



What's Afoot?

Stevens Creek Striders' Newsletter

Editor: Larry Myers

August 2010

From the President's Desk

Greetings fellow Striders,

Welcome to the latest Newsletter. And thanks to the article providers and to Larry who put this all together. As we embark on a new year, we can take pride in our accomplishments of this past year. We again supported the Quicksilver event by staffing the critical Aid Station and for the 29th consecutive year we staffed the Last Chance Aid station for the Western States Endurance 100 mile run. The Last Chance Aid station has been consistently voted the best aid station in the event by the runners. We also had Strider members running in both events. In addition, this year we had four Striders complete the Vineman Ironman Triathlon. Let's hear a big congratulations to all runners and volunteers.

As we look forward to the upcoming year, the Striders will continue to support these events, as well as, propose other events to make your year as a Strider more enjoyable and fulfilling. If you have any suggestions, by all means send the board an email. Our focus will be providing programs and events that will be challenging to one and all.

Cheers,
Gene Kiernan

Strider's Board

The Strider's year ends on July 1st and with that comes the appointment of a new Board. The new Board assignments are:

President: Gene Kiernan

Vice President and Membership: John McKiernan

Treasurer: Mike Dhuey

Secretary and Holiday Party: Gregg Levin

Newsletter and Clambake: Larry Myers

WS100 Aid Station Captain & Spring Picnic: Lina McCain

Website: Randy Ison

Yosemite Hike

On August 20-22 a group of Striders camped at Oh Ridge and hiked Mount Conness. Thanks to Gene for organizing the trip. Watch the web site for an article.

Upcoming events

Sunday Sept 12th: Clambake Run and Potluck Lunch (see article in this newsletter)

Saturday Oct 23rd: Big Sur River Run and Campout (see website for more info)

December: Holiday Party (more info to follow, watch the web site)



Relay for Life

By Larry Myers

Stevens Creek Striders participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life on July 17-18. We formed "Team Tom" in honor of Tom Kaisersatt and did our laps on the track at Deanza College in Cupertino for 24 hours. We also raised money -- Team Tom contributed over \$1700, and the overall Cupertino event brought in over \$75,000. Penny Beeston, Peggy Alfred, and Peter Hargreaves helped organize the event, and we were joined by members of San Jose Fit. Thank you to all who participated!

Clambake Run and Potluck Lunch

By Larry Myers

Join us for the annual Clambake Run on the Skyline-to-Sea Trail, followed by a potluck lunch featuring yummy clam chowder at our exclusive beach picnic site.

When: Sunday, September 12

3 running options:

1. Saratoga Gap to Waddell Beach (30 mi) -- start at 7:00AM
2. Saratoga Gap to Big Basin (18 mi) -- start at 7:00 AM
3. Big Basin to Waddell Beach (12 mi) -- start at 10:30 AM

There is also an early-start option TBD. Rolling aid station along the way. Everyone brings along something to share for the potluck lunch (12:30 ish) plus their own drinks, beach chairs and utensils/plates etc. Questions? Contact Larry Myers lmymers95@sbcglobal.net

Sign up on eVite or e-mail to Larry.

The Western States Endurance Run? I thought that was a horse race!

By Lina McCain

My fascination with the Western States course began 33 years ago when my mother told me about the Western States Endurance Ride, commonly called the Tevis Cup. My mom fancied distance horse rides. My dad liked to ski. I used to ski with my dad and my siblings at Squaw. I wondered what the horse trail was like just over the ridge on which we skied and what it might be like to ride it. On the way to Tahoe, up highway 80, I would spend hours wondering where the trail was that took these riders all the way to Auburn.

Fast forward 20 years. For my 31st birthday I received from my boyfriend, now husband, a pair of running shoes. Within a year I was running on trails, and within two years I was training for my first ultra-marathon. Somewhere in there, I was told about the Western States Endurance Run, and a decade long dream began.

Not much can compare to finally realizing this dream. I owe the Striders a huge thank you for allowing me the aid station entry. It is because of the hard work of the Last Chance volunteers that I had the opportunity this year to attempt this crazy run from Squaw to Auburn.

Through 6 months of hard training, it was often on our minds what would the weather be like on race day? When it is hotter than hot, the finishing rate goes way down. When there is snow, the first mountain pass can be quite treacherous. Would I be able to finish? Would I be able to break 24 hours? I was so fearful of injury that I refused to practice the 100 mile distance on another course. I thought for sure that I had only one 100 miler in me, and that I'd come up lame after that.



Thanks to lots of hard training, and to a wonderful group of people to look forward to at Last Chance (captained by Peggy and Peter), and to a great crew (brother, Greg and husband, Bruce), and a super pacer (Penny), race day was not the insurmountable challenge that I had feared it might be. We had snow, some of it quite deep, but only for about 5 miles or so. It felt hot, and the night did not cool down much, but as evidenced by a super-high finishing rate, the heat was not too bad.

My high point, emotionally, was at Robinson Flat. It felt so good to be out of the deep snow and into a good running groove. The ten miles that preceded Robinson were very pretty, some of it the new section along French Meadow Reservoir. The low point, physically, was actually at Last Chance. I was feeling beat up, and worried about the canyons. It felt hot and I wasn't sure about having enough water. Ironically, I learned later that I should have been less worried about water and more worried about salt at this point. I was dizzy and weak going up to Devil's Thumb. I didn't feel great once I was there, but I did feel like I could keep moving. From that point on, I concentrated on keeping up a steady pace. Prior to Devil's Thumb, a 24 hour pace was within reach. Afterward, I could relax and just concentrate on finishing. It felt better. I felt more confident.

Once at Foresthill, I had my crew again and I got my pacer! Penny took us out of there at a good clip. We were alternately leading and following a few other pairs of runners, and at first I didn't even realize that Larry and his pacer (Tom's son, Eric), were one of those pairs! We went through the next Aid Station together with Larry and Eric, but not long after, my stomach got too full and I was having a hard time getting adjusted to using the headlamp. Larry pulled ahead, to be briefly seen at Rucky Chucky changing his shoes, and then like Speedy Gonzales he re-passed us and was gone.

I never quite got my running legs back, but found it relatively easy to power-walk. Mainly I could only eat gels and chomps and a little bit of fruit, but I was able to keep my sugar level up just fine. The worst of my nausea passed, but low grade nausea and lots of burping remained. Salt didn't taste good, so I thought that meant I didn't need too many salt capsules. That was wrong. Turns out that though I looked relatively good and my weight had stabilized from 4-5 pounds down to just 2-3 pounds down (the expected loss due to using up glycogen), my sodium level was woefully low on finish. Medical never would have flagged me in. The research study that I'd agreed to participate in revealed the problem. I'm very thankful to them. Knowing that I need to eat more salt helped me to feel better and recover faster from the very next race I did (Skyline 50k on August 1st).

Again, finishing the Western States 100 miler was a highpoint in my life. I'm thankful to the many that helped to make it happen. In addition to those I've already mentioned and the Striders at large, Charles Stevens was a super-helpful training partner. I finished in 26:17:53 and it almost went by too fast. Highlights in my memory include the sunrise going up to Emigrant Pass, briefly turning around there to see the lake; the slippery and beautiful snow; seeing Amy Palmiero-Winters with her prosthetic leg pass me in the snow and later seeing her racing around the track at the stadium to be the first ever amputee to finish WS; the rocks and streams and logs in between the snow; the majestic mountain beauty (miles of it!); the moon over the American River; crossing Rucky Chucky in a boat; a baby fox in the night; Penny's gentle guidance; the second sunrise; Greg and Bruce at Highway 49; Bruce again at Robie Point; and all the great friends at the finish! One of my mom's friends keeps asking: which horse did she ride? I had the best day a horse could ever have!



My first WSER

By Larry Myers

Preparation: I went up to Squaw Valley on Tuesday to get a few days of rest and acclimatization. Usually I show up for races tired before I even start, but WSER is special so I took the week off of work. I had a condo in the Squaw Village complex right near the starting line, and I spent the week stretching, running (a little bit), reading, and napping.

On Thursday, I attended the traditional opening ceremony at Watson Monument, which was actually held lower on the mountain near High Camp because of snow. Some people hike up to this, but keeping with my plan of rest, I took the cable car. On the way up, I met Amy Palmiero-Winters. She was attempting to be the first amputee to finish the WSER, and she did it. I had seen her running through Squaw Village the day before, and she caught my attention first because of her truly beautiful running form and athletic grace. It was only on a second look that I even noticed she was running on a prosthetic



leg. Amy told me that her work involves athletic programs for children with prostheses, and when the going gets tough for her, she just thinks about how the kids encourage her and she pushes through. What an awe-inspiring athlete!

The race:

Squaw Valley to Watson Monument (0-4 mi):
The start of the course is a 4.5-mi, 2500-ft climb up to Emigrant Pass. I had decided to walk the whole thing, and I stuck to this plan. I had done

this climb three times in training previously using a heart rate monitor so I had a sense of how hard I could push. However, today I was thinking about what I might feel like tomorrow morning after 80 miles or so, and I held back a bit. In about the first quarter of the climb, I met up with Bill Dodson. What an inspiring guy!

At about the halfway point, I was passed by a guy wearing a pink tutu, pink shirt, even pink running shoes. I was worried that it was a bit early in the race to be experiencing hallucinations, but later I found out he is actually a real person named Keith Straw, an accomplished ultrarunner. (He finished in 23:45.)



Watson Monument to Forest Road 51 (4-9 mi):
This year there was lots of snow in the high country and it caused trouble for the runners. This section traverses the south side of Granite Chief and Needle Peak, and there are many short, steep climbs on the sloping face. The snow turned these ups-and-downs into little ski runs, and many runners slid and fell. This section is always wet, and some of the trail even runs along creek beds, so this year it was very wet indeed. By the time we finished this section, everyone was wet and muddy. Generally the snow causes times through this section to be slower; Charles, who typically finishes under 24 hours, told me it slowed him down by about half an hour.



Forest Road 51 to Duncan Canyon (9-24 mi):

Because of the snow, the aid stations at Lyon Ridge and Red Star Ridge were not accessible, and the traditional course had to be altered. This had been done maybe four or five times previously in the history of the race, but this year was the first time this particular alternate route was used. The trail was scouted by Tim Twietmeyer, ultrarunning legend and current board president of WSER, just for this situation. Instead of running along the tops of the ridges, it dropped down to French Meadows Reservoir and then climbed back up to Duncan Canyon aid station where it rejoined the standard course. Tim said the alternate course was the same distance as the traditional one, but most people thought it was easier. This was my first WSER, but I had run the traditional course in training, and I would have to agree. The alternate course was mostly on gentle forest roads, while the traditional course is rolling and rocky.

Duncan Canyon to Last Chance (24-44 mi):

This section begins to get a bit more challenging, and in Duncan Canyon you get a taste of the bigger canyons that are coming up. Duncan Creek was more full than usual, so a rope guide was strung across it. Whereas in September I was able to cross without getting wet by jumping on stones, now it was knee deep, broad, and flowing fast. The climb out of Duncan canyon to Robinson Flat always seems to me to take longer than it should. Robinson Flat is one of the major aid stations where a lot of runners meet their crews. This year access was restricted because there was snow there also. I met up with my crew for the first time 8 miles further on at Dusty Corners, where my son Richard was waiting. At this point I felt a bit drained, and Richard said it showed, but onward I went to Last Chance. It was a real boost to see my Striders friends and receive their encouragement.

Last Chance to Foresthill (44-62 mi):

This section, known as The Canyons, is the toughest part of the course, and on some

training runs in the past it has broken me. The three steep descents and climbs are tough; however, this year I was ready, and it went well. During the three-day training camp over Memorial Day weekend, plus the Friday before -- running with an informal group including Striders Lina, Charles, and Dennis -- I had run the canyons a total of three times so I had good confidence that I could beat them. The first canyon that leads up to Devil's Thumb is the steepest. In 2009 training camp, I had to drop out at this point due to an IT band problem. What a difference a year makes. The second climb up to Michigan Bluff is just about as bad, and in fact it always seems more tedious to me. One problem is that it is more exposed, and the heat starts to take its toll. However, I met my whole family at the top so that gave me a boost. The third canyon is the shortest, and I find it kind of fun to run (well, it's all relative). At the bottom of this canyon, Volcano Creek was the last deep-water crossing of this year's race, also with a rope assist.

Foresthill to Rucky Chucky (62-78 mi):

Foresthill is the biggest aid station since it the most accessible being in the town of Foresthill, and it is also the place runners pick up their pacers. Here I met up with my pacer Eric Lacher, who is Tom Kaisersatt's son. Running with Eric meant a lot to me. Tom is the most important coach that I have had in my running career. He helped me train for my first marathon in 2003, and advised me as I progressed into ultrarunning distances. When Eric answered my request for a pacer, I took it as a very good omen. With a farewell kiss from Patty, and Eric at my side, I left Foresthill ready to run through the night. This section of the trail is quite runnable so I determined to try to push harder. I took the long downhill stretches as fast as I could. I even managed to catch up to Lina, and we played tag along here for a while. The river crossing at Rucky Chucky was by boat this year because of high water.





Foresthill – Eric, Larry, Tom, Patty (left to right)

Rucky Chuck to Highway 49 Crossing (78-93.5 mi):

It was in this section that Eric's companionship came in most helpful. I started to develop blisters on the ball of my right foot which were becoming very painful. Eric advised me that it was going to be painful whether I ran fast or slow, so I might as well run fast and get it over with sooner. In my weakened mental state, this somehow made sense. I was taking more walk breaks now, but still making pretty good time when running. I did have to sit down briefly at Green Gate and at Auburn Lake Trails aid stations because I was feeling a bit of nausea, but it passed. Brown's Bar aid station, with its theme of "Welcome to Hell," volunteers dressed as monks, and rock 'n roll music playing, was very surreal and a bit disturbing. The 1-mi, 600-ft climb up to Highway 49 Crossing was definitely the hardest part of the entire race for me. Mostly due to the blister pain, I had to walk it, and my spirits were at their low point. A few other runners passed me along this stretch.

Highway 49 Crossing to Placer High School (93.5–100.2 mi):

Eric helped again by setting a target for me to finish the race by 7AM, and I accepted the challenge and determined to drive to the end.

Having passed Highway 49, I knew I could make it. I was pushing past the pain now and picked up the pace again. As sunrise started to bring daylight, No Hands Bridge was a most welcome sight. The final climb up to Robie Point was simply an exercise in moving one foot in front of the other. Finally having reached the streets of Auburn, I was able to run in most of the way to the high school. My victory lap around the track felt strong enough, and when I crossed the finish line, I experienced the welcome release of knowing that I did not have to start running again.



Aftermath and Lessons Learned:

Prior to this day, the longest run I had done was 100 km. I found out that there are many lessons to be learned between mile 62 to 100.

The training I had done really paid off. In addition to the expected distance running and hill work, I spent a lot of effort on strength conditioning which I could feel helping me as I tired.

Training in the Canyons was crucial. This is a tough section both psychologically and physically. The extra Friday before the training camp, running the canyons out and back, prepared me on both fronts. I needed this confidence to offset the fears I had from past difficulties on this section.



I do not usually run with an iPod, but I did in this race. I used it mostly during the climbs, and the music really helped keep me feeling energized.

I did not feel affected by the heat. While it was not a particularly hot year, I believe my preparation was nonetheless valuable. In training I had run on hot, sunny days wearing multilayer jackets, and I did Bikram (hot) yoga. During the race I wore a long-sleeve white shirt and a water-soaked bandana.

I did not change socks, which I think contributed to my blister problem. I wore Injinji over-the-calf compression socks, which I believe helped my legs feel energized throughout the race. However, because they are toe socks, they are difficult to change, and I did not want to spend the time to try. I plan to experiment with other styles and brands.

I tried to use a sternum-mounted light, but it kept sliding down to my waist. The jostling on my waist caused a nauseous feeling. I am going to stick with a head lamp and hand-held light.

I ran too hard on the steep downhill sections after Foresthill. This helped me make up time and I passed many other runners, but it took a toll on my stamina and was risky in the dark. Eric cautioned me about this, but I did not heed the advice. Now more than a month after the race, I still have some lower leg soreness and am being evaluated for a stress fracture.

My target time at WSER was 27:00 based on the predictive rule-of-thumb of doubling my time in the Miwok 100 km race on May 1. I was definitely pleased with my actual time of 25:38. I promised myself and Patty that I just wanted to run this one time and that would be enough. That pledge lasted about a week; I will try to enter again in 2011.



I am an Ironwoman!

By Peggy Alfred

Well, I can now say that I am officially...."an Ironman." Swam 2.4 miles in the peaceful Russian River, rode 112 miles through beautiful Sonoma winery country and ran 26.2 miles of roads through pretty countryside to finish up the day. The race was an amazing and powerful experience, and I am deeply grateful to be able to do such an event and feel blessed to have the athletic ability to do so.

The 10 months of training was an incredible journey that I will hold close in my heart for a long, long time. Our team of 25 athletes was an amazing group of folks who trained hard day in and day out, gave each other encouragement when it was needed most and picked each other up when we were struggling, cried together at the unfairness of cancer and the lives it affects, and laughed and played like a bunch of care-free children just living the simple joy of being alive and finding delight in the smallest of moments. Thank you Ironteam 2010.....you "get life right."

The lessons I learned?.....there were many. I learned that I can push my body to do things I wasn't sure I could do and to achieve a new level of fitness, and I learned how to back off when my muscles were fatigued and needed recovery-- back to back day-long workouts teach you that well. I learned that faster isn't always better, but persistence and patience is. I learned that it is very hard to keep a good balance in life with the level of training required for an Ironman, and that I have incredibly supportive people in my life that I am deeply thankful for and appreciate so very much.

And mostly, I learned that there are some simply incredible people in our world who care deeply, and with the biggest of hearts, about others....their family members, friends, and often



about people they don't even know all living with an illness called cancer. The celebration of life, and the grieving of losses during our Vineman weekend was one of the most powerful experiences I have ever been through and has affected me greatly. Watching many family members and friends standing long hours along the course cheering their athlete on and greeting them at the finish line with relieved smiles and tears streaming down their faces was a most beautiful thing to see and be a part of. Team Honorees, people living with blood cancers, competed in and finished the event, an incredible feat of accomplishment I can't begin to imagine and have the deepest of respect and admiration for as a fellow athlete. Watching coaches, family members and friends, and TNT Honorees and athletes speak at our pre-race and Victory brunch events of their sadness, anger, hope and faith was powerful and meaningful beyond words, and reaffirmed for me the decency and caring of people we have in our world. It truly does "take a village," especially to support people living with cancer and those who love them and to continue the fight against this life-impacting disease.

A deeply-felt thank you for all of your support over these past 10 months, be it a donation and helping out with my fund raising efforts, going on monster bike rides or long runs with me, checking in to see if I was surviving my training!, understanding my being less available.....or tired or grumpy or hungry or tired or tired...., bearing with yet another excited telling of something that happened during training or news about a TNT teammate, and making multiple trips to Sports Basement with me to stock up on GU, Cytomax, Cliffs Shots and to get much-needed bike repairs.

Our three sections of Ironteam through the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society alone raised over \$500,000 with the Vineman event. Just this past year Team In Training passed the 1 billion mark in raising funds since its inception in 1978....by

one individual who had a buddy diagnosed and living with Leukemia who couldn't pay for his own treatment and wanted to do something to help, so he got on a bike and started asking others for pledges..... That's true "Iron" to me.

USATF Cross Country

By Claire Saxton

Cross country? Think of it as a trail race that doesn't last all day. As you may or may not know, our club is registered with USA Track and Field (USATF). Our local association, the Pacific Association (basically Northern California), hosts a cross country race series every fall. I did this a few years ago and had a great time doing some shorter races in the hills. Our Saturday club runs are great training for this type of race, since the distance ranges from 3 to 6 miles.

There are races throughout Northern California from mid-August to mid-November. I'm planning to do several of the closer races this year, and it would be fun to have some other club members running as well. I'm not sure if we'd be able to field any full teams (5 to score in men's and women's open and men's masters; 3 to score in women's master's and all seniors, super seniors and veterans), but it would just be nice to have some company wearing the Striders shirt.

In terms of logistics, you do have to join USATF (it's \$30) and the race fees are \$15-\$20. I'm planning on doing races at Santa Cruz, Golden Gate Park, Garin Park in Hayward, and Shoreline. You can get the full schedule and more information at www.pausatf.org (click on Cross Country).

Many of our members might be better suited to the Mountain Ultra Trail Series, so in the interest of full disclosure I'll mention that as well. It runs



for the calendar year. There is more information at the same website.

If you're interested, let me or a board member know!

Ask the Dietitian

By Claire Saxton, MS, RD, CNSD

Q: What should I eat during the Clambake run? I'm not sure yet what distance I'll be doing.

A: It's great to plan ahead on how to fuel yourself for your long runs. Fuel and fluids are what will get you to the finish, and that coveted bowl of chowder. You'll be fortunate to have some support along the way, but it's good to know what you need. Your strategy will differ a bit depending on what distance you plan to do.

You do need to pay attention to what you eat before the run. If you're starting early with the 16 mile or 28 mile run, you'll still want to be sure to get some pre-exercise carbohydrate in, preferably at least an hour before you start. You probably have a sense of what your stomach can handle, but many runners like to have a bagel, bowl of cereal, or sports bar in the morning. For the 12 mile run, you'll have time to have a normal breakfast and maybe even another snack before you get rolling. This pre-exercise carbohydrate will make sure that your glycogen stores are near capacity before you start.

Since all of these distances will take longer than 90 minutes for most of us, fluids and carbohydrate during the run will be necessary to help provide fuel to your working muscles and extend your glycogen supply. Let's start with fluids: a sports drink is appropriate to provide some carbohydrate and electrolytes. It's ideal to drink at least every 15 to 20 minutes from the start of your run. Don't wait until you feel thirsty. You'll want to take 2 to 8 ounces each

time, depending on your size, sweating, and the weather. You will want to bring something to carry fluids, but there are opportunities to refill along the way (other than the 12 mile stretch at the end).

If you haven't eaten much before the run, you'll want to start taking in some carbohydrate 30-45 minutes into the run. If you're pretty well fueled up, you could wait until 60 minutes. A good guideline is to take in 30 to 60 grams of carbohydrate every hour that you're running. For larger runners and those doing the 28 mile option, you'll want to be closer to the 60 gram mark in the later stages of the run. Sports drinks have about 15-20 grams per cup, so that will get you at least half way there if you're having a cup per hour. To get the other 15 to 40 grams each hour, you'll need something else—ideally something you've tested before and know that your stomach can tolerate. Or, this run can be a testing ground for a future long race. There's usually a rich and varied assortment of things available at the moving aid stations in the first 16 miles, but you may need to carry along a few things if you're doing the last 12 mile stretch or have a sensitive stomach.

Here's some information on the approximate carbohydrate content of some common foods:

Sports gel	25 grams per packet
Banana	15 grams per half
Raisins	30 grams per ¼ cup
Jelly beans	10 grams per 10 small ones
M&Ms	19 grams per 2 Tablespoons
Potato	15 grams per ½ cup
Pretzels	45 grams per 10 twists
Licorice	8 grams per twist
Watermelon	12 grams per cup of cubes
Coke	12 grams per 4 ounces

After the run, don't forget your fluids to rehydrate. While you'll of course want a nice bowl of chowder, get some other foods with carbohydrate and protein as well. Which of



course means you should bring something for the potluck that will make a good post-race food!



Let me know if you have a question you might like answered in a future newsletter.
Claire

