



What's Afoot?

Stevens Creek Striders' Newsletter

Editor: Randy Ison

October 2011

From the President's Desk

When I moved to San Jose from Jamaica in 1995 I asked about local running clubs and was steered to one that emphasized competition. When I asked if there were any others nearby, I was told "Yeah, there's this bunch in Cupertino that's half women and parties a lot. That was all I needed to seek out the Striders and confirm the truth. And we still have a lot of women and neat activities. While not as numerous as in the past, we have great traditions-Last Chance, the Clambake Run, the Turkey Relays and others. It's a great bunch of people and I have served several times as payback for all I have received. This is my first go as President.

My challenge, and ours, is in finding ways to build the membership back up. There are so many competition activities these days that we need creative new ways to do that. We are already working on some, such as John McKiernan's Sunday Long Runs. And we are hoping to attract some SJ Fitters after their marathon. But we would like your input as well. What do YOU think would be attract some new blood, and keep them coming back? More race activities? Family stuff? More parties? Facebook? YouTube? A Better Web Page? The Board is drawing up a survey for the members and will be sending it out on the web-page in the next week or so. This will be your chance to have your voice heard without having to attend those boring(?) Board meetings. (Actually, they are fun, but don't

tell anyone or EVERYBODY will want to be on the Board!)

I drive from Willow Glen every Saturday to run with my old friends, but I would like to run with some NEW friends' too-wouldn't you? New members are not attracted when only 6-8 runners show up. The more people we have, the more people we'll get. So, here's a challenge for YOU. The next time you run with us on Saturday, bring a friend, a neighbor, a co-worker, or a family member.

They don't have to be great runners-they can walk the trails. If you have a suggestion, just send it to us at: board@stevenscreekstriders.org.

Your President,

Bill Jones

Spring and Summer Athletic Achievement

Many of our members have been quite active in the past months and as October's lengthening nights and cooler days advance and autumn colors our landscape, it would be beneficial to note many of our member's accomplishments.

- Johanna Ylanen, John McKiernan, Jean Pommier, Lina McCain, Penny Beeston, and Michael Florence participated in the Quicksilver Trail 25K, 50K, and 50 Mile Endurance Run at Almaden-Quicksilver Park in April. Jean Pommier established an age group record in the 50K and Johanna Ylanen



was the first woman to complete the 50 mile run.

- Strider Richard (Dick) Opsahl was the oldest marathon finisher at the Avenue of the Giants Marathon in Humboldt County, California last May.
- In June, Christina Brownson placed first in her age group at the Bass Lake Classic Triathlon, in beautiful Bass Lake, California.
- Also in June, Eric Lacher, John McKiernan, and Peter Hargreaves completed the 2011 Western States 100.2 mile run as finishers.
- At the World Master Athletics Championships in July, Bill Dodson finished 2nd in the marathon and 9th in the 5000 meter run for his age group and Jean Pommier finished 3rd in the marathon and 8th in the 10000 meter run for his age group.
- Also in July, Lina McCain and Dennis Connor braved the fog and completed the PTR Headlands 50 mile run at the Rodeo Beach, Golden Gate National Recreation area.
- Jean Pommier won convincingly at the Stevens Creek 50k race and both Charles Stevens and Dennis Connor gave strong performances in August.
- Also in August, Penny Beeston turned in very respectable times in the Subaru Ironman Canada.
- In September, Lina McCain completed the Rio Del Largo 100 mile run. Lina recounts her experiences later in this newsletter.
- Also in September, Claire and Patrick Saxton completed the Norcal Half Marathon and nearly finished together, Randy Ison completed the Half Moon Bay International Marathon, Dennis Conner completed the Big Bear 100m from Utah to Idaho, and Peter Hargreaves completed the Marin Coastal 50k.

[Ed. – special congratulations to Bill Dodson whose many accomplishments, athletic longevity, and good humor seem to only require clean air, low humidity, and California sunshine.]

Strider's Board

Early July is the time new board members are selected. The 2011-2012 Stevens Creek Striders board assignments are:

President: Bill Jones
Vice President and Membership: John McKiernan
Treasurer: Mike Dhuey
Aid Stations and Social Events: Peggy Alfred
Secretary: Dick Opsahl
Newsletter: Randy Ison
Webmaster: Peter Hargreaves



A Grand Day and Night Out

Upcoming events

October 30th: Long Run at Windy Hill, above Portola Valley. Distance: 14 miles, and should take ~ 3 hours, but with shorter options.

November 24th: Thanksgiving Turkey Relays at DeAnza College, Cupertino. Runners arrive about 8:30 am.

December 10th: Annual Holiday Party at St. Edward's Episcopal Church Hall, 15040 Union Ave San Jose, CA 95124.

December 18th Christmas Relays – Teams of Four Sunset Circle Parking Lot (Sunset Blvd. at Lake Merced) San Francisco, CA.



Rio Del Lago: Where Lina learns that it is possible to "salt" correctly, but that 100-mile runs still hurt anyway.

By Lina McCain

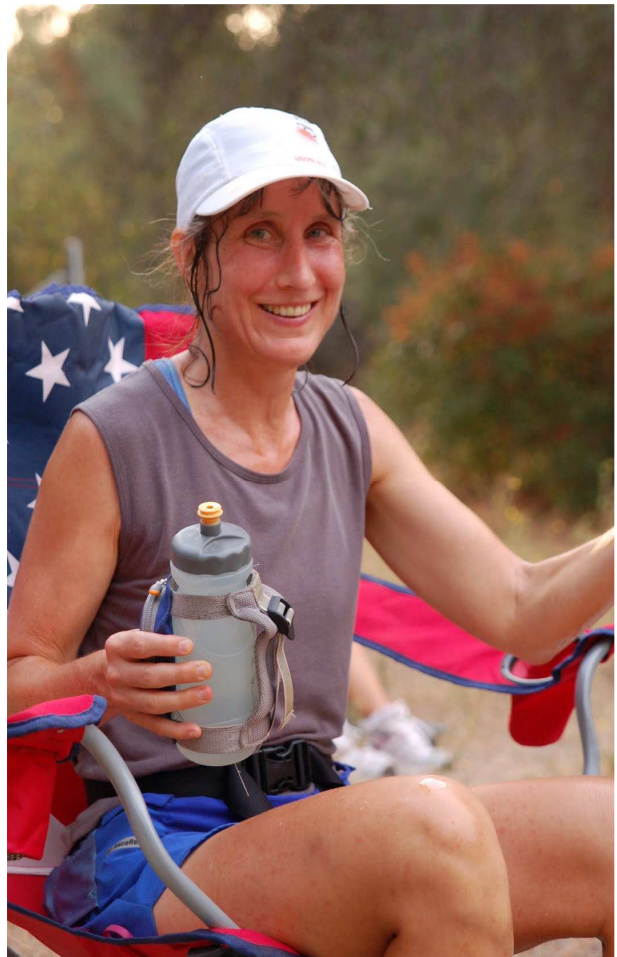
The trails alongside Folsom Lake and the American River are quite beautiful, but I chose to run Rio Del Lago mainly because of its relative ease. The weekend happened to mark exactly 1 year since my major knee injury (dislocation). I also wanted to feel what it would be like to run that distance without allowing myself to get severely hyponatremic, which was the one thing that clouded an otherwise very happy, though challenging experience at Western States 2010 (my only other 100 mile race).

Rio Del Lago lived up to my expectations in terms of oak trees, lake views and sounds of the river. We crossed tiny streams, small bridges and the famous No Hands Bridge. The race provided camaraderie and support, mutual striving and shared difficulty. However, none of us seemed to fully grasp how much more difficult the course would be this year. We had to navigate steep little rocky, rutted, rooty sections repeatedly rather than spending the night portion of the course on the more forgiving open trails and bike paths below Beal's Point. Furthermore, we got an extra hot day. This led to numerous drops.

The first half of the race went well. I went out conservatively from the start, and found that despite the heat, I felt good and I was on target pretty much the whole time for what I thought would (just barely) get me a sub-24 hour finish. I passed people going up the main big, steep climb called K2. Two of those people were women, and finally I asked a few hours later and was told that I was in third place.

During the second half of the race, I had to come to grips with no longer being able to make my time goals. A large part of that was the need to protect my knee from future dislocations. I will never be able to run technical sections of trail the way I would like to, especially once the legs

get tired. Also I could tell my toes had some blistering, but gambled that they would stay quiet enough not to have to tend to them. I won that bet, but did have to deal with my left shin. Around mile 55, I started to get intermittent sharp pains that were reminiscent of some major shin problems I'd had several months earlier. Fortunately, I just had to last until mile 59, where Bruce would have some bandaging materials that



I had packed.

It was dark by the time that I reached Twin Rocks, the 65-mile mark and first turn around. I was an hour behind schedule. Bruce said that I was limping, but I shrugged it off. He'd helped me wrap my shin at the previous aid station, and the wrap helped. My lameness was just general stiffness in the midst of all those rocks. Moreover, I was not in a particularly reflective mood at the time, but it was a huge triumph to be arriving to the 100k mark without any of the



weakness, dizziness or nausea that in retrospect denoted the hyponatremia of Western States. Jill made some happy, bubbly comments and I felt strong despite my frustration, and was glad to be picking up my pacer, Eric Lacher.

Having crew and pacers enhances the experience of running the longer ultras, in my opinion. I had an amazing trio of people there to help me. Jill Lacher is enthusiastic and supportive, and she gave up her weekend to crew. Jill also lent me her husband to pace. Eric is a strong runner and extremely helpful pacer. He has a quiet presence and an extremely useful database of facts in his head. He helped me remember when to take salt, and had an amazing command of distances and times such that I had no false expectations and was able to re-work my goals with the reality before me. Finally, my husband Bruce made sure that I had everything I needed, perfectly. My finish time goals went from sub-24, to before 6 AM (approximate sunrise) to before 7 AM, to before 7:17 AM to whenever the hell I might finish as long as it's before the gal who was only 15-20 minutes behind me at the last turn-around. Despite the fact that things do hurt after 50, 60, 70, 80 miles and despite this time pressure that I put on myself, I managed to enjoy the experience of running at night. The aid stations, though basic, were tended to by friendly folks. The soups were good, especially at Twin Rocks, and I loved the lights at Rattlesnake Bar, where they had a rock and roll party of it all. In fact, the aid station workers at Rattlesnake were super-helpful. On my last time through, around 2 AM, one of these angels even gave me his flashlight after I had gone though two sets of batteries that I had forgotten were not new, plus the spare flashlight that Bruce had gotten me from the car. This helped tremendously with the fourth and final pass through the rockiest section.

It started to get light just before we got to Twin Rocks again, the last aid station before the finish. Bruce and Jill surprised us there, and had been

waiting for 1.5 hours. It was 6:20. We had 4.9 miles to go. While Jill was taking trash out of my pockets, and Bruce and the Aid Station workers were asking me what I wanted, I made some almost unconscious mental calculations. I had somewhat less than a bottle of water left, and one Gu. The last section would not have much technical running and it was still pretty cool, I wouldn't need much water. "Let's go!"

I started running hard. My bottles had less than I thought, perhaps 2/3 total. Eric calculated it to be unlikely for us to finish before 7:17. I wouldn't give up, but my tired legs did not allow me to keep that pace consistently. There were some hills that slowed us a bit more. After maybe 30 minutes, we could just make out the Beal's Point finish area. When we reached the berms I gave it another kick. I'd been hoping there were a few extra minutes compared to Eric's watch, since we started slightly after 5 AM (the previous day) according to my watch. With the finish line in sight, I switched my watch over to the stopwatch function: 26:12. If it were to take less than 5 minutes, I could still have a PR for the 100-mile distance. We kept running along the berm. We turned the corner. The race clock said 26:17:08. I went crazy and ran as fast as I could. Jim Magill and Dan were there. I crossed the line somewhere around 26:17:54, which is my exact time at Western States. At the moment, I was amused thinking that it was a PR by 2 seconds, and I was very happy to be the third woman to finish. Going forward, it will come time to decide whether to continue to include such a physically brutal distance in my training goals, or whether to spend some of that extra training time doing other things. Regardless, it feels like a huge privilege to include two 100-mile races among my life experiences.

Lina.



Exercise and the Nervous System

By Randy Ison

A variety of human and animal studies have been published recently showing the benefits of exercise on improve memory, brain volume, protection from infection,

Regular exercise shields older animals from memory loss following bacterial infection, according to a study in the August 10 issue of *The Journal of Neuroscience*. The findings suggest moderate exercise can lead to several changes in the brain that improves its ability to protect itself while aging. A recent research study at the University of Colorado at Boulder, found that older rats that ran on an exercise wheel were protected from memory loss after an *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) infection. It was also found that exercise protected the hippocampus — that portion of the brain that controls learning and memory — that usually follow bacterial infection in older animals. In humans, aging adults are more frequently than younger adults and teenagers to suffer memory impairment following severe bacterial infection.

"This is the first study to show that exercise reduces susceptibility to the cognitive impairments that follow infection in aging animals, and the changes taking place in the brain thought to underlie these impairments," Ruth Barrientos, PhD, the lead researcher said. Barrientos and her team also found the microglia — the brain's immune defense cells — of aging animals became more reactive to infection and released more chemicals that caused inflammation in the hippocampus, when compared with younger animals.

In a contrasting study, researchers at Ohio State University, University of Pittsburgh and University of Illinois, have discovered the older adults brains hippocampus can increase in size leading to an improvement in spatial memory after one year of moderate physical exercise. The study appeared in the January 2011

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).

Research scientists recruited 120 older, sedentary people and randomly put them in one of two groups— those who performed stretching and toning exercises and those who started an exercise program of walking for 40 minutes around a track three days a week. Magnetic resonance images (MRIs) were collected before the study began, after six months, and after one-year. The walking exercise group had an increase in volume of the right and left hippocampus of 1.97 percent and 2.12 percent respectively. For those who participated in stretching exercises experienced a decreased right and left hippocampus volume of 1.40 and 1.43 percent. Spatial memory tests were also given to participants at the three time intervals. The results shown those in the walking group experienced memory improvement compared to their results at the start of the study, an improvement that reflects the increased size of the hippocampus. In addition, the researchers also examined participants brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a small molecule biomarker involved in learning and memory.

Much of these findings substantiate the writings of Walter M Bortz, Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at Stanford University who has taught that heart disease, an inactive sex life, memory loss, and frailty, while associated with aging are symptoms that have less to do with chronology than with lack of physical conditioning.

Yellowjackets: Where's the Meat?

By Randy Ison

It seems many Striders and other runners have suffered through a memorable experience with "Meat Bees" while trail running. In fact, at some time or another during your lengthy running career, in all probability, you will be stung. These aggressive insects, called Yellowjackets are



wasps, not bees, although that's small comfort when you are slapping your back or swatting your torso while trying not to be stung again. And why are they called "meat bees"? Well, like nearly all wasps, yellowjackets are predators. The small larvae are fed meat by adults, which explore their territory looking for such sources. Yellowjackets are social by nature and behavior and live in a colony that was started in later winter year by a single Queen. By the next year, her efforts at egg laying can result in a colony the size 25,000 individuals.

Yellowjackets are members of a society, like ants and honeybees, who care for the young (the eggs and larvae), gather food, work to build the paper nest and enlarge when needed, and whose **duty** is to protect the colony when feeling threatened – by a hapless runner, like myself, who is running in the wake of another who has disturbed them.

Yet, staying away from trails infested with yellowjackets will not necessarily remove you from harm's way. They like to hang around picnics and barbecues where they are a danger to small children and older folks. Why? Because their larvae eat meat and where you find people eating outdoors during summer you will find hot dogs and hamburgers, Yellowjackets also obtain meat from dead animals they find laying on the ground. Yellowjackets also subsist on insects – grubs, crickets, caterpillars, or other bugs too slow to scamper away and in this respect they benefit us.



A yellowjacket colony consists of a single Queen and dozens or many thousands of workers, all of

whom are females. Late in the year male wasps are produced to mate with new Queens, after which the males die, and the now fertilized Queens hibernate through the cold winter and begin their own new colonies in the spring. The earlier they can begin, the larger their colonies can become. So, if we have a mild winter and early warm temperatures, we'll have yellowjacket problems building sooner and bigger.

Watch What You Wear! - yellowjackets seem to be attracted to certain colors (yellow, orange, or purple) or odors, such as perfume or cologne. Commercial insect repellents do not seem to do much to deter yellowjackets.

My 2011 Western States 100-mile Endurance Run (with a "twist"):

By John McKiernan

Western States is a journey of many days, not just a single weekend. Along the way, the experience builds memories that you carry for years. I had great support from family, friends and volunteers, and I thank them all. I've seen (and learned a lot from) several similar articles, and want to share my experience and insights from my preparation, running and what followed for others.

Qualifying:

I first started running trails in late 2007, completed my first 50km (31 mile) trail run May 2008, and then my first 80km (50 mile) trail run October 2009 . I finished in 10:13, a Western States qualifying time for the distance, but I did not plan to enter. Qualifying was good enough, and that was my philosophy through 2010. It was a good year, with some very high goals and some big disappointments also.



Western States 2010:

In December 2009, Bill Dodson (then age 74) was selected to run Western States in June 2010. Bill helped me finish my first 50 km trail run, and I enjoyed running with him on other occasions. Bill is exceedingly capable, and really wanted to run and finish, establishing a new record for oldest-finisher. Many recognized this, and Bill was listed as a "Runner to Watch" in the 2010 WS100 event program.

At age 75, Bill was entitled to a pacer/"safety runner" for the entire course if he wanted. I offered to assist Bill in his run as a pacer, and hoped others might as well. Bill and I ran together at Quicksilver (pacer for ~ 18 miles) and WS100 May training runs (the last 38 miles of the course I would pace).

In June, I worked at the Last Chance aid station until closing, and then hurried back to Auburn for food and rest, then back to Foresthill to meet Bill. Bill arrived late, tired and sick. For miles 62-73, I tried to nurse him out of nausea and not lose too much time. For miles 73-84, I tried to keep him moving well, but we squeaked by cutoffs too many times. At 85 miles, and after 26 hours, we missed a tight cutoff by 10 minutes. We were both very disappointed, but proud of his effort.

The lottery selection and appeal:

The Western State 100-mile Endurance Run is the first and most famous of the 100-mile trail runs. Approximately 400 runners can start each year, so a lottery is used to select among qualified applicants. The selection is in early December, and there isn't any wait-list. Entry fees are not refundable; entry selections are not transferrable. If you are selected, you pay and go or the starter list shrinks.

Dennis Connor suggested I enter, saying I seemed ready and it seemed a "natural

progression". The "two-time-loser" rule was eliminated in 2010, replaced with added entries in later years. Many enter not expecting to be selected and hoping to increase chances in the next year. With ~ 2400 applicants in 2010, I somehow was selected (even early in the process). Bill Dodson had qualified, applied and was not selected. I immediately began an urgent appeal to the Western States Board to get Bill in, even offering my spot. The Board declined, so in late January I started preparing for the run. Peter Hargreaves received the Striders club entry, and Eric Lacher received a special consideration entry. Dennis Connor offered to be my pacer, and I was very pleased to be able to work with him in this effort.

The progressive build-up:

I put together a moderately aggressive training plan with ~ 50 miles per week and increasingly longer and more difficult runs. I entered PAUSATF races where possible (for competition and to promote the club). My plan included 2x 50km in March, 2x 80km in April, 1x 100 km in May and the Western States May training runs. March and April went well, but May left me tired. Bishop High Sierra 100 km May 21 had some snow, but was mostly altitude and long grade training since it was not hot. WS100 training runs May 27-28 with Lina, Eric and Peter included an out-and-back covering three major canyons and climbs twice, important for learning the course and strategy. Now it was time to taper.

One important side note: my ankles had been an issue before, and I knew the run would challenge them. I worked with physical therapists for strengthening and preventive practices, and wore an ankle brace on the weaker right ankle for long runs. Things seemed OK in the training and through May.

The days before the run:



The days before the run were filled with discussion about the snow levels in the high country (first 34 miles) . Squaw Valley got new snow late into June, and even Auburn had snow in late May. A few days before the run, it was announced three aid stations would be relocated (too much snow for access) and the course modified to accommodate such. No extra time would be allowed (30-hour limit still), but some early cutoffs would be extended. My strategy for clothing and supplies had to change some.

See John on YouTube Before the Race:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ParegikhSto>

I came to Squaw Valley June 22 to relax, get used to thin air, take in seminars, and mix with others. My wife (Salina), my daughter (and her husband) and my father all spent some good time together. My son had final exams that week and could not come with us. Eric, Peter and I got together for dinner June 22.



During one seminar, Salina and I met Penbin Chen, the first-ever WS100 runner from mainland China and without any crew or English skills. Salina quickly became an interpreter and we became friends as we worked through various issues for him in this adventure. I also spent a lot of time with Tony Rossman (WS Board), Mo Livermore (WS Trustee) and Joe McCladdie (event photographer) who were all very interested in assuring Penbin was well cared for and our help. We also met Paula Johnston with Auburn Community TV film crew. She was interested in Penbin and my stories and we

became friends as well. Paula gave me ID tags so that her crew could follow me on course during the run, and we recorded an interview and took photos for a film to be released later.

The first 34 miles (high-country):

My plan was to start slow, move carefully through the snow and ice in high country, then maintain a solid pace through the canyons and finish strong with a good pacer (Dennis Connor) helping me. My goal was a 27:30 finish time, but finishing safely was a requirement. The snow in the high country was a mix of soft/wet stuff and some that was like walking on slippery rock (melt/freeze cycles created an irregular crust) . Horizontal crossing some slopes was tricky, and you had to watch for some in front who stopped suddenly. Trail markings were scattered, so I was off course briefly a few times; others were around enough to correct that. I wore shoes best suited to snow and ice, but they were awful on some roads (course change). At Last Chance, I had my favorite shoes.

The next 28 miles (the canyons):

As I approached Dusty Corners (mile 38) , I saw Penbin Chen in front of me. He had planned to finish under 24-hours, so I knew he was way behind pace, and he seemed in trouble. I warned some at the next aid station and at Last Chance Lina McCain was able to work with him. He had taken too much salt and was becoming bloated and sick. With some care, he continued on, and even passed me in the very last mile.

I came to Last Chance in good shape, took a long time changing clothes and supplies, getting fueled and discussing things with Dennis and others. I left well rested and ready for the canyons which seemed cooler than expected. I moved through them well with strong walks on long climbs and smart running on flats and down hills. I spent some time at Michigan Bluff changing into night running gear, and as I



approached Foresthill (62 miles) and my crew and pacer, I was close to goal pace. The sun set about 9 PM, just as I passed through the last canyon before Foresthill. Then my left ankle started giving me trouble, and never stopped for the rest of the run.

The last 38 miles (with Dennis):

As I approached Volcano Creek, I stopped to get my flashlight. I was moving down some steep narrow switchbacks, and may have twisted my ankle or strained it with braking. Soon, it was clear I had trouble, but I could walk well. Running flat or smooth surfaces was OK, but running down steep rocky sections caused too many ankle rolls and tension. By the time I met my father and Dennis on Bath Road, or my wife and others at Foresthill, I could tell them what the situation was. Nobody wanted me to quit as yet, so I had to revise expectations as we went. My crew nervously watched my progress via online updates.

Dennis did a masterful job of running me as much and as well as I could (though I had to remind him of my pain with an "ouch" sometimes). Walking breaks helped, and through the dark downhill to the river we made up time to be on goal pace. With a good climb to Green Gate, we started a set of rolling hills approaching Auburn Lake Trails. This is where Bill Dodson and I missed the cutoff in 2010, and Dennis and I were well ahead of that, but the start/stop/repeat of the area made the ankle more painful. Realizing the risk of serious long term injury, and knowing I had lots of margin, I told Dennis it was time to give up on the high goal and aim to finish safely by walking it in. He sometimes asked if I might be able to run, and we joked about "trying", but he knew I was serious about my promise to my wife to finish safely first and foremost. Stories of Tom Kaisersatt and Terry Fox kept me motivated, as did Dennis' friendly badgering, reports and testing of my mental (and physical) state. The miles passed and I grew anxious for a finish.

Moving was easier after sunrise, and my spirits rose with the temperature. I was very pleased to see few passing me even with all my walking. At No Hands Bridge (mile 97), my father met me and walked the rest of the course with me. I was tired and got angry with him for being on a section that crew were not supposed to be on. It was dangerous for him, and I might also get disqualified. I apologized later and he was very understanding. At Robie Point (mile 99), Bill Dodson was waiting for me, and we ran as best I could for the last mile. Just then, Penbin Chen passed me from behind. I was so pleased to see him finishing! At the stadium gate, my daughter was waiting for me, and 50 meters from the finish line was my wife. I was proud to walk across the finish with her on my arm and a huge smile on my face. When Bill Dodson greeted me after, I started crying and apologizing for 2010, and Eric Lacher gave me a huge consolation hug as well. I was so pleased that he finished his journey as well.



The situation after:

At the finish, I removed my shoes and socks to soak my feet and examine blisters and the ankle. My ankle was so swollen I could not remove the compression sleeve except by cutting it off. I donated fluids for the medical study (good results), was wrapped and iced for the next hour, and missed opportunities to "mix" in the run finish area. I walked on crutches to the tent for awards and was able to stand to receive mine.



Paula from ACTV saw my condition and cried; Dennis encouraged me to "smile", but it was difficult with the pain. As I left the stadium, another runner commented that I ran 100 miles but can hardly walk now. It was Penbin's pacer, and we discussed his situation and recovery. He knew Dennis and had greeted us in the last mile, and had been sitting with Penbin, Dennis and I and I didn't realize it. We decided to stay an extra day at Auburn to let my ankle and other pains reduce, and then went home for physical exams (no fracture) and rest. I missed a full week of work while my ankle swelling and blisters reduced, and was on crutches for two weeks.

I attempted a trail hike and then a short (6 miles) trail run July 9, but it hurt, so I rested for another week. July 16-17, I walked or ran perhaps 13 miles on a soft track at De Anza College for "Team Tom" at the American Cancer Society Relay for Life. Some who watched me saw nothing wrong, but later that day I was hurting badly (partly from fatigue). I decided it was time to get an MRI and see a specialist. The MRI showed significant damage to a key tendon, but not a tear. I withdrew from two PAUSATF 50 km trail runs planned for August. After two more bad runs in mid-August, I withdrew from all my remaining planned competitive runs: my season was in a slow train wreck, with my third-place standing (perhaps better) going out with it. With more medications and physical therapy, things started to improve but progress was slow and setbacks continued.

Lessons learned:

I told many I was not going to enter the WS lottery, but did anyway, and somehow "got lucky". Progressing from first 50 km trail run to first 160 km trail run in just 3 years is a bit too fast. My training plan was good, but a bit condensed, and did not have enough heat / snow training. I was able to manage training and work by discussing the plan in detail with my employer. I ran in Asics shoes for years, but

switched to others and with different support structure. I ran too long in my snow / ice shoes, and my other shoes also had ~ 300 miles before the run.

I carried most of the food I wanted (pack, a few drop bags), and used the aid stations for other food. I managed food, fluids, salt and such well, with steady weight (and no nausea) through the run. I made the right decision to walk most of the last 20 miles. Running the last mile was not smart. Aleve (NSAID, not ibuprofen) tablets did not reduce swelling or pain or cause a kidney problem. I started the run with one ankle brace (on my right leg), and perhaps I should have moved it. Running 100 miles (160 km) hurts, no matter what others say or how you go about it. I was off crutches too soon (difficult at work) and ran too much too soon. I waited too long to get an MRI and a second opinion on the ankle injury.

My wife was reluctant regarding plans in January, but backed me 100 % after and still.

Dennis was very good at helping me get prepared for and running / walking Western States. Of three SCS runners at WS this year, I was the only selected via lottery, the only working full time during training, the only with a single pacer, and the only with a major injury after (even before). The run entry and hotels at Squaw Valley or Auburn were small compared to the other costs preparing for this run, and physical therapy after is still adding to the total. Buckle, jacket and such are nice, but expensive!

One and done? Not quite yet...:

At this point, I have put off all running through October at least, though I will continue to do long trail hikes weekends and host Sunday group runs which I proposed in May. I hope to return to running in 2012, but with great care and attention to warning signs. After Western States, I had ideas of three other 100-mile runs in nearby states, with Tahoe Rim Trail in 2012 the first. One and done? Not quite yet ...

