



**Table of Contents**

**1... Feature Article by Philip McGoff**

**1... Another Mile**

**4... Birthdays, New Members**

**5... Club Runs, Club Info, On Your Mark...**

**Dates to Know**

**Sept. 18...Wed. night run switches to Winter Course**

**Sept. 25...General Membership Meeting**

**Oct. 5...Tow path run changes to 9 AM**

**Oct. 13...East Brunswick Races**

**Tuesdays...Track workouts**

**Wednesdays...Club Run**

**Fridays...Friday Night Out Run**

**Saturdays...Tow path run**

**Check rvrr.org for latest club**

## Reviewing the Running Stuff Out There

*by Philip McGoff*

This month: Staying the Course: A Runner's Toughest Race by Dick Beardsley and Maureen Anderson

This is a pretty good book, but not great. It would be a good book to read at the beach, since it is pretty fluffy and goes pretty quickly. A couple of days on the beach, and you'll probably be done with it. The book follows Dick Beardsley's running career from Hopkins High School in Minnesota (have I men-

tioned that I grew up in Minnesota?) through his great race at the Boston Marathon in 1982 and on to the end of his real competitive days. This is not a resource to figure out how to become a great runner. For the love of God, do not attempt many of the things that he did. I think that his workout schedule always read 'run more than last week, and do it a little faster.' The final third of the book deals with his addiction to pain killers. You probably shouldn't attempt the addiction to

pain killers either.

Beardsley grew up near the Minneapolis suburbs, in farm country. He didn't live on a farm, but he frequently worked on neighboring farms. He is every bit the simple, naive farm boy, a genuine rube. In high school, he realized that most guys with letter jackets had girlfriends. Wanting a girlfriend, he decided to try football. After getting smacked around on the gridiron, a friend suggested that cross country might be

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Another Mile in the Presidents Shoes

*By Pete Priolo*

I am writing this article fresh off the Half-Wit Half Marathon trip. In my opinion, this was one of the most difficult courses that I've ever been on. We had about six members do this race. After tacking the endless steep hills, downed trees, protruding rocks, and the oppressive heat, one of our members, Graeme Ackland, emerged as the winner of this race. His 1:35 time on this course is simply amazing, given the difficulty of this course. He will be with us for only several more days until he moves

back to Scotland. He was supposed to go back in August, but has graciously stayed around until he reaches his 40th birthday and run for our Masters team at the Liberty Half-Marathon on September 29. I personally would like to have as many members come to Jersey City on September 29 to wish him farewell.

In the beginning of the month, we had two teams at the River to Sea Relay. At the end of a very hot and brutal day, both of the teams finished only 6 minutes apart and close to the

expected 7:30PM finish that every team was expected to come in. All in all, a good many of the members involved had fun that day and I hope that we can get some teams for next year's event as well.

Well, it's time to shake off the sweltering heat of summer and look forward to the fall racing season. We start off with the cross-country 8 kilometer state championships at Deer Path Park in Readington on September 15. We would like to get at least one team from every division there to the race,

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Reviewing the Running Stuff Out There

*(Continued from page 1)*

more up his alley. He had a decidedly unspectacular career in high school, with a three mile cross country best of 16:01 (note that my high school best is much faster than this).

After high school, he went to the track powerhouse of the University of Minnesota, Waseca, a junior college. It isn't really a track powerhouse, but it has a fine agriculture department. (I'm pretty sure that the school does not exist anymore, as it was only 15 miles from

my home town.) He spent three years in junior college, hopping into a couple of marathons on a lark. He did run the national junior college marathon in his final year. It always freaks me out when I see that junior colleges had a national championship in the marathon. These are 19 and 20 year olds, for god's sake. Who on earth thought that this would be a good idea?

After junior college, he spent part of a year at South Dakota State, then left because of marriage. He

tried farming for a short while, then decided to continue with distance running. He kept at the marathon distance, and he kept improving. His debut marathon was at the 1977 Paavo Nurmi Marathon in Hurley, Wisconsin, where he ran 2:47:14. His best was at the 1982 Boston Marathon, where he ran 2:08:53 (note that my marathon best is much slower than this). In about four and a half years, he improved by nearly 40 minutes. It was a total of 13 marathons, each getting progressively faster.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Another Mile in the Presidents Shoes

*(Continued from page 1)*

so if you're interested, please see your respective captains so that you can be placed on the team. As I mentioned before, Liberty Waterfront Half-Marathon is the 800-point race of the year and will be a championship to all teams. This race will be held September 29. Also on tap is the cross-country 5-kilometer state championships in our backyard at Donaldson Park on October 12. Even if you do not want to participate you should at least come on down to see how the state's premier cross country runners do on our Summer Series course!

The East Brunswick Road Races will be held October 13. The East Brunswick Race Committee is calling for volunteers to help out with this race. Even if you are racing, we can use some helping hands earlier that day to help mark the course and set up the aid stations. Please contact Ray Petit if you want to volunteer. If you don't know his contacts (phone or e-mail), please contact me at ironpete@aol.com and I will send you his contact info.

As for club events, our annual

Summer Series Picnic will be held at Donaldson Park at noon on September 8. There will be the usual fun and games like Frisbee Toss, Egg, Toss, and croquet, and some new ones also. All members are welcome to attend the event. We will of course have food and drink also, so please come on down.

Our Wednesday Night Runs also have some special events tied to them also. On September 11, we will be commemorating the year anniversary of one of the darkest days in US history by holding the "Stars and Stripes Run". Please wear red, white, and blue for this run. Any US flags that you can wave while running will also be welcome. This day will also be the last day on the Summer Course; on September 18, we will be running on the Winter Course. I have checked the sunset records for this year, and I feel that this would be the right time for the switch. Also, on September 25, we have our third General Membership Meeting of the year. We will be having nominations for the 2003 Board that day, so start deciding you would like to nominate for the Board. We will be securing a guest speaker for that meeting also.

On the Friday Night Runs, we will be occasionally have special events also; we will be getting the word out through our mailgroup rvrr@yahoo.com and through the announcements on Wednesday Nights. Some of the things we did in August is to attend a "Plays in the Park" musical in Metuchen and join in Ken Verccamen's summer gathering at his house after the run.

Our Saturday Towpath Runs are still going strong. There are many members that are doing very long runs at this time. If you want to join in on a long run, or just do four easy miles, we can accommodate everyone. Please join us. The run starts promptly at 8:00AM every Saturday until the time shifts back to standard time in October; after that the run will switch over to 9:00AM.

Hope I didn't forget anything. If I did, the website is always up to date and the mailgroup will notify you of any upcoming events. Until then, let the wind always be at your back.

△

## Reviewing the Running Stuff Out There

(Continued from page 2)

Much of the book does concentrate on the 1982 Boston Marathon, the so-called 'Duel in the Sun' with Alberto Salazar. This is far and away the most interesting portion of the running part of the book. Beardsley ended up losing to Salazar by two seconds. Does anyone else remember when Americans were near the front of the Boston marathon? Or any major marathon, outside of Khanouchi? Americans rarely break 2:10 these days, and on that day two were sub 2:09. Just amazing. The race itself was spectacular, by all accounts. Beardsley and Salazar were essentially alone for the final nine miles, just beating on each other, never more than a few yards apart. Beardsley pushing for all he was worth, trying to break Salazar. Salazar refusing to break. Truly epic.

Beardsley's style of writing is very succinct and straight forward, and you may occasionally need a 'Minnesotan to English' dictionary. Few extra words, and he doesn't seem real concerned with times and workout details. He definitely doesn't overanalyze anything. A typical excerpt from the 24th mile of the 1982 Boston Marathon: 'We were killing each other. I'm serious. I had no idea how fast we were running. Didn't care. It didn't matter. I had no idea we were running at record pace.' Much better, though, is the unintentional comedy that is Dick Beardsley. One story that I had heard

many years ago dealt with one of his first marathons. He went on an all liquid diet a week before the marathon, having read that that is a good thing. He bought a new pair of racing flats the day before the race. He did a five or seven mile warm-up. By 18 miles, his new blue shoes were red, but he kept going. He was still doing surprisingly well at 22 miles. At 22 miles and two steps, the entire world crashed around him. He did finish, but the hallucinations were not remembered. Another episode involved a trip to Stockholm, Sweden, for a marathon. He was on a flight with Bill Rodgers, and they stayed at the same hotel, since they were both running the marathon. Arriving a couple of days before the race, Beardsley goes out for an eight mile run. Except that he gets lost, and he ends up with a 14 mile run. Shortly after getting back in his hotel, Rodgers calls wondering if he wants to go for a run. Since Rodgers is one of his heroes, he can't refuse, so he goes out for another 8 miles. That's a total of 22 miles just two days before a marathon. There are a number of other outrageous things that he did that are equally mind-boggling, and often hysterically funny.

After his most competitive running days, he bought a dairy farm, and had a multitude of accidents and injuries, many quite severe. One almost ripped his leg off and probably should have killed him. This led to extended hospital stays and many painkillers. He be-

came addicted to the painkillers, and eventually he sunk so low that he was arrested for forging prescriptions. He spent much time in rehab for the addiction, and he goes into great detail about the process of becoming a recovering addict. He writes about this episode of his life the same way he writes about the running part of his life--succinct and straight forward. He just tells it like it is. By all accounts, he has been clean and sober for a few years now, and he works as a fishing guide in northwest Minnesota. I'm almost tempted to go fishing up there on my next trip to Minnesota.

Final rating: ★★★ (out of four)

Recommended for: Anyone wanting an easy read about a pretty interesting distance runner, especially those afraid of being overwhelmed by too many details about times and distances. Anyone who doesn't realize there was a time when Americans competed well in major international marathons.

Not recommended for: Anyone afraid of facing details of addiction. Anyone looking for details of his training. △



## Happy Birthday!

### September 2002

\*\* - New Age Group

Anthony Bainbridge **	9/2
Greg Mullins	9/3
Craig Bauer	9/3
David Brown **	9/11
Carl Rocker	9/11
Sue Juronics **	9/13
Paul Grassie	9/13
Graeme Ackland **	9/22
Paul Fiorilla	9/23
John Dale	9/27
Richard Myers	9/27
Butch Pivano	9/27
Michael Ferinden	9/29

### October 2002

Jennifer Kolarsick	10/1
Don Bergman	10/2
Jennifer Kirsch	10/3
Julie Pape	10/3
Conor Gaynor	10/4
Julie Mazza	10/6
Roger Shatzkin	10/7
Shuvo Rafiq	10/7
Tom Ostroski	10/8
Steve Fisher	10/8
Rosanne Ilardo	10/9
Ann Marie Rakovic	10/10
Michelle Burke	10/10
Ginny Werner	10/12
Frank Joworisak **	10/18
Jo Ann Coffee	10/19
Paul Krentar **	10/23
Jerry Baron	10/25
Ed Levy	10/25
Luke Huggins	10/26
Robert G. Hopkins	10/27

## Welcome New Members

Jan Van Eeuwen	Wayne
Shuvo Rafiq	Plainsboro
Benai Dickinson	Westfield
Matthew McCoy	Highland Park
Europa Malynicz	Highland Park
Joseph Balint	Union
Mia Oliver	New Brunswick

### Welcome Back

Jim Ryan East Brunswick

## RVRR Shorts and Singlets for Sale

Just in time for the racing season.

*RVRR singlets - Coolmax White Mesh*

Male: M, L, XL

Female: M, L, XL

Cost per item is \$17. Mail check and 'Ship to' address to RVRR, PO Box 1197, Edison, NJ 08818-1197. Singlet will be mailed to you via first-class mail. High-split running shorts

## Upcoming Events

**September 15** - XC 8K State Champs at Deer Path Park - call respective captains if you want to be part of a team.

**September 18** - Switch to Winter Course

**September 22** - Pfalz Point Trail Challenge

**September 25** - General Membership Meeting - nominations for 2003 Board - guest speaker TBA. Also deadline for Equinox T-Shirt design contest. Voting on winning design will be done at the meeting.

## T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST!

RVRR is having a T-shirt design contest for the new Equinox 20K race to be held March 23, 2003.

If you would like to submit a design please send it to:  
T-Shirt Design Contest  
8 Cedar Court  
Bedminster, NJ 07921

OR Give your designs to Dana Gross or any of the other members of the Equinox 20K race committee.

All submissions must be in by the first week in September. Voting on the designs will take place at the September general membership meeting.

GOOD LUCK TO ALL!

**September 29** - Liberty Waterfront Half Marathon - contact respective captains to be part of team.

**October 12** - USATF XC State Champs 5K in Donaldson Park - our Summer Series Course! - contact respective captains to be part of team.

**October 13** - IMPORTANT - Volunteers needed for East Brunswick 10k. Those who are running in the race can volunteer also (i.e. setting up the course beforehand). Please talk to Ray to volunteer.

**Raritan Valley Road Runners**

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John MacGillivray	1990-1992
John Pretzell	1993-1994
Mark Rogalski	1995-1996
Ray Petit	1997-1998
Trink Poynter	1999-2000

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**Wednesday Night Runs**

The Raritan Valley Road Runners have met weekly for *Sixteen* years of consecutive Wednesday night runs! **Come join us at 6:30 PM at the Highland Park Senior Citizen's and Youth Center at the intersection of Benner St. and S. 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.** Parking is available in well-lit lots adjacent to the building. Come dressed in your usual running garb. We are currently running the winter course that goes through the streets of Highland Park. Runs of 4.5 and 7 miles are offered. After the run join us for dinner!

**Week Place**

- 1 **Dolls** Rt. 27 South, 1<sup>st</sup> bldg. on right past railroad bridge, New Brunswick
- 2 **Dolls (again)**
- 3 **Tumulty's Pub**
- 4 **Dolls (again)**
- 5 **Szechwan Gourmet**  
3 Livingston Ave., New Brunswick △

**Saturday Towpath Runs**

Every Saturday morning at 8 AM, we meet in Johnson Park, Piscataway at the Grove 5 parking lot for a group run. Take the oneway park road west from Landing Lane (between Landing Lane Bridge and River Rd). Turn left into the first parking lot. .

The run is out-and -back on the D&R Canal towpath. Typical distances vary from 4.8 to 20+ miles and runners of all levels are welcome! Runners should arrive by 7:50 AM to run with the group. In the event of the lot being closed, you can park in the lot near the end of the road at the Old Towne Village.

Due to the loss of the heat and humidity, starting Saturday October 5, 2002, the run will start promptly at 9:00 AM! It is also nice to not have to get up so early on a Sat. morning △

**On Your Mark...**

*Rebuilding, rejuvenating, and reinventing yourself.*

Every so often you go through a period of low, or even no, motivation. Every workout becomes work instead of fun. I am experiencing this for the second time in the last ten years. The first time was after my first Ironman race back in 1994. The following year I did only a few races and I did not enjoy the training, and especially the racing.

Did you ever notice that when you are out of shape and not motivated, how training and racing are so much more painful.

I pretty much decided back in mid-summer that this year was just going to be a rebuilding year. A year to just try to keep from getting too fat and to maintain what running

form that I could by running one and sometimes two days a week. It is amazing how much extra time you have when you are only training a couple of hours a week.

I am using this vacation time to replenish the batteries and gear up, mentally and physically, for what hopefully will be a good year.

I have known many folks who have gone through this. One of the clubs leaders is currently going through this. He or she (pronoun used to protect the guilty) may not admit it, but I can see it in his/her demeanor. There is nothing wrong with this, it is normal to get worn down after several years of hard training especially when life throws some right hooks at you. My advice is to just roll with it and enjoy the extra time to discover something new about yourself.

I know I have!

## Half-Wit Half Marathon

By Graeme Ackland

Kitchen, early August.

Graeme: "I've half a mind to do this RVRR road trip to Reading the day before you fly home":

Jane: "I'm sure that's all you'll need".

Toyota Corolla, Pennsylvania Turnpike, August 18th. James "Are we nearly there yet?" (repeat ad nauseam)

Morris, the official arboretum of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Jane "Whats behind that arboreal oddity?"

James "Here comes a REALLY long train. Choo choo"

Pottstown PA, p.m.

Graeme "Where's the diner? I'm hungry! where's the motel? I'm tired!"

James "Yum yum Zzzzzz"

Route 422 SuperEconoBudget-InnLodgeMotel 86 (or somesuch), a.m. (just)

Jane's watch "beep beep beep"

Jane: smack!

Graeme's watch: "beep beep beep"

Graeme: smack!

James: "Zzzzzz"

Edelmans Park, Mt Penn, Reading. 9a.m.

Ron Horn (no, really, that was his name...) "The course is marked with streamers and white flour. If you run a mile without seeing streamers or flour - you're lost asshole! Go"

One mile marker, 9:05:30

Lead pack: "Ooops, thats a bit quick".

And so it came to pass that I was lurking just off the pace in the half-wit half marathon.

By the time we'd scrambled up the reservoir dam, over fallen trees and up the first climb, the too-fast starters were gone. Ahead I could see a pack of three:

two-something-teen marathoner Chuck Crabb; the open category leader of the Pa trail running series, Ms Cassy Byrne sporting the only vest in the area, and some skinny, tanned athletic guy (STAG) in black shorts. Further ahead, but already out of sight, were three more identikit STAGs in black shorts. At 175lbs, I'm probably conceding 20+ to the leaders, and it tells going up: I decide on a walk-early-walk-often strategy. But by four miles I had hauled in the hindmost STAG and the staggering hind, Cassy having a bad day.

Rocks gave way to road, and I glimpsed the leaders who Chuck had now caught. Drinks on Skyline Drive from where, as you might guess, the only way is down.

Descending is something I know how to do: disengage brain, lean forward and. Down through the rocks. Bounce off the fallen trees. Bushwhack through the woods. Like flying, all you need do is try to fall down and fail. Within a mile, a minute deficit became a handy lead. Which vanished on the next climb as a STAG bounded by.

A feature of the race is the "128 steps from hell": I'd got back ahead descending to its foot, but the broken stone staircase with crawlun-derable fallen trees lived up to its name. Halfway came soon after, and at the foot of the "first monster climb"(!) I had almost a minute lead over the STAG pack. Signs adorned the trees offering varied mockery. "the winners run up this" cried a step section. No they jolly well don't thought I.

By the top, the chasing STAG had

almost caught me. But then came another descent, and down by the beer stop at 10 miles (they thought I looked too serious to offer me any) I was away, and 20 mins of running, jumping, rocks, roots and logs later I emerged only slightly scathed from the woods: a personal worst half marathon time and a course record of 95 minutes.

Chris also placed in his age group, and we came away with some splendid equine posterior trophies. Others had less luck: Jane toiled with blisters and Julie spent much time admiring the ground. And the beer-class winner downed 17 en route, pausing only to complain that there was too much head on the beer.

Admittedly I'm biased and half-witted, but I thought it was wonderful.

Any chance of spreading some rocks and felling some trees on the equinox 20k course?



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