



The Pacer



October

2002

newsletter of the Pike Creek Valley Running Club

Feature

A Real Classic!

The 2002 Delaware Distance Classic

by Dave Farren

The 20th annual Delaware Distance Classic was the most successful in years. Running in near-perfect conditions, 250 finishers crossed the finish line. This was the fifth consecutive year there was an increase in the number of finishers. The temperature at the start was 64 under overcast skies.

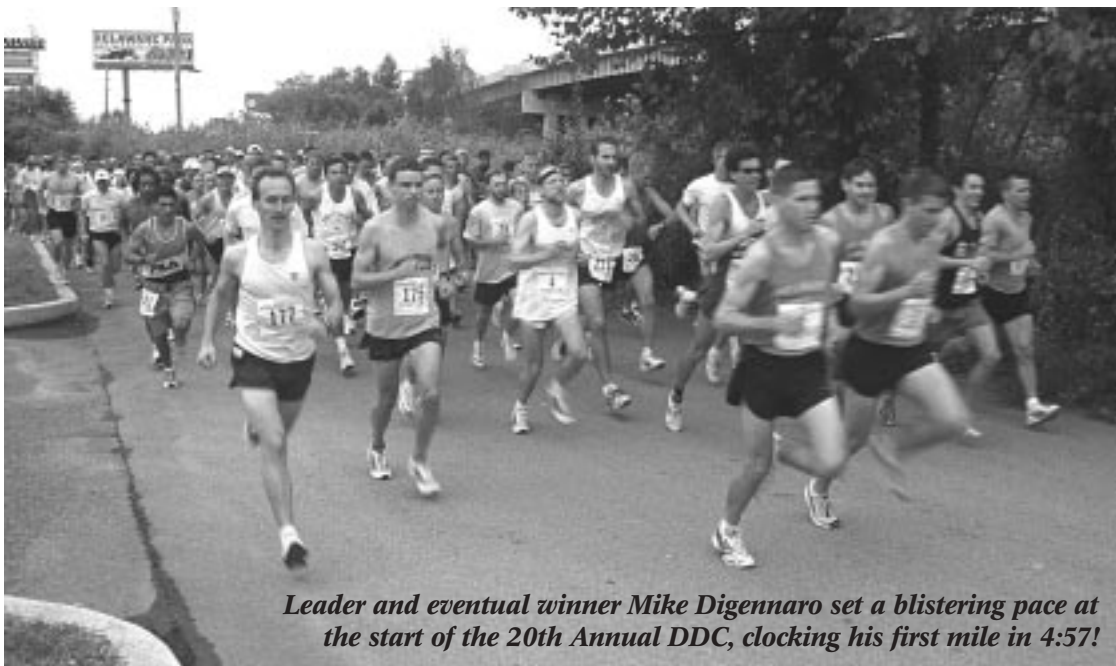
Leading the way this year was Mike Digennaro from Newark, Del., with a time of 48:40. This was the fastest time run on the Riverfront since the race was moved there in 1999. Running about a minute behind was Mike Monagle, the new owner of the Delaware Running Company in Greenville. Leading the women was Kara-Lynn Kerr of Ardmore, Pa., in a time of 56:36. Second among the women was newlywed Vicki Cauller in 59:02. A total of \$750 in prize money was awarded, with the top three men and women and the top male and female masters taking home some cash.

Top PCVRC members were **Steve Sinko**, 4th overall and **Theresa Cannon**, who just turned 40 this year and was the 9th overall woman and the 3rd female master.

New this year were the team competition, the

Comcast Cup (Corporate) and club competition. PCVRC's "A" Team placed 2nd and the "B" Team placed 3rd among the seven club teams that were entered. The "A" team consisted of **Brian Driscoll**, **Tom Jermyn**, **David James**, **Theresa Cannon**, and **Kim Moore**. The "B" team consisted of **Frank Barbera**, **Bob Hempton**, **Chris James**, **Diane Kukich**, and **Carla Pastore**. The Delaware Running Company took home the Comcast Cup.

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Leader and eventual winner Mike Digennaro set a blistering pace at the start of the 20th Annual DDC, clocking his first mile in 4:57!

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newsletter of the Pike Creek Valley Running Club

The Pike Creek Valley Running Club, Inc., is a non-profit corporation formed: (1) to promote the civic interest of the State of Delaware by the education of the people of this State in the physical, moral and mental benefits to be derived from participation in the sport of running, and (2) to stimulate, improve and perpetuate the interest, participation and performance of the people of the State of Delaware in the healthful sport of running.

Visit us online at
www.pcvrc.com

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Submissions

We welcome all submissions of articles, from informative tidbits to member stories. It would help our production staff if you would send the text as an e-mail attachment to Diane Kukich (dkukich@udel.edu). You may also e-mail photos (we encourage it!) in JPEG form as attachments.

Results of non-local races should be e-mailed or called-in directly to Jerry Herman (gaherm@earthlink.net). Thanks.



Gone Running

Join us at

Newark "Bagel Run"

(meet at Newark Hot Bagels & Deli on Main Street), Sundays at 8:00 a.m., (7 miles or more at 8-9 min./mi.), call John & Ann Foster at 410-392-3480 or Bob Taggart at 302-738-5969.

Delcastle Recreation Area

(near tennis court parking area), Sat. and Sun. at 8:00 a.m. (7-10 mi.), Mon.-Thur. around 6:00 p.m. (3-7 mi.), call Rudy Antonini at 302-731-8137.

Trail Runs from White Clay Creek Preserve

(meet at parking lot #1 in Landenberg, Pa.), Sundays at 8:00 a.m., contact either Dave McCorquodale (302-998-7161 or mccorq@comcast.net) or John Mackenzie (302-453-0859 or johnmack@verizon.net). For additional information on trail runs check the Traildaws website (www.traildaws.org).



President's Message



Time flies! It seems like only yesterday that we were looking forward to the Delaware Distance Classic 15K and fall marathon season. I would like to congratulate Dave Farren and the entire race committee on the quality event they put on this year. It certainly continues to be the centerpiece and backbone of PCVRC.

This edition of **The Pacer** really captures the spirit of race day thanks to the outstanding photos by Stewart Whisenant, artfully arranged by Mark Deshon.

Congratulations to the recent age-group record setters: Diane Kukich, Bob Hempton, and Deborah Compton. And please note the strong showing by our club and individual members in the current Grand Prix Series standings. Our USATF Mid-Atlantic chapter plans on adding a cross-country series in 2003. We are fortunate that our race is part of the Grand Prix Series, and your support of USATF will be appreciated. I encourage all of you to visit their website: www.usatf.org/assoc/mid-atlantic.

Let me recognize the special contributions of two board members who recently stepped down due to work or personal commitments. Kim Moore has been a

great recruiter of new members and organized a great Boston Send-Off Party. Carla Pastore helped to build the membership committee, increasing our visibility in the community while fielding requests for information and welcoming new members.

I hope the progress made by the club this year, indeed the past several years, gives you a sense that PCVRC can still set and achieve goals to build a stronger club. This year, the board has grappled with key issues, like a possible club name change and re-examining our primary mission. Although I haven't been 100% effective in sorting out the wants and needs of a diverse membership, there is still a lot that is right about Pike Creek Valley Running Club.

Our upcoming holiday party (December 11) has been the traditional time to nominate new officers for the following year. Rather than seeking another term as president, I will be turning my attention to effecting a smooth transition to the next administration. Those of you with fresh ideas for making the club even better in 2003 need to step forward (or be pushed by a friend). The best way to get the most out of the club is to get involved yourself!

Best Regards,

Vince

Vince McIntosh, PCVRC President

Classic *continued from page 1*

Two Pikers set state records for their age groups on the especially fast 15K course. **Diane Kukich** broke the Delaware resident women's 50-54 age-group record that had stood since 1987 by running 1:07:13. **Bob Hempton**, who has been running for many years, now has an incredible six state records, some dating back 18 years! Bob ran 57:58 to finish 20th overall and eclipse the men's 55-59 age-group record, one of the many state records that was held by fellow Piker **Richard Webb**.

To have a successful race, you need good sponsors, good volunteers, and the support of the runners. This year we had all of that. Comcast, the Footcare Group, PerpetualMotionSport.com, Marathon Sports, Delaware Stadium Corporation, and Pine Mountain Springs were the

sponsors. We had a good showing of runners from the club and excellent work from volunteers who got up at 5:30 a.m., including **Ron Bock, Dan Weintraub, Jerry Herman, Chip & Doris Bixler, Rudy & Marianne Antonini**, and my lovely wife, **Kathy [Farren]**. We

also had club members come out and volunteer with traffic, water, etc.

The race benefited the club as well as the Delaware Special Olympics. Next year's race is slated for October 12! We hope to continue the momentum!

Club Reminders...

Holiday Party

Wednesday, December 11
7:00 p.m.
Caff  Bellissimo

Come spread some holiday cheer as we reminisce over another good year running, the club's 20th. Caff  Bellissimo is located on Kirkwood Highway (Rt. 2) near the intersection of Newport-Gap Pike (Rt. 41).

Cost is \$10 per person; cash bar. Call Judi Enright (302-366-0960) if you have a question.

**See reservation
form on the back
page!**



Foot Notes

Congratulations to Deborah Compton on her record-setting performance at the Columbus Marathon. In running a 3:30:45 she smashed her former state age-group record by over twenty minutes!

New member **Dave McSherry** ran his **100th race of 2002** in Washington, D.C., on October 26. This was a goal set by Dave as a way to "do something different now that the PRs are coming more slowly." He counts Ralph McKinney and Dwayne Christy as local inspiration. If all goes according to plan, he should finish the year with 117 races run.

Chris Castagno, director of the **Old New Castle Run**, has announced a new date for next year. The event will move to Sat., Sept. 13. An afternoon start time is being considered. Register early for discounts at www.oldnewcastlerun.com, where results of this year's race are also posted.

Another future runner is born. Congratulations to Mary Kate and Cres Campbell, who welcomed their second child on August 15. Patrick Stratton Campbell arrived at the starting line at 5 lbs., 8 oz. and 19-in. long.

Bob Wortz, who is now fully retired, enjoyed a four-day weekend in Rehoboth Beach in early September, which included running in the Bottle & Cork Ten-Miler. The get-away was to celebrate his wife Phyllis's birthday and their **40th wedding anniversary**. Bob finished in 1:28:02.

John Foster has recovered from a nasty fall that required 15 stitches in his knee. The mishap occurred when John tried to jump over a

chain on the trails in White Clay Creek State Park. He was grounded for about three weeks but still hopes achieve his goal of running 2002 miles before the end of 2002.

FREE! FREE! FREE! Open to all ages is the **Seventh Annual Old-Timers Cross Country 5K Race** on Nov. 2, 12:00 p.m., at Brandywine Creek State Park. This event is being held in conjunction with the New Castle County High School Cross Country Championships. **RACE DAY REGISTRATION ONLY.** Note: this race will be run on the same course as the **18th Annual Delaware Open XC Championships**, which will be held on Sat., Nov. 30. For more info on

that event, contact Jim Walsh at 302-892-2829.

Wayne Kursh has announced that the **Icicle Ten-Miler** will start at **9:30 a.m.** instead of 11:00 as in the past. The YMCA now opens at 10:00 on Sundays instead of noon.

The **9th Annual Race Against Time 5K** will be held at 4:00 p.m. on December 31st. However, the New Year's Day 5K at Pike Creek Fitness Club will not be held in 2003. St. Mark's High School, beneficiary of that race, will be involved with the Super Bowl 5K, planned for Sunday, January 26, 2003, at Bank Shots.

New Members

Kevin Smead currently lives in Wilmington but is soon moving to Hockessin along with his wife and two young sons. Inspired by his marathon-running wife, he began running about three years ago, after the birth of his first son, and has been running races from 5K to marathon since then. His favorite running accomplishments have been qualifying for the Boston Marathon, which he will be running in 2003, and running his first sub-6:00/mile-pace 5K this past summer. He generally trains at 7:00-7:15/mile.

Stan Young is from North Wilmington and has been running off and on for the past ten years but more regularly this past year. He normally run six days a week and averages 5-6 miles per day at a pace of 7:15-7:30/mile. He enjoys racing and usually enters 2-3 races per month. His longest run/race is the half-marathon distance. He most recently ran the Philadelphia Distance Run and the Half-Wit Half Trail Marathon in Reading, Pa. The distances that he enjoys running most are the 10-mile and 15K runs. He works in King of Prussia, Pa., so he does a lot of his training runs at Valley Forge Park during the week and has also trained with some of the Delaware Running Co. group in Greenville, Del., on Wednesday nights.

Carrie Collins has been running for the past eight years and is addicted to her weekend morning runs and runs after work, which last about an hour or more. She started running competitively in college for the University of Delaware track and field and cross-country teams. After having graduated and taken on a teaching career, she continued running on her own, racing locally when she had time. She tried to convince friends and family members to join her but just couldn't find anyone who loves running as much as she does. Since earning her master's degree, she has had more time to focus on training for and completing a marathon. In the meantime, she's having fun, staying active, and always in search of a new run.



A Message from the Editor

In the last issue, Vince and I discussed various functions the club has attempted to provide to the membership. The function that I'm discussing here is *The Pacer* and the costs associated with it. Out of our discussion and the general meeting on August 1, almost everyone I have spoken to agrees with our recommendations for reducing the cost of the newsletter. So, for now, the following two changes are being put into effect:



Race Results

After this issue, which contains all club member race results that we could obtain, we are going to cut down on the results that we print. All local results directed by Marathon Sports are available online at www.races2run.com. Everyone has the opportunity to call into the *News-Journal* with out-of-state results.

Hereafter, we will print the following:

- 1) results of major local races;
- 2) results of major regional races;
- 3) results of the USATF Mid-Atlantic races;
- 4) results of any half or full marathon that is submitted to us;
- 5) any result, such as winning a race or age-group victory, that *The Pacer* staff deems notable; and, finally,
- 6) any special result that an individual member wants noted, such as a PR (personal record).

Let's use some common sense here. The idea is to eliminate the obligation to print the club results of every little 5K or 10K and to cut

back the number of pages devoted to results. Some people run dozens of races in a year; they don't need to see every result in print.

Likewise, some runners could garner an age-group award in almost every race entered; they don't need to see all their awards mentioned. But someone who infrequently races or rarely gets an award, may want to see his/her results. New members and new runners certainly deserve more attention for their accomplishments than those of us who are so jaded by racing that we occasionally have to box up some of our race T-shirts and give them to charity because we've run out of space for them. Everyone is encouraged to submit any special result to Jerry Herman via e-mail at gaherm@earthlink.net.

Number of Issues

In the immediate future, we are cutting back to four issues per year. As compensation for the reduction in number of issues as well as the reduction in race results, we hope to have issues just as big, if not bigger, packed with members' stories and pictures. As you have seen, we have attempted to transform the newsletter into a magazine that you will want to keep.

Of course, more means that we need your participation. There are members out there whom I've never met. Send digital photos in JPEG-format as e-mail attachments to deshon@udel.edu or your printed pictures to

Mark Deshon
75 West Mill Station Drive
Newark, DE 19711

E-mail stories or any thoughts you might want to share about running to dkukich@udel.edu or mail them to

Diane Kukich
1241 Doe Run Road
Newark, DE 19711

—Dave McCorquodale



Come Race with Becky!

by Vince McIntosh

Race with Becky for the Central Y Kids 5K: I hope all of us available to run on this date will come out to cheer on Becky and applaud her accomplishments over the years.

Race with Becky for the Central Y Kids 5K

**Sun., Nov. 10, 9 a.m.
11th & Washington
Wilmington, Del.**



Runner of the Third Quarter: Frank Barbera

Pike Creek Valley Running Club's Runner of the Third Quarter, Frank Barbera, is a gifted runner who has been running well for many years. However, he only recently joined the club. Like many of our prominent members of the club, his performance in almost any three-month period is good enough to garner this honor. Although Frank just became a Masters runner, he is always a threat to win most local races, usually finishing in the top five. Even in the most competitive races in this area, he will always be among the top runners.

Frank's most recent races include second overall in the Blue Rocks 5K (17:18) and Bankshots 5K (17:37) and first in his age group at the Rockford Ice Cream Festival 5K (17:47) and Friends of Anne Marie 5K (17:11). At the Old New Castle Run Frank



finished second in his age group with a five-mile time of 28:51.

In the spring Frank had additional accomplishments, such as fourth overall in the Reedy Point Bridge 10K in 35:52 and, in back-to-back events, third overall in the Make-A-Wish 10K (36:32) and second overall in the Make-A-Wish 5K (17:58). In the Caesar Rodney Half-Marathon, attended by many of the region's top runners, Frank was third in his age group with a

1:17:13. And, in what earns him bragging rights for a year in marathon circles, Frank was first Delaware finisher at the 2002 Boston Marathon with a 2:49:58.

For all of these achievements, Pike Creek Valley Running Club is proud to name Frank Barbera Runner of the Quarter.

Member Stories

Editor's Note: The following article was written by Ralph McKinney's friend Allen Thompson in mid-Aug. after Howard Laws announced that he would not compete in the "4th Annual Howard M. Laws Challenge Run," which was to occur Aug. 20 at the final XC series race at Bellevue.

The Battle of Bellevue IV—Wait 'Til Next Year

by Allen Thompson

One of the few things hotter than the weather this summer is the rivalry between Ralph McKinney and Howard Laws. Their running feud had spanned the millennium and is heading toward their "Showdown at Sundown" next week. Well, make that *was*, since the announcement that Laws would not be able to compete this year.

Included in that announcement was that, for the first time in this series, there would be the use of a designated runner, (which means this must be an American League series). This was not greeted warmly by McKinney or by the fans of this series. Rumors started that McKinney was seen at Lehigh University attempting to recruit Duce Staley as his designated runner. What would be next—a computer game of the series to simulate what would happen? Although with Ralph's record-keeping, there may be enough data to create a McKinney 2K2 running game.... Move over John Madden!

So, while there will be a race on Tuesday, it just won't have the magic of "McKinney-Laws IV—War of the Worlds." How could it? The cries of "This is the year" were being heard from the Laws camp shortly after the start of 2002. The motivation from that three-second loss of last year seemed to have Howard ready to even the score.

As for Ralph, he was following his usual "Happy Days" racing schedule, as in "Sunday, Monday, racing day, Tuesday, Wednesday,

racing day, Thursday, Friday, racing day, Saturday, what a day, that's when Ralph does two!" But he knew the consequences if he fought the Laws and the Laws won. Word had it that Ralph even was postponing donating blood (although he allegedly volunteered a pint from Laws. And, while his recent strength-training practice of changing tires seemed extreme, Ralph was ready to run.

Now, it is wait 'til next year. It is a feeling both of these men have experienced in this series. And it is a feeling that neither wants to have again. Which makes the anticipation of next year's duel in the dusk even greater. The wait may seem longer than your last marathon, but it promises to be worth it.

Maybe HBO will show some real hard knocks next summer and televise it. Maybe Anna Nicole will be the official starter. Maybe Anne Robinson can get away from "The Weakest Link" long enough to present the award (for second place anyway). Maybe, I'll find a better way to end this.

So, until next year, remember that if you are out driving and suddenly see a trophy in your rearview mirror, Ralph is probably behind it.



Member Stories

Adventures in Paradise

a continuing series by Don and Cindy Fessman; this chapter written by Ted Filmont



CHAPTER THREE

A.K.A. TED AND DON'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

Dear Pike Creek Valley Runners:

Karen and I arrived at Don and Cindy Fessman's villa in Sint Maarten, on Friday, Sept. 27th. What a gorgeous place! We started to unwind immediately.

Our first training run, "**Lone Tree**," was the following morning—Pelican Key thru Cole Bay to Port de Plaisance Tennis & Fitness Center, 4.5 miles away. After refreshing ourselves, I started retracing our steps back to home but Don said, "No-o-o. We go **THIS** way." It was almost like a dare.... Into the land of dinosaurs, we set off—up, up, up, hop-scotching and pirouetting through the cow plops to the top, "**Lone Tree**." We encountered a number of bulls guarding the top of the mountain, so we clapped, grunted, and generated many strange noises to move them out of the way. Finally, running up a 2,500-ft. elevation, we "**marked**" our territory, next to "**Lone Tree**." The downhill was much easier, and we ran to Marigot, capital of the French side, to breakfast with Cindy and Karen on the waterfront.

We allowed ourselves a short, morning training swim of a quarter-mile on Orient Bay, in preparation

for the "**Splash 'n' Dash**," taking place the same afternoon. I had only had one ocean swim, the week before, in 67-degree New Jersey ocean water. Don, on the other hand, had a few more swims under his belt (?) over the last month.



Time, now, for the afternoon's "**Splash 'n' Dash**"—a 400-meter ocean swim (against the wind and current) and a 5K road race. During the swim, Dr. Gracie hovered over me in her kayak to make sure I stayed, breathing, on the surface. On the last leg to the beach, she yelled at me, "Turn around and face the beach! Don't be a wimp! Swim like a man!" We finally both made it to the beach to put our running shoes on and discovered we had been beaten in the swim by Susie, nine months pregnant! Still, our times weren't bad: Don, 31:51 and Ted, 37:37.

We ran our hearts out, but I was yelled at by several locals, "Hey, get some pants on!" I guess they didn't care for my brief, triathlete swim trunks! Don was able to pull in

John, a local, his age, who had a 3-4-minute head start from the swim. But we were again both humbled by Mary Wrigley, the overall winner. She ran barefoot!

Don got me up and out the next

morning for a "**Training Run to Heaven**." Pic Paradis (Paradise Peak) is the highest mountain on the island of Sint Maarten, and with that, there's a tremendous potential to get lost. At a 60% grade, the steepness alone provided us a good workout. Hand-over-hand, we reached the summit, and I think I saw Florida! We got lost and were two hours late in getting home!

The following day's "**Last/Lost Run**" was quite a finale! The cliffs of the mountains overlooking Orient Bay are indescribable. With its unmarked trails—well, you know the rest of the story. We did, finally, find our way home.

What an adventure in Paradise!

Ted Filmont



Member Stories

The Beauty of Running

by Stewart Whisenant

Anyone who has watched three-time Boston Marathon winner Uta Pippig run knows that the human body can be the epitome of aesthetic delight. The elegance and power of a performing athlete like Pippig is a marvelous expression of the principle: beauty follows function. Some lessor known, but equally inspiring examples on the local competitive circuit also come to mind. They include Delaware Sports Hall of Fame runner Vicki Huber-Rudawski as well as the club's own Nadine Marks, Tom Jermyn, Steve Sinko, and Diane Kukich, just to name a few.

I watched a 10K race at the University of Delaware last spring and was awed by an entire field of young runners as they struggled to realize their maximum potential as athletes. I clocked the winner of the event as he ran consecutive sub-70-second quarter-mile laps with grace and concentration. It was obvious that he had diligently applied the principles of training learned from Coach Jim Fischer and the result was beautiful.

The next day I went out for an inspired, tempo training run at Bellevue State Park and as I passed a group of young women walkers, a statuesque blonde pushing a stroller called out, "Looking good, Pops!" Apparently, the lady perceived beauty in the struggle for optimum performance even in a context of existing limitations such as advanced age and lack of talent. To tell the truth, I wasn't feeling very beautiful that day as my decrepit, 57-year-old body shuffled around the track, but the jolt of positive feedback was a real motivator.

I mention this incident because in the world of recreational running, whatever impels an athlete to action is no small matter. Indeed, according to Amby Burfoot, executive editor of *Runner's World* magazine, "Motivation is the name of the game, period. If you succeed at maintaining your motivation, you'll succeed at running and get everything you want from it." The question is, how does one stay motivated? Accolades

from admiring spectators are helpful, but perhaps the best way, as Burfoot suggests, is to continually remind yourself of the many reasons for running. Old geezers like myself might begin their inventory by noting the health benefits of the sport. According to Kenneth Cooper, endurance exercise, such as running, produces beneficial physiologic changes that he calls the "training effect," a phenomenon which (a) increases the efficiency of the lungs, so they process more air with less effort; (b) conditions the heart, so it pumps more blood at a lower rate; (c) increases the size and number of blood vessels, and increases collateral circulation; (d) increases total blood volume; (e) improves muscle tone, and changes fat weight to lean weight; (f) causes the rhythmic contraction and relaxation of muscles; (g) induces sweating and raises body temperature; and (h) enhances cerebral oxygenation."

All of these fantastic physiological advantages are also good for your head, something the Greeks discovered 2500 years ago. In fact, the Greek saying, *mens sana in corpore sano*—a sound mind in a sound body—is a seminal ideal of Western culture manifested today by over 25 million runners who have become a ubiquitous presence on the American roads. Motives for running are varied among these legions but probably coalesce around the favorable physiological results cited by Cooper. John Hanc pointed out in *The Essential Runner* that "research is beginning to show that much of what has been considered the aging process is

really just the result of lack of exercise." Runners have actually taken this information to heart.

The more arcane motives of spiritual and psychological well being are less often expressed, but nevertheless tacitly inform the efforts of just about all the runners I know. Occasionally, runners talk about these deeper issues in public but none has done so more eloquently and inspirationally, in my opinion, than the late Dr. George Sheehan, a man who Joseph Epstein called "something of a Jean Paul Sartre in an athletic supporter."

"My fitness program was never a fitness program," wrote Sheehan. "It was a campaign, a revolution, a conversion. I was determined to find myself. And in the process, found my body and the soul that went with it." Sheehan had a way of summing things up about the

continued on page 13



Bob Taggart displays classic running form on race day at the DDC.



Special Photo Section from the 2002 Classic



photos by Stewart Whisenant except where noted



Kathy Farnen



Heather Hirschman







The Beauty of Running *continued from page 8*

subject of running—precisely and forcefully—that reflects what his colleague and friend Dr. Ralph Oriscello once said of him. “George Sheehan was a pioneer in motivating and mobilizing people, of great and limited athletic ability, to run in order to improve their perception of life.”

Like Sheehan, running for me amounts to nothing less than a quest for personal renewal. When I run, a new awareness is born; I see the world with greater clarity as worries and fears drop away. What *Runner's World* editor Joe Henderson said is true. Running assuages “gummed up thinking.” As vain imaginings about the future and regrets about the past dissolve in the crucible of aerobic exercise, mindfulness of the body is heightened and the present moment comes into sharper focus. An hour of running out on the roads or trails mysteriously reveals new and wondrous dimensions of my being. To be sure, running has become the key to a deeper understanding of the riddles of life and a means of spiritual resurrection.

“The only high I get from running,” said a friend after a grueling 5K, “comes after I get home and have an ice-cold, post-race brewski.” Although I agree that drinking alcohol in moderation can be one of life’s peak experiences, exercise is what I crave, the high with no toxic side effects. Like a lot of runners, I relish solitude and find that my happiness and well being seem to revolve around an intense need for introspection. In short, running is intoxicating precisely because of how it deepens and enriches my inner life. While running, my soul “vibrates to epiphanies of a higher order,” as Clifton Fadiman once said about a memorable bottle of wine.

To George Sheehan, this would all no doubt sound familiar. “For the runner, he wrote in *Running and Being*, “running has always been a form of contemplation and meditation, an activity with the saving grace, as Santayana said of football, of purging, rinsing and exhausting the inner man; a time when the movements of his body in concert with his mind and heart gave him an appreciation of what was good and true and beautiful.”

My motivations for running weren’t always this lofty. For years, I fit the profile of what might be called a “gentleman jogger.” My primary goals were simply to feel good and maintain an athletic profile for the ladies. My training program revolved around Kenneth

Cooper’s aerobic points system with an occasional 5K race thrown in for variety. But since I retired from the U.S. Postal Service, I’ve let go of my indolent ways and become what one might loosely term a “competitive” runner. Last year I increased my mileage to 25-30 per week and I run more 5Ks than ever before. I also enter a 10K race now and then and recently vowed to run the Distance Classic 15K every October -- rain or shine. At present, I am in training for a half-marathon and occasionally, I entertain thoughts that I’ll run a full marathon someday.

For a long time I fantasized that this meant I had also become a contender. Sadly, I must report that a bit of reading from the vast literature of the sport dis-

abused me of that notion pronto! Since my best effort in the mile run (on a good day at my ideal weight) is a slow 7:10, it’s a safe bet that I’ll never be in a race for Olympic gold. In fact, using the one-mile test as a yardstick, my potential as far as race performance is concerned, is pathetic. According to *Fitness Running* author Dick Brown’s race time prediction table, about the best I can hope for is a 5K time around 24 minutes. The fastest I am ever likely to run in the 10K is 49 or 50 minutes. Judging by the race results posted in the recent Pacer, I am not even a contender for a prize on the local circuit. Unfortunately, most of the winning 50–59-year-old runners I know consistently run sub-22-minute 5Ks and sub-45-minute 10Ks. So realistically, it appears that

all I can hope for in the trophy department is that adventitious race day when no runners in my age group show up except me!

In view of the aforementioned limitations and improbabilities, why do I run road races? If I can’t expect to win, why bother to stay in shape? In shape for what? The answers are complex and multifaceted, but the following quote from Sheehan’s classic *This Running Life* offers a valuable insight into the nature of competition that’s especially appropriate for aging recreational runners. “The Latin root of the word is *petere*—to go out, to head for, to seek,” says Sheehan. “The *com* is doing it together, in common, in unity, in harmony. Competition is simply each of us seeking our absolute best with the help of each other. What we do magnifies each other, inspires each of us. The race is synergistic society where what accrues to one accrues to all, a society in which everyone can be a winner.”



*Ann Foster
flies through the DDC 15K course.*

