an athletic event is thus an evolution toward purity. The mountain in the beauty void. Without the distraction of natural beauty, only pure effort and the singularity of getting to the top faster than anyone else remains. This is the intrigue- asking yourself for but a few minutes of shear, athletic aggression and expecting nothing in return.

The media frenzy surrounding this race is amazing. Admittedly, this was one major reason that I had wanted to run here. In the warm up area, one floor below ground level, there were a probably half a dozen cameras interviewing competitors. This was nothing compared to the scene in the lobby where bleachers were needed in order to accommodate all of the press. The winners were shown on CNN and countless major media outlets report on the race. USA Today even published an article in which they interviewed me regarding my training for the event. This, of course, was before it became public knowledge that I suck at stair racing.

Going into the race, I felt that greatest obstacles to my success were the start and the short duration of the event. The start is on the ground floor in the lobby with about 20 feet between the starting line and a single door leading into the stairwell. Race numbers one through ten had priority on the starting line; with number 41, I was very lucky to sneak a spot on the line to the extreme right side of the corridor. This was a big mistake. While I probably knew more about fluid dynamics than any of my competitors that day, I had not realized that this should have been a factor my choice of starting position. In a normal race, the field moves according to the decisions of individual competitors each of whom are trying to run the shortest allowable distance to the finish line. In the FESBRU, however, the field behaves as a Newtonian fluid wherein the flow velocity at the center of the flow conduit is double that of the average flow velocity. This is, of course, assum-

ing laminar flow, which, it will soon be evident, was not entirely applicable to the situation. I do not remember anything between the blast of the starting horn and entering the stairwell. A well-timed photo from the NYCRR website indicated that numerous runners had already passed me in the first 5 feet of the race. Somehow, I managed to get to the bottom of the stairs halfway down in the field! After navigating my body through the doorway, I ran smack into the back of the runner in front of me. Instantly, the runner behind me ran into the back of me. It is at this point in the race, that the waiting begins. After running all out at the gun, the majority of the field than proceeds to stand still and wait for the congestion to clear sufficiently for forward motion to resume. This part of the race probably comprised less than one second; however, for those runners who's competitive nature has been sharpened by years of hard work (everyone in the race), the wait seems to take an eternity.

Finally, we were (physically) allowed to move forward. The next few minutes were filled with easy running as passing is very difficult. At this point, I was very discouraged about my chances of finishing well. Then, I looked up to see that race favorite (and eventual winner), Rudolf Reitberger was only two runners ahead of me. This convinced me that, despite what I thought was an awful start, I still had a chance to finish well since Reitberger had finished second in his previous two attempts at this race. The next few minutes of the race, I passed many competitors who had capitalized on a better-than-average lobby dash and were now victim to staggering levels of blood-borne lactic acid. Passing these runners was relatively easy despite the narrow (4 feet wide) width of the staircase as, by this time, I was moving considerably faster than they were. With every additional flight, however, passing became increasingly difficult. After six or seven minutes of running up stairs, I was not moving that much faster than the runners that I was passing. The last three or four times that I passed runners required several flights for me to completely get by. By this time, we had managed to work our way into the bulk of the women's field who had started five minutes in front of the first men's heat- adding significantly to the difficulty of navigating a race on stairs. With a few minutes to go, I had moved into third and was thoroughly dispirited as I could not see the leaders and time was running out. My last two passes had been extremely difficult (physically demanding and psychologically defeating) and I was completely fed up with the event and with my inability to deal with its rigors. The only runner to pass me during the race then came up behind me and repeatedly attempted to forcefully pass on the right (inside). After being shoved and yelled at for a few flights, I pulled wide on the landing and allowed him the opportunity to pass on the inside. This was another mistake. A few minutes prior, it had taken me five flights to finally pass this guy. When I did so, it

was on the left (outside) with no assistance. In return, I endured a few shoves before entering into a nadir of apathy about the event and the nature of competition in general. This was the end of my race and I ran slowly to the top thinking about how much time and money had been wasted on the trip. Before completing the event, I had said that to run well in the FESBRU would require 95% pure, mountain running fitness and 5% specific stair running ability. In hindsight, I would change that to 75% pure mountain running fitness (the winner, after all, was an accomplished mountain runner who has beaten me on many an Alpine slope), 5% specific stair running ability, and 20% ability to pass people on a four-foot-wide staircase while maintaining focus on the race at hand (to word it a politely as possible). I work hard year-around on the first 75% and, for eight workouts this January, I worked pretty hard on the middle 5% by running as many as 10 repeats of our 29-story campus library in the course of a single session. I could probably work to improve my standing by focusing on that last 20% but I would view preparing for this event the same way that I would view training for running fast down a steep incline. There is no way to properly prepare for running extremely fast downhill except to do it in a race. No matter how hard I try, I am never going to run as fast down a hill in training as I will during an important race. Likewise, there is no way that I would subject myself to the sort of situations that would allow me to train for 11 minutes of extreme unpleasantness. Short of attending a Who concert or waiting for DVD players to go on sale at the local Wal-Mart, I wouldn't even know how to go about it.

Such is the nature of the event. The FESBRU is the oldest, most prestigious, and greatest stairclimbing race in the world. Part of this race and its honorable tradition is the lobby start and the utter craziness that its competitors must endure in an attempt to win it. Tradition is an important thing in racing and I hope that 26 years from now, the FESBRU is using the same course, the same starting procedure, and the same observation deck finish. Meanwhile, I will be looking for columnar joints in basalt, dragonflies, and columbines during my races.

Richard Bolt
Team Leader
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Editor's note: This just seemed like an interesting perspective on a unique race and unique runner.

Around The Mountain

Lots of things going on at the Forest these days. We just had our annual cleanup crew work with the Reddington Rock people to get the leaves removed. Dan Wright, Jerry Stage, Bruce Marvonek, Willi Frederich and spent time helping there (while many others were helping with the Spirit of Spring race).

We have even more work to do to get the Sampler ready for the May race. The section where you first enter the trails from the dirt road right through the beaver pond area is all logged. It's passable, but not raceable so we need to get out clear it to some extent. I am planning on going out there on April 24 after our morning run to work on it. We could use volunteers with bow saws, clippers and perhaps even a chainsaw. If you don't have equipment, I'm sure there'll be work dragging/carrying away brush.

Besides that work, Jerry will be trying to organize a group to do the usual paint touch-ups. Many of the white dots need to be restored throughout the course.

It's been a good training year so far. Rich Moore had started running with Bill Johnson and got us all together for a Sunday run in January. That lead to a regular Sunday run, and I corrupted the positive aspects by introducing a bottle of beer as our post-run beverage. So I guess you could call it our Sunday Beer Run.

Anyway, it is nice having a group to train with. We push and pull each other and generally provide a lot more motivation for each other than we would get running alone. This weekend we got out to Northern NipMuck to run the race course one way. We got Bruce Marvonek to join us, and despite his knee injury and lack of running he could still have kicked our butts if he'd wanted to. It was good prep for the race on April 10.

We also got to run with Clint Morse a few times as he got back out to the Forest a few times around the Moonlight Run. It would be nice to see more of you on Saturdays.



Russ and Willi enjoying a retirement run. Note that Willi is proudly wearing his Striders singlet. I am not sure that his expression is actually a smile, or that he appears to be slightly ahead of Russ. I believe that he's actually grimacing, and that Russ had just stopped to tie his shoe. It was kind of Russ to run with Willi to prevent him from becoming disoriented in the unfamiliar surroundings.

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Or if you prefer the Beer Run, give us a call.

Funniest thing about the Beer Run is that one week it was just Bill and I running. Out near Bald Mtn. I found a Budweiser in the middle of the trail and of course stowed it in my vest. About a mile later we found another Budweiser. Honest, I didn't plant them! Anyway, when we got to the Pinnacle (turnaround point) we popped the tops and enjoyed a true Beer Run.

It didn't help or hurt the run other than the bloated feeling from the carbonation!

I have to thank everyone who has contributed an article or more during the past several months. We seem to have developed a little momentum to keep this newsletter in-

teresting. And for further incentive, the more you others contribute, the less you'll have to listen to articles from me!

Quick update on the Sampler. I have had time to get out on the course and clear a section of the logged area. It's starting to look good. Jerry and I went out today (4/8) and decided that instead of clearing the final section just past the pond, we would reroute the course up and over a little hill. That saves a lot of work, and will make the course just slightly more difficult. We may not need to have a serious cleanup on April 24, but we could probably use volunteers anyway to go out on the long course to do some repainting of the dots.

Kevin Simons

Shenipsit Striders' Newsletter

U.S. Postage

It's never too early to enter the Soapstone Mountain Trails runs or the Lake Wyola Road race. Get the apps. from the website or hardcopy included with mailing.

Contributors: Willi Frederich, Russ Marth, Scott Livingston

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Next Issue: Whatever you send in! Please send material to Rich Moore, Deb Livingston, or Kevin Simons.
