

WHAT'S AFOOT

a Newsletter for the Stevens Creek Striders

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What's In This Issue

President's Message
Calendar of Events
Quadruple Dipsea
Race Reviews
Facing Traffic. Hazardous to Your Health?
Race Results
Club Meetings

President's Message

Welcome to 1998 and Happy New Year. The year 1997 went by pretty fast and pretty well for the Striders, with lots of activities and accomplishments on the part of individual members and groups of members. Participation, I think, was at an all time high. With relays, attendance at fun functions, trail parties, active involvement in nominations for Big L's, holiday party preparation and attendance, there was lots going on throughout the year. Hope each of you had as much fun as I did at the events.

This is the first year I've done the Christmas relays in the past fifteen years. What a turnout!! We had eight teams - thirty -two runners - and some support friends as well. It was a lot of fun in spite of the fact that those running leg four got absolutely drenched before and during our run. Jerry Hill's motor home was a really big plus and provided shelter, rest rooms, coffee and goodies as well as fodder for jealousy among other teams standing in the rain. Thanks a bunch, Jerry!!! Thanks also for a great organizing job by Janine Hernandez.

Our esteemed treasurer, Emily Jones, has departed once again for Detroit to accept an employment offer she couldn't refuse. Best of luck to you, Emily, and thanks for the excellent work in maintaining our financial records. However, this leaves us without an official treasurer for the

remainder of the board term. Fortunately, Darryl Denton, as the Sargeant at Arms, has agreed to shoulder the Treasurer's duties for the rest of the term. Thanks, Darryl.

About fifty people attended the Holiday party, a pretty good turnout as a percentage of the membership. Everyone had a good time with great food, some unique entertainment and great dance music 'til midnight. We heard a few complaints about disappearing wine glasses with the caterers picking up their wares. The innovative members found some plastic glasses and remaining open wine bottles. Speaking of wine, Jim Bordoni once again generously provided the red wine for the party. Saves a lot of bucks and the wine is great. Thanks again, Jim, for your generous contribution.

We'd like your opinions on the Holiday party. I've put together a simple survey (other side of this page) to elicit some feedback. The next board will use it in their planning. We're always striving to improve. Please take a minute or two to respond and place your survey in the box on Saturday morning or mail it to P.O. Box 1176, Cupertino, CA 95015 Directions are real simple. On a scale of 1 to 5, assign a number to each suggestion. 1 means you DON'T agree with the statement, 5 means you REALLY agree. Please feel free to add comments. Thanks!

▪John Felde

Calendar of Events

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| San Francisco Half Marathon | Jan 25 |
| Death Valley Trail Marathon | Feb 7 |
| Jed Smith Ultra Classic | Feb 7 |
| The Great Race 4 mile | Feb 22 |
| Napa Valley Marathon | Mar 1 |
| Bidwell Classic Half Marathon | Mar 7 |
| Mercury News 10 K | Mar 15 |
| Houlihan's to Houlihan's 12 K | Mar 22 |
| American Rive 50-mile | Apr 4 |

HOLIDAY PARTY SURVEY

- I attended and I liked the party just the way it was. #---
- I didn't attend because I haven't enjoyed past parties. #---
- I didn't attend because of conflicting parties or party burnout. #---
- Eliminate the entertainment portion of the program. #--
- Move the Big L awards to the summer picnic or some other time. #---
- Reduce the cost substantially by having a pot luck at some location. #---
- Have the party at a restaurant, use their rooms and meal service. #---
- Eliminate the disc jockey and dancing portion while reducing cost. #---
- Eliminate the Holiday party completely or substitute something else. #---
- Move it to January or July and have an installation dinner and awards. #---
- I'll probably attend no matter what changes you make. #---
- I probably won't attend no matter what changes you make. #---
- I've got this great idea you guys probably haven't thought about. #---

COMMENTS :

The Quadurple Dipsea

If running up out of Mill Valley, over the open crest of Mt. Tamalpais Ridge, and then down the Steep Ravine into Stinson Beach isn't enough for you, then I've got just the ticket. Why not do it, oh, let's say, four times. That's how I spent my Saturday after Thanksgiving.

Now then, this is a race that inspires the truly masochistic, for it traverses the infamous 7.1 mile Dipsea Trail four times. That's right, and over it's course of 28.4 miles it climbs a full 9,200 feet, and, of course, descends 9,200 feet. YIKES!

Gayla Johnson and I entered the race; we were stoked. My wife, Susan, and Tom Kaisersatt were kind enough to come along to provide support. Early Saturday morning, the four of us drove up to Mill valley together and met up with other Striders that suffered from a similar lapse of good judgement. Noel Relyea and Pat Koren had entered the race, too, and they were on station, ready to roll.

We arrived in Mill Valley an hour early for the start. Unfortunately, I soon came to the harsh realization that this early arrival was really just in the nick of time... for men, that is. To my dismay, the usual ritual of waiting in line for a bathroom was to be much more than I had bargained for. With only one stall in the men's room, I was in line a full half hour before I got relief. And, as if inspired by poetic justice, every woman who walked by took a moment to chuckle and remind us that this is what they go through all the time. The women's line was non-existent... figures.

The race started promptly at 8:00 AM. Although the weather was cloudy and gray, it was actually perfect for running. With temperatures in the upper 50's and a light mist in the air, it was actually quite nice. The only wind we encountered was high on the ridge, and the dense redwood forest of Muir Woods just wouldn't be the same under other conditions. It rained only a short while during the race, but don't let this fact fool you. As a result of the heavy rains on the days preceding the race, the theme for the day was decidedly wet. Yes, we were all about to be treated to a genuine "slog-fest." The terrain was muddy beyond description; and as a result, every root and rock in the trail provided

more risk of slip than trip. Oh well, having "turkey loaded" to the maximum extent humanly possible only two days prior, I was ready for anything

The first mental obstacle you encounter on this course is the "stairway from hell". In three flights, totaling 676 stairs, the course climbs straight up out of Mill Valley. The good news is that, with the mass start, the crowd kept the pace down to a brisk walk up those stairs. Although frustrating to the adrenaline crazed runner, this was a blessing in disguise. Later in the race, the quadriceps of even the most ambitious runner would be thankful for the slow start.

After ascending this first monster of a hill, the trail descends into Muir Woods parking lot. From there the course begins the 2.4 mile climb up to the Mt. Tam Ridge. On this segment, the trail is steep, rutted, and unrelenting. It culminates at the top of "Cardiac Hill" where, mercifully, you finally get a break. However, the relatively level section of rough singletrack that follows is short lived, and you quickly begin a radical plunge down the Steep Ravine into the Stinson Beach area. Every rumor you may have heard about this stretch of trail is true, and then some. It is steep and traitorous. The wooden steps which permit passage of a dirt trail of this extreme grade seemed to be spaced at the most impossibly irregular and inconvenient intervals imaginable. Going up or down, they are no fun at all. But the scenery is exquisite, and we were on a mission. Sick though it may be, I love that stuff!

Reaching the bottom of this precipitous descent, the trail fiendishly begins another steep climb out of the woods, and onto the rolling coastal zone just above the beach. This little demon of a climb is appropriately called, "Insult Hill." From the top of this hill, the Dipsea trail continues across the gentle coastal dunes and descends into the town of Stinson Beach, the turnaround point.

At the aid station, I was greeted by the cheerful faces of volunteers and my crew, Susan and Tom. I wasted no time as I stuffed potatoes and Ultrafuel into my face. Turning one last time to my crew, I smiled and said, "Now that's a very long 7 miles. See you on the other side."

Once back on the trail, it was over the rolling dunes, up the Steep Ravine, down Cardiac, up and out of Muir Woods, and then down those pesky stairs. Then you turn around to go back to the beach,

then back to Mill Valley. I felt like I had a little voice telling me, "You're going to do this until you get it right!" Very spooky. And so the day passed, back and forth along this beautiful, yet devilish trail.

I had noticed that most runners were fairly light-hearted during the first traverse. At that time, most people looked up as they passed each other and offered words of encouragement and "high fives" to all. However, that mood was soon to change. For after a couple more doses of the Dipsea Trail, most folks seemed to have lost their cheerful disposition, if not their sense of humor, entirely. Most were striding, eyes cast to the ground, with the determination of the possessed. That good old "relentless forward motion" axiom kicked in, and runners pushed to finish the ordeal. It was a very memorable scene. I, myself, went the last leg on guts alone. By the time I reached the infamous steps for the last time, my quads were too stressed to even think of running. Not even downhill!

I happily crossed the finish line six hours, one minute, and 30 seconds after I started. Then, covered from head to toe with mud, I wasted no time in proceeding to the car to change into dry clothes and eat a turkey sandwich. All was right with the world...

■ Doug White

Race Review by Richard

What would you think of a race where the mile markers were accurate, the bathrooms had short or NO lines, and last minute registration for over 500 was quick and effortless? What would you think if every water stop had plenty of drinks, where some stops offered water bottles along with water cups, where the support personnel were competing to give you, the runner, the utmost in personal service? What would you think of a race where you lost your hat and extra shirt, only to find them arriving in the mail 10 days later, laundered and folded? What would you think if the finish line personnel were so efficient, they called out your name as you ran into the finish line, and had your results posted less than 15 minutes later? No this is not a dream, it was the Clarksburg 30k in November, possibly the best organized race I

have run of more than 100 races in my 24 years of running. It gets 5 Stars, and the race officials get my hats off for their efforts. I will send an extra donation just to congratulate them!

Running Against Traffic. Hazardous to Your Health?

What percentage of drivers turning right onto a boulevard not impeded by oncoming traffic actually stop their cars at the sign before turning into the boulevard. 75%? 50% 25%? To answer this question, I decided to conduct a not-so-scientific study, beginning this last summer, along Pruneridge Drive in Sunnyvale and Santa Clara. While running against the traffic, I watched all the cars turning right who did not have to stop because of traffic or other interference in front of them in the boulevard.

I decided not to test each driver by the legal standards for right hand turns. A legal turn requires turning on the right blinkers at least 100 feet. in advance, coming to a complete stop behind the sign or white stripe, looking both ways (including for pedestrians), and then looking forward while driving forward and to the right. Instead, my only requirement was that the driver stop completely before the sign or white stripe.

I was astounded at the results. After counting over 50 cars, ZERO came to a complete stop before either the sign or white stripe. Only one ever stopped at all, and that was more than 3 feet beyond the white stripe. None of the rest stopped at all, and nearly all were looking to the left while driving to the right.

The Lesson: If you run against the traffic on any type of boulevard, don't expect the drivers entering from the side streets to stop, to check the side walk or the street to their right, or to even look forward while driving right into the boulevard

The sad part? Probably some of the drivers are runners too.

■ Richard Schramm

Race Results

| Name | Time | Remarks |
|---|---------|--------------|
| Big Sur Trail Marathon | | |
| Pat Koren | 5:25 | |
| Quadruple Dipsea November 29, 1997 | | |
| Doug White | 6:01:30 | |
| Gayla Johnson | 6:35 | |
| Noel Relyea | 6:52 | |
| Pat Koren | 7:30 | |
| Clarksburg 30 K November, 1997 | | |
| Richard Schramm | 2:28 | |
| Run to the Far Side | | |
| Noel Relyea | 50:00 | |
| Christina Brownson | 54:55 | |
| Rob Larsen | | |
| Geri Spieler | | PR |
| California International Marathon December 7, 1997 | | |
| Bill Gough | 3:08 | |
| Rick Siemens | 3:18 | |
| Rob Greenlee | 3:37 | |
| Randy Mahony | 3:43 | |
| Christina Brownson | 4:32 | PR... Again. |

Board of Directors

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| President | John Felde |
| Vice-president | Janine Hernandez |
| Secretary | Tom Kaisersatt |
| Treasurer | Emily Jones |
| Social Director | Peggy Alfred |
| Newsletter Editor | Rob Greenlee (phone 650/ 327-1572 with race results) |
| Sergeant at Arms | Darryl Denton |

Track workouts led by Jim Bordoni continue every Thursday evening throughout the year. If you are interested, be at Cupertino Junior High School on Homestead Avenue and Route 85 at 6:00 PM (or a little earlier to warm up).

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Club Meetings Every Saturday at 8:30 a.m. at Stevens Creek Park, off Stevens Canyon Road, below the dam. Members meet to run, walk, bike and socialize. After each Saturday run, members meet for breakfast at Hobees Restaurant in the Cupertino Oaks Plaza. During daylight savings time a group meets at 6:00 PM on Tuesday and Thursday in the lower parking lot at Rancho San Antonio County Park for trail runs of 5 to 10 miles

Striders E-mail: To 'join' the list, send an e-mail message to the address

majordomo@alink.net

with any subject but with the main body of the message containing only the words 'subscribe striders' (without the quotes).

After you have joined the list, you can send mail to the list by sending your message to

striders@lists.alink.net

If you have any questions or problems, please send mail to Bob Downs at

bob@downs.com

or call Bob at (408-730-0664).

The Striders also has an 'outside' e-mail address that people can contact to find more about the club. This address is

STVCRKSTRD@AOL.COM

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