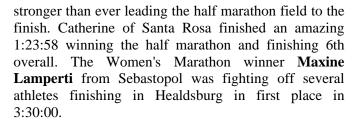


### **Empire Runners Dominate Healdsburg Wine Country** Wolf-Root and DuBay Take the Half, Shebest and Lamperti the Full Inaugural Race Draws over 500 runners

### Brad Illing—Event Director

The inaugural Wine Country Marathon & Half Marathon on Sunday October 26th 2008 was a day I will never forget. The 26.2 mile marathon started at 7:00 am in downtown Healdsburg on a Chamber postcard day. Watching the excited athletes head north towards Dry Creek Rd sent tingles down my spine. The half marathon athletes loaded the buses for a tour of wine country, dropping the athletes at the half way point of the marathon at Silver Oak Winery. The scenery was incredible with the autumn colored vineyards and the fresh piles of crushed grapes leaving an aroma in the air. While waiting for the 8:30 start music was playing and Peter Kirk was pumping up the crowd while the Girls On The Run served drinks to the athletes. We offered six athletes a free entry in 2009 if they carried a mini pumpkin to finish. Several athletes were fighting over the mini pumpkins; all six people finished and received their free entry. With ten minutes till race time Bob Shebest of Santa Rosa passed the halfway point of the marathon holding a 6:15 pace for the first 13.1 miles. The gun went off at 8:30 sharp as 500 athletes headed south toward the finish line in Healdsburg.

The first 8 miles are flat and fast as they passed well stocked aid stations hosted by Randy Fette and the YMCA Hoot Owls, **John Royston and the Empire Runners**, Judy Dix and the Fleet Feet crew and Joy Hermsen with Jill B Nimble gang. The lead male **Alex Wolf-Root** was holding a 5:30 pace attempting to catch the marathon leader **Bob Shebest**. Alex caught Bob at mile 9 as they ran side by side down Chiquita Rd. Alex had a slight lead as they finished in Downtown Healdsburg, Alex of Santa Rosa finished with a blazing time of 1:11:04. Bob Shebest had an incredible day winning the overall men's marathon in 2:45:22. The women's field was heating up with **Catherine Dubay** 



The finish area was buzzing with excitement and smiles. Bill Bradley and **Peter Kirk** did a great job working the microphone yelling the names of runners crossing the finish line. The athletes had plenty of refreshments and food while the band Five A.M. played tunes. The awards ceremony seemed late, however runners were still finishing.

Ι would personally like thank to evervone for participating and the many Volunteers helping with this event, it would not be possible without you! I promise to double the restrooms next year. BI



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65 Brookwood Ave - Santa Rosa CA 95404



Tagliaferri's Delicatessen & Cafe

### Empire Runners October 2008 Club Meeting [Pending approval at the November 20, 2008 club meeting]

**President Bob Finlay** (bfinlay@sbcglobal.net) called the October 23, 2008 meeting of the Empire Runners to order at 7:33pm.

#### **Special Report:**

Susanna Bohn, the volunteer coordinator for the Lake Sonoma 50 requested that the club man an aid station for this year's race on March 28th.

#### Secretary's Report:

**Secretary Nate Koch** (nathankoch@gmail.com) read the September meeting minutes which were approved as read.

#### Special Report #2:

Doc said that he wants to get in the minutes that El Presidente Finlay did an excellent job of leading the discussion on cross country at last month's meeting.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

Treasurer John Harmon (jj2harmon@yahoo.com) reported that last month we ended with \$35,894.72 and is now at \$35,997.91. The Student Grant Fund balance is \$477 and there have been \$6,050 donated to high schools to date. There have been \$1395 in costs for the current cross country season to date.

#### President's Report

Bob Finlay read a letter from Doug Hastings thanking the club for the donation to the El Molino track.

Bob also reported that Gil Moreno sent an email concerning sending out membership dues notifications. Gil is looking into purchasing new software to make this easier in the future. LT suggested we look into a January to December membership system. Bob highlighted that Gil is not trying to single out anybody by sending out the emails, but this is simply the easiest, most efficient method for the time being.

### Recent Events:

**Garrin Park CC – 9/27/08 –** Mel reported that it was warm and that there was a rattlesnake in the finish chute.

Presidio Challenge – 10/4/08 – Lots of people

Harvest Fair – 10/5/08 – Several members ran

**Tamalpa/Empire world record** – 12 years ago there was an attempt to beat the 4X1600m relay super senior record, they did and then they lost it. This year there was another attempt. When the race was finished, they thought that they were too slow, but after looking at the previous record again, they realized that they were the new current record holders. Read the newsletter for the full story.

#### Upcoming Events:

**Shoreline CC – 10/25/08 -** Several men and Mel were going to go. They are meeting at Montgomery at 7am.

Wine Country Marathon and <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> - 10/26/08

Tamalpa Challenge CC - 11/1/08 - 43 committed

Run to Stop Hunger – 11/9/08 – Fleet Feet raises money for Redwood Empire Food Bank.

PA Championships - 11/23/08 - At Golden Gate Park

McGuire's Breakfast Run – 11/30/08

**Committee Reports** 

CPR Training – Mel Lovrin reported that there is still room.

### There is a race director's meeting after the club meeting.

**Annadel Donation** – Bob Finlay reported that he is still in contact with Annadel and that the Sonoma County Trails Association is interested in partnering with the club for the drinking fountain donation.

### Unfinished Business: None

#### New Business:

First Nominations for club officers for 2009 – President – Doc nominated Bob Finlay for president Vice President - Bob nominated Dave DeSelle for Vice President

Treasurer - Dale nominated John Harmon for treasurer

Secretary – Bob nominated Nate Koch for secretary

**Jingle Bell Run** – Bob Finlay reported that the Main's can't host the Jingle Bell Run this year and so a new venue is needed. Several suggested were made. If you have an idea, contact Bob Finlay.

### Raffle/Drawing:

Raffle: Dale Peterson stole the \$20 from Nate Koch.

Drawing: **Tristan Cole** (\$200, not present). Next month's drawing is for **\$200**.

President **Bob Finlay** concluded the meeting at 8:32pm. **Attendance**:

"Bones" Koch, John Harmon, *SLEDGE*, Ralph Harms, Pappy, Mike McGuire, Robert Merritt, Mini-Mel, LT, El Doc, Sarah Trejo, Bob Shor, Super G, Dave DeSelle, Susan Kelleher, Chris Mason, Bob Finlay



### NEW MEMBER

### Please welcome to the Empire Runners Club Shelby Grolig - Age 23 - Rohnert Park

Hello, my name is Shelby... I live in Rohnert Park and have recently started training for a Half Marathon in January. Running is new to me, but the more I have trained the more I am enjoying it. I am hoping to meet some friends and find some fun running trails in the area. I am definitely a rookie so I thought being in this running club would also be motivating.

### Wine Country

**The Half** 

#### Alex Wolf-Root

(Note: The events chronicled in this article are not necessarily 100% accurate. The taxing nature of the event led to possible confusion in chronology, possibly due to inadequate oxygen to the brain and the overall physical pain associated with the race. Then again, the mental shortcomings may be due to a prior cause, as, well, who in their right mind would wish to race such a long distance? [and don't even get me started on marathoners!] Anyways, on to the recap!)

Over summer, race director Brad Illing talked to my high school coach Dan Aldridge about getting people out for the event, and Danny figured it would be good for me. True, I know I'm better at the longer distances, but I didn't want to debut at the half for another year or so. I'm still not sure exactly how he convinced me to run this

thing, though I'm quite glad he did. (My body, though, disagrees....)

So the race started out halfway into the marathon course on a beautiful Sunday morning. The weather was perfect: cool with an ever so slight breeze, and I was wearing my amazing new Brooks T5 racing flats. Seriously, those things are amazing. I was coming off some decent but not amazing tune-up races of 5k and 8k, and had never raced a half-marathon before so really did not know what to expect. I figured sub 75 was definitely doable, and, if all went well, 73 would be awesome.

About 5 steps after the gun, I knew this would be a solo run. Although I went out slightly hot for that first 800m or so, I felt like I quickly got into a comfortable groove. Well, comfortable is relative, but I felt like I was running a pace I could run at, or close to, without completely bonking. It felt fast, but I really had no idea. When I hit 4 miles in 21:30, I knew this was going to be huge or I would have a terrible last half of the race.

Slightly after 4 miles I started to feel it, but kept pushing. The entire time I felt like I was attacking the race, but not quite crossing that line. It was like if I were to give 1% more at any time I would fall apart within a minute or two. I had the feeling that this would come to bite me in the ass as the race progressed, but as I had a comfortable lead I was okay with that risk.



	Empire Runners Club Finishers [Apologies to those who may have been left out]					
Healdsburg Wine Country Half Marathon, October 26, 2008						
Place	Name	Age	Age Group	Time	Pace	
1	Alex Wolf-Root	21	1st/6 M 20-24	1:11:04	5:25/M	
6	Catherine Dubay	44	1st/51 F 40-44	1:23:59	6:25/M	
17	Rob Main	49	4/18 M 45-49	1:34:28	7:13/M	
21	Dave Secchitano	50	2/12 M 50-54	1:36:07	7:20/M	
31	Vernon Stafford	53	3/12 M 50-54	1:38:23	7:31/M	
35	Elizabeth Meza	39	2/61 F 35-39	1:40:01	7:38/M	
42	Patrick Burden	20	3/6 M 20-24	1:41:18	7:44/M	
49	Reyana Ewing	38	3/61 F 35-39	1:42:47	7:51/M	
61	Steven Burden	26	3/15 M 25-29	1:44:43	8:00/M	
68	Jay Reed	49	8/18 M 45-49	1:45:58	8:05/M	
80	Anette Niewald	52	2/21 F 50-54	1:46:53	8:10/M	
84	Leslie Graves	41	5/51 F 40-44	1:47:11	8:11/M	
94	Andrew Furlong	30	12/24 M 30-34	1:48:43	8:18/M	
110	Tanya Narath	45	6/48 F 45-49	1:50:35	8:26/M	
117	Rhonda Roman	45	8/48 F 45-49	1:51:13	8:29/M	
140	Dawn Haight	37	18/61 F 35-39	1:53:38	8:40/M	
150	Megan Basinger	29	9/32 F 25-29	1:55:33	8:49/M	
167	Ann Dubay	48	14/48 F 45-49	1:56:49	8:55/M	
174	Kathleen Daly	49	16/48 F 45-49	1:57:09	8:56/M	
185	Linda Reed	49	20/48 F 45-49	1:58:19	9:02/M	
209	Paul Critchett	61	3/5 M 60-64	2:02:21	9:20/M	
369	Tonie Quigley	50	16/21 F 50-54	2:39:08	12:09/M	
388	John Faye	59	13/15 M 55-59	2:50:42	13:02/M	
Healdsburg Wine Country Full Marathon, October 26, 2008						
Place	Name	Age	Age Group	Time	Pace	
1	Bob Shebest	24	1st/4 M 30-34	2:45:22	6:19/M	
10	Maxine Lamperti	41	1st/6 F 40-44	3:30:01	8:01/M	
13	Janet Feldman	50	1/3 F 50-54	3:32:31	8:07/M	
14	Debbie Beem	50	2/3 F 50-54	3:34:16	8:11/M	

Twvla Robert

Mary Ann Weber

E.J. Bohn

51

42

44

3/3 F 50-54

1/6 F 40-44

11/16 M 40-44

8:32/M

8:43/M

8:59/M

3:43:41

3:48:27

3:55:18

27

30

39

### (The Half, continued)

Shortly thereafter I saw Downtown Kenny Brown on the side of the course. Kenny had been leading a training group culminating in the marathon or half-marathon here, and was just out to support his crew (which included running the first few miles of the marathon with them, crazy Kenny!) He gave me some much needed encouragement and laughed at me when I told him to join me. (The lead bike gave me a funny look too, as I had been quiet for the last 3 or so miles. But how could I not say something? It was Kenny B!) In addition, Kenny told me I was only about 90 seconds behind the lead marathoner (Bob Shebest, though I didn't know that at the time) and closing steadily.

Not much later (or perhaps just before?) I passed through downtown Geyserville (I think) which was having some sort of classic car convention. The streets were crazy busy with people and cars, though I really didn't have the energy to glance around, and certainly not to weave in and out. Fortunately, the lead biker knew what to do; he cruised on ahead, alerting the town to my presence, and cleared a straight path. I didn't have to change my course at all. Seriously, mad props to this biker, whose name I don't even know.

On the topic of the biker, somewhere around here, maybe between mile 5 and mile 6 or so, during a clear straight portion of the course, the lead biker started to drop back. He informed me that since the course was straight and quite clear for a bit, that he was going to take a piss break. Yea. It probably was that, at this point, I had absolutely no concept of time, but after what seemed like 30 seconds of running alone I heard a *whoosh* as he flew back by me and regained the lead. (While reading what I just wrote, this does not seem that interesting, but, during the race, and thereafter, and to a degree still, I found/find this hilarious.)

By this point, what was before a "comfortable" pace was becoming less and less so, though I didn't feel like I was slowing down. I had to exert more mental energy to hold pace, but not really any more physical energy. I was just getting tired.

Maybe around mile 7.5 or so, I'm not sure, I saw a cop car, a bike, and a lone runner, Bob Shebest, not too far off on a slight incline. My biker informed me that, once I passed, he would switch with Bob's. I said my thanks for a job well done, and then picked it up ever so slightly until I caught Bob. I don't understand how (nor, I think, did the bikers), but Bob and I were able to comfortable exchange pleasantries as we ran together for a few moments. While running solo for my distance was rough, I cannot fathom what it must have been like for Bob. Anyways, I took off from Bob and began to open up on a downhill. Now, coming from Annadel and the many, many races on the Spring Lake course, I've for a long time prided myself on downhill running. I knew, though, that at this sort of distance I had to play it safe and not go crazy on them as I normally do, and, up until this point, I was good. Maybe it was just the accumulation of many miles of pounding, maybe it was the extra push down the hill due to the adrenaline from actually seeing someone, but right after that downhill things started to go down hill. (Terrible pun not intended).

Everything started to tighten up and I just felt generally way more sore and tired than I had previously. I kept telling myself that this was just momentary, that it would go away, but it was more hope than knowledge. As it turned out, I was right, but it was really just a lucky guess. About 800m later I started to loosen back up and feel half-decent. Though, from this point on, what was once semi-comfortable became just plain hard.

Now, the race was feeling much more like midway through an 8k or 10k, and, though I still was holding a steady clip, I was pushing practically full-on to keep it that way. I really have nothing to report from here to midway through mile 9 because I really don't remember anything from it, except a vague feeling of pain.

Now, midway through mile 9, was a hill. A big hill. There were other hills during the race, but they were gradual or short enough where I really didn't mind. This one was different. It was steep. And I was tired. And it was steep. And I really, really didn't want to run it. But, there it was. Actually, this whole portion was a gradual uphill, I think. But what vividly stands out was this steep hill, and my tiredness. O, and did I mention that it was steep?



Bob Shebest & Alex Wolf-Root

### (The Half, continued)

So my plan going into this was to start squeezing the trigger once I hit mile 10. But thanks to this annoyingly steep hill, that plan went out the window. Though I did cross the 10 mile mark at 54:20 which, while shocking the hell out of me, gave me the confidence that I could pick it up in a mile or so and end up with something huge. I tried to do the math to see what was possible, but numbers really didn't want to stick in my head.

Once I had adequately enough recovered from that stupid hill, I started to go. Just like at the Lake Tahoe Relay, with about two miles to go I dropped the hammer and entered full-on race mode. I was going into tunnel vision, and all in all feeling like ass. Turning the last corner I saw the finish line maybe 200m out and heard some crowds and announcements over the loudspeakers. I (in my mind) zoomed through the 180 degree turn and went all-out for those last 20 meters till I crossed the line.

Once on the other side, I bent over for a while, not really having a choice. Someone put a medal around my neck, though all I remember is a medal going around my neck. Someone else took off my chip, I assume, as when I looked about 15 minutes later it was no longer there. But, I have no recollection of this.

I spent what seemed like 10 minutes sitting on the ground, shoeless, though in fact it was maybe 2 minutes max. Eventually I was able to walk around and re-hydrate, as well as take a picture with Bob. Oddly enough, neither of us remembers the picture being taken. But, it clearly was.

I tried a few times to cool down, before and after hydrating and walking, but it was just way, way too painful. In fact I couldn't run until Wednesday, and ended up going down an elevator instead of stairs on Monday (I never take elevators!). Turned out I stopped the clock at 71:04, which I must say really, really pleased me. It hurt like mad, but, in the end, was well worth it. Well, the results say 1:10:04, but I find it depressing to think in terms of hours for race times, so I will stick with 71:04.

All in all, this was nuts. I don't get how people can run halfs, let alone full marathons, so often, and enjoy it. I can see myself doing another half in the future, maybe a year out, but for now (after running PA champs for the Empire Runners) I am going to focus on the 5,000m. I may not do as well, and I may hurt more during, but at least I'll be able to run a day later.

Of course, thanks to Brad for an awesome race, and thanks (I think) to Danny for somehow convincing me to do this. And to all of you who ran the full marathon: I admire you, but you are crazy. That is all.

Alex Wolf-Root November 9, 2008

# Clarksburg **Half Marathon**

I woke up in the Elk Grove Holiday Inn Express. It had rained over night but now as I looked out the window across an empty parking lot towards Highway 99 the remaining clouds were breaking up. I made myself some coffee and ate a whole-wheat English muffin with a little honey. Soon I would be making the drive across the Sacramento River and down to the small delta town of Clarksburg.

This year I decided to forsake the fall marathon for something a little shorter. I decided to look for a halfmarathon. I hoped to find a fast course and to run in cool temps. I thought about the two Healdsburg races that would occur on the same weekend but before I actually realized there were two races I shifted my sights to Clarksburg. I had heard people talk about Clarksburg, some complaining about the supposed monotony of the course, while others warned about the treacherously cambered roads that run atop the levees. None of this deterred me as I continued to be intrigued by the prospect of a cool day and a flat course. So I signed up several months in advance.

Training had gone well. I managed to stay healthy while consistently showing up for Larry Meredith's Tuesday night speed work sessions. In addition, since my recovery after Boston I had added a 3 hour LSD run to my repertoire every 4 to 6 weeks to keep my base near marathon ready at all times. Top all of this off with several tough cross-country and club races and I felt that my level of fitness was quite good.

Even so, I felt tired and sluggish all week after the Tamalpa USATF-PA cross-country race with only a few days to go before Clarksburg. I tried not to worry about it and wrote it off as the pre-race blahs.

I was disappointed that Larry would not be making the trip with me as he had pulled a hamstring at Tamalpa and could not run the 5K at Clarksburg as he had planned. So, I made the trip out to Sacramento, picked up my race packet at the Fleet Feet store on J Street and headed down to Elk Grove to spend the night. I watched the Cal-USC football game, ate a Togo's sandwich, drank a beer and went to bed at a reasonable time. I slept like a log until about 5 minutes before my alarm was to go off. Now I was getting my race bag together, getting dressed in my Empire Runners singlet and heading out to my truck for the drive to Clarksburg. What started out as a somewhat cloudy morning was now turning bright and sunny but much to my relief the temperature remained on the cool side. I am not someone who runs well in hot weather so this was good news to me. I realized that

### (Clarksburg, continued)

I had forgotten my sunglasses and almost turned back to get them but I was already half-way to Clarksburg and was in fear about the parking situation.

People had told me that Clarksburg was just a suburb of Sacramento and I was prepared for the monotony of Rancho Cordova or one of the other cookiecutter cities that surround the area. I was pleasantly surprised to find that Clarksburg is actually in the country and it is very beautiful indeed. There were large stands of hardwoods in their autumn colors adjacent to vineyards with an occasional view of the river or a canal. You could even see Mt. Diablo rising in the distance over the flat river delta – a stunning, classic California landscape. Don't believe anyone who says Clarksburg is just a Sacramento suburb.

When I got to the actual town of Clarksburg there was already a fairly long line of cars waiting to park at Delta High School, the start and finish of the race - actually *races* as in addition to the half marathon, they also had two kids races a 5K, 30K and 20 Miler.

After a short one mile warm up I waited for the call for the half marathon runners to report to the starting line. By now the kids' races were already done and the 20 Milers and 30K runners were already out on the course. By the time they finally had us head for the starting line I was starting to get a little antsy. I wondered how I would do today. I felt good but rather than get all psyched up I decided to just stay calm, trust my training and see what happened.

With about 400 other people they finally lined us up. They reminded us that the half marathon course was an out and back and to be aware of the turn-around point. After what seemed like a long time the siren went off and so did we, heading down the road on the first of 13.1 miles.

I hit the first mile in 7:19 and realized that I would need to slow it down some if I was going to avoid problems later in the race. The road was nice and flat, no odd camber detected whatsoever. I felt good and came through in 7:28 for mile two followed by the next three in the 7:33 to 7:36 range. I had calculated that I needed to run an average of 7:34 to be on PR pace. By now I had been through two or three aid stations. The day continued to be cool though it was bright and sunny. Large sections of the course were under partial shade which was very nice. Besides the folks in the aid stations there were a fair number of spectators along the course, cheering us on and otherwise offering encouragement. I continued to feel quite good though based on recent experience I was a little anxious to see how I would feel in the later miles. Occasionally I would pass some slower runners - stragglers from the 20M or 30K that had started earlier. I tried to say something encouraging to some of them as I went by.

Near the six mile mark there was a live rock band playing which was pretty cool besides giving an added

boost to the runners as we approached the halfway mark and the turnaround point.

I picked it up some at this point posting a 7:29 at the six mile mark, however I slowed to 7:34 at mile seven and it was here that I resolved to really try to pick up the pace. I was feeling pretty smooth and decided to push a little bit more and see what happened. The next two miles were well under 7:30 pace and I realized that I was starting to build up a very slight cushion. If I could just keep it up I was still on a PR pace. As I approached Mile ten I really began to feel confident. I felt like I was having one of those wonderful days when you know you are running your best but there is not a lot of discomfort. Also, I began to reel in runners who had gone out too fast and were now paying the price. Shortly I would be passed by some of the fastest runners from the 30K which actually was kind of cool to be able to run "with" them for a few strides. I missed the marker for mile eleven and did not get a split until mile twelve. Those two averaged out to 7:25 each. At this point I realized that unless the wheels came completely off I was going to PR easily, but instead of backing off I determined to just lay it all out and get the fastest time I could! So, I tried to summon some of the speed that I spent all summer working on and tried to think about longer strides and faster turnover even as my legs began to feel just a bit tired.

I could see the bend in the road that would return me to the high school and the finish. People were lining the road now, clapping and cheering us in. I looked for the clock and I could see that if I kept pushing hard I would likely break 1:38.0. Finally I entered the finish chute being careful to step on the chip-timing mats, hit my watch and came to a stop after a few slowing strides. I looked at my watch and I had done it - 1:37.45, a PR by almost two minutes. I walked over, had my chip cut off and a finishers medal handed to me by one of the many volunteers and turned to watch the other finishers.

I grabbed some water and walked back to my truck to stretch my legs a bit. I felt great to say the least and after I retrieved my phone I called **Robin** to let her know how I had done. I also called Larry to let him know that the track workouts had once again made the difference in my training. It was such a great day and I only wished that someone had been there to share it with.

Of course we all tend to have good thoughts and memories about races in which we did well, but I don't think I am exaggerating when I say that the Clarksburg Country Run is a great event on a fast and scenic course. I highly recommend giving it a look. If the weather holds and you've done your training you'll probably run a very fast time and be very pleased with the experience.

### DM Peterson

# **Two Non-Marathoners Run the New York Marathon**

I don't really know how it happened. It seems I only just had the inkling to actually do a marathon and then before I knew it, I had signed up. I chalk that up to 1) my friend suggesting (ok, no dragging) me to see "Spirit of the Marathon" and 2) Jedi Mind tricks performed on me via a phone call with another friend. I don't really remember how it happened. All I know is that along about June I figured I had better get cracking on this marathon training business.

The training for this became almost like caring for an additional child. In the peak of the training, I would often wake up before 5:00 to get in a run. Which felt great at 7:00am, and then by lunch time I was completely strung out. Often people would tell me that I looked "tired". Gee thanks. I decided to join cross country to have the team experience, supplement the training, learn how to race smarter, and to get to know the Empire Runners better. Go Empire! It was a blast! I also signed up for a half marathon a month before. Needless to say, I missed a few soccer games and was late to some family parties. Then when I would show up, I would limp in with ice strapped to this or that and consume enough food for three truckers. People were starting to wonder. I was too. Wait.....why was I doing this again?

I worked hard to stay positive and focused on doing this thing. I figured if I got to questioning it too much, then what was the point of doing it? I am horribly addicted to my iPod, so I kept my playlist fresh, rewatched "Spirit of the Marathon", chatted on the Runners World discussion boards, and tried to run with others when I was feeling burned out. One week before my marathon, I volunteered at the Healdsburg marathon. I wanted to see my friends in the middle of their run and be a part of the experience before I did mine. I really loved doing this. Ok, well it did scare me a little bit more, but it also made me more excited.

People asked me what time did I want?.....Heck if I know. I had only raced half this distance. That made some of the workouts at goal marathon pace hard to figure. My most recent half marathon time of 1:29:04, according to McMillan, predicted a 3:07 finish. Riiiiiight. About two weeks before the race I decided that my pace would most likely be 7:30-ish. I then tried

to hit that number unsuccessfully on the track a number of times.

Things were going pretty smoothly and I made it injury free to my taper. I run my last 20, then when I try to run the following Tuesday, something was not right. My Achilles! It felt like someone was stabbing me with each step. I tried not to freak out, but was very worried. The plane tickets, the room, the whole trip. Would I go there and NOT run the marathon? I rest. I massage. One week later, the pain has disappeared like magic! Was it in my head? I do not know. I hear this is a common thing to happen during the taper.

I make it to New York without a hitch and have roughly 36 hours to mentally prepare for the race.

So there I am on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge on November 2nd. I am packed in with my fellow runners like sardines. I am feeling good. I have used the "facilities". I have my gloves. I am trained. I am cold as heck but feeling "sprightly". I am in wave one, but I was at the way back of my corral, so when the gun went off, I had a couple of minutes to get to the start. But then, there I am running, finally doing this thing.

The first mile was tough. I was so packed in it was hard to run my own pace. It was extremely windy. I passed as much as I could on the sloped walking path on the bridge. I have no idea what that first mile was, because I never saw the mile marker. I am guessing around eight minutes, which was where I wanted it to be. After the first couple of miles, I was warmed up and feeling good. Hitting my splits in the mid to low seven's. I really wanted to try to be consistent and not go out to fast as I so often do. I hit the 5k at 24:18. I absolutely LOVING this race. New York feels so alive. I am slapping high fives all around. The gloves come off. I am noticing my fellow runners and how there are so many countries represented. Some have written their names on their shirt or who they are running for. I hit the 10k at 47:45. I am still feeling boxed it, but not caring so much. I feel good and still want to run conservatively. There is so much to see in this marathon, that I am at the halfway point before I know it. I come to 13.1 miles at 1:39:17. It was few minutes slower than I hoped, but who cares, I am having some kind of out-of-body experience. Few more bridges and boroughs later and I am heading in to Manhattan! Oh the dreaded wall is in there somewhere. I tried not to think of that word. No wall! Not going to happen!

Oh, but it did. I found it. The mythical "wall" that I had heard so much about. It was waiting for me at mile 23. The "out of body experience" went away and my legs were like pure lead. I still had 3.2 miles to go, but I decided to piecemeal it. Just to the water stations, just to Central Park. Mile 23 was 8 minutes. Noooooo! I did not want to go down like this!.. But then, Central Park! I rounded the corner and started to pick people off. I only had a couple of miles to go. It's just Brush Creek up and back I told myself. I got back in the sevens and hung on. I hit mile 24 at 3:04 something. I do some quick math and decide to shoot for under 3:20. So now I have my goal at mile 24! People were dropping off like flies; I am still passing and making my way through Central Park. I managed a couple more 7:40's but it was getting tougher and tougher to hold the pace. I finally see the finish line; I feel emotional but too exhausted to cry. I cross the line still not sure if I made it under 3:20. It was close.

Completing the distance was surreal, exhilarating. Then pain...so much pain. I walked to gear check with a girl who had bled through her running shoes. So hardcore! She is my new hero.

When I look back on experience of running in the New York Marathon, a few things really stand out in my mind. First, when I got to around mile 7, I was running behind a double above the knee amputee running with titanium legs. Wow! I have to admit I remained behind him for several miles because the crowd absolutely loved him and I was feeding off that energy. This man was beaming from ear to ear and I knew that the training and running of this marathon helped him recapture something of himself. It should also be noted that this man was running sub-eight minute miles! Secondly, I remember the gospel singers at around mile 10. Everyone was singing and clapping and the energy was so positive it carried me through a few more miles. I remember running by the Sloan-Kettering Cancer center where the kids were waiting to cheer on my friend Valerie who helped raise over three thousand dollars for cancer research. That got me choked up a bit.

My friend asked me today "What did you think about during the race"? I had to admit that I didn't remember. The question caught me off guard and I drew a blank. Then I headed out for a light jog with my iPod (always with the iPod!) And then I remembered as I listened to some of the same songs I had listened to on the course. I thought about her, thought about the people who had helped me train, I thought about my husband who had been so patient with the training for the last few months. I ran for them, I ran for myself. I drew on the strength that got me through 16 hours of labor. And now that it is over, I will probably use the marathon as a tool to help me get through other things. If I can run 26.2 miles, then what else can I do? Chances are...There'll be another marathon or two!

Carrie Peterson-Kirby 3:19:54

### Valerie's Story:

"Oh, why don't we throw in a lap over Fountaingrove after this 15 mile run?" That is not an uncommon thing for me to *say* somewhere between miles 3 and 4. It is, however, uncommon for me to actually *do* it. But please know that I have the best of intentions.

So when I said "hey, how about we run New York this year?" I doubt anybody took me too seriously.

I am not what one would call a "serious runner"... meaning... I really don't have a lot of talent. But I love it. I love how it makes me feel. I love how it clears my mind. I love how the Rocky theme goes through my head when I DO go over Fountaingrove Expressway. I love the friends I've made. I love how I just know I'm a size 2 after a run when I left the house a size 10. I love how running in the rain makes me feel "hard core".

In February it was time to register. Not being of qualifying speed, I had to rely on the lottery or join a team and raise money for one of multiple worthy causes. I just KNEW I'd get in with the lottery. I also knew my track record for "finishing stuff". I reserved a hotel, registered for the race and signed up with Fred's Team all on the same day. No longer was it just about me. In that moment, I started running for something greater. It was a turning point.

Most people train for a marathon for 4 months. But since I am far from most people, I began in March. That gave me eight months to slowly work up to the distances I knew I'd need to complete before the event. Running anywhere from 26 to 46 miles per week, I wondered if I'd ever see my non-running friends again. They wondered the same. I slept with dog eared copies of Runner's World and purchased old Sports Illustrated issues featuring the NYC Marathon on eBay. I had a strange preoccupation with looking at my changing calves in the mirror at every available opportunity.

About 10 weeks before the marathon I fell on the sidewalk injuring my shoulder and neck. Most runners pull muscles, tear tendons, get shin splints. I fall down. This had me out of commission for a few weeks and on

any other day, I'd have quit. Restarting felt like, well, restarting. It was hard and I wondered if it was worth it. I remembered the children with cancer that I was raising money to help. I thought of their parents. I thought of my own sorry excuse for giving up, and I pushed on.

I am a very blessed woman with friends that are second to none. We trained together and trained alone. Some going to New York, some running in the Wine Country Marathon the weekend before and some just plain running. We did hills and speed and tempo runs and long runs and drank coffee and ate Gu and talked about biological functions and built each other up when we were feeling down and tried to reassure each other that we were not depriving our families *too* much. That we deserved this.

Four of us women traveled to NYC together and only one had run this before. We relied on her heavily for information on what to expect. All having different goal times and different start waves, we separated before the sound of the canon.

I was now left with Fred's Team.

There were 750 of us all together... all in our bright orange team jerseys. Even though we didn't "know"

each other, we held a strong connection. Along the way we would encourage one another and the crowds LOVED us. I mean... they L O V E D us to the point where folks in the crowd would jump up and down shouting FRED'S TEAM FRED'S TEAM!!!

Just as I was entering Manhattan... approximately mile 17, I was pretty tired and feeling somewhat dazed. Searching for my Blackberry (don't laugh... how else could I find my family at the finish line with two million spectators?) I wanted to send a text to my husband, while running, of course, saying "I you!" need hoping somehow, he'd subway over and run with me a block or

two. I didn't know that sweat would kill a Blackberry. Did you? It was within minutes of that feeling that I heard once again "FRED'S TEAM FRED'S TEAM OVER HERE"!!! The crowd was immense! Cheering! Jumping!! Waving!!! Calling me over.

I stood in front of Sloan Kettering Memorial Cancer Center. Unsure of where I was, I looked around at the children, the parents, the staff, all cheering, all smiling, all so grateful for what I was doing. I felt like the only runner out there. That this "party" was all for me. I stood there for a time applauding them, trying to catch my breath. My short 26.2 mile journey seemed so small in comparison to theirs. It is THEIR courage and strength that kept me going.

By mile 23 I knew I was not going to meet my goal of 4:44 and my head said "just walk now. What's the point?" But I didn't come this far to walk. I didn't train for eight straight months to walk. I owed it to Fred's Team, I owed it to the children, I owed it to my friends who supported me through my training, I owed it to my family who endured many hours without me, but most of all, I owed it to myself... because like I said... I don't finish stuff.

Valerie Kumra – Marathon Finisher – NYC 2008



## **Rio Del Lago 100 miles in the Sierra Foothills**

### Cathy DuBay

With 25 + years of running and racing under my belt I think I can safely say I have witnessed many amazing feats in our sport. I have enjoyed racing 1 mile at the downtown Santa Rosa Supermile to the marathon in New York City. But, it was a race on September 27 which marked one of the highlights in my running career and I wasn't even participating! Flashback 8 years ago...

### Spring 2000

Todd Bertolone and his wife Marie came into my office at Montecito Heights Health Club. They wanted to join the club and Todd wanted to start a running program. He had been playing rugby most of his adult life and was feeling a little beat up from the sport and interested in something a little easier on the body. I invited him to start running with me on Friday mornings. For the last 20 years, Friday mornings has been some variation of mile repeats or long intervals from the health club. I always invite people interested in running to join me for this workout and 95% of them never show up. I think they might be intimidated, but in his naïveté, Todd took me up on the offer. And despite his lack of running experience, Todd was too stubborn to slow down and way too proud to admit that he bit off more than he could chew. So, he continued to return every Friday.

Before long, he was running 10k's. Soon after came the half marathon and then the marathon. He kept getting faster during the winter, peaking during spring, and then the slow down would take place in the fall during deer hunting season. The cycle would start all over again and each year his goal races were getting longer and longer.

Thus, I wasn't too surprised when he confided in me last





**Todd Bertolone** 

year that he would love to attempt the Western States 100 miler. He qualified to get in by running a 50 miler, but did not get picked in the lottery-despite driving up to Auburn to listen to the names picked out of the hat! This turned out to be OK since this year's race was cancelled due to smoky conditions in the Sierra's.

### Early Summer 2008

Todd and I were out on a training run when he casually mentioned he had entered the Rio Del Lago 100 miler which was to take place on September 27. He followed up by asking if my husband, Mark and I would like to be part of his crew/pacing team. Me, being the runner and my husband being the ultimate in event planning seemed to be a good fit for this task and we agreed.

### Todd and Marie

In addition to Mark and I, Todd's crew/pacing team consisted of his wife Marie, and his good friends, Peter Kirk and Kevin Wolski.

### <u>Friday, September 26 2008,</u> Cavitt Jr. High, Granite Bay

Todd and Marie arrive and set up their trailer in the parking lot. They attend the pre-race meeting and Todd agrees to be part of a UC Davis study measuring the effects of extreme stress on the body. They take blood samples, body weight, blood pressure, etc. and tell him they will do all these measurements again after the race.

Mark has laminated copies of Todd's aid station information which is a legal size; excel spreadsheet listing mileage, elevation, time of day at several different paces, food, beverage, clothing and equipment needs at each aid station. Todd has meanwhile premixed energy drinks of varying concentrations identified by a number from 1-6. He has sandwiches, soup, energy bars, gu's, shots, bloks, gels, you name it. It is all in boxes or coolers which we will transport from aid station to aid station.

Saturday, September 27: 6am. Todd and 113 other runners start the race. Temperatures are predicted to reach a high of 100 degrees that day. Runners can not have pacers until mile 45 but we can meet him at the various aid stations and give him supplies.

### 12:00 pm:

Well ahead of his predicted pace, Todd is looking good despite the soaring temperatures.

### 1:30 pm, Mile 33. Cool, California.

Talk about an oxymoron...this town should not be named Cool! It is 98 degrees and a control burn has done away with any trees or bushes that might have provided any shade on the course. Asked how he was feeling on a scale of 1-10, Todd was a 4. Mark, in a very matter of fact tone states a 4 is very good as he will reach a 0 and remain there for a good portion of the race



### <u>3:00 pm</u>: Mile 44, Auburn:

I get to start pacing Todd! He is hot and tired and still in good spirits. We have an 11 mile stretch in front of us. It is hot but there is shade on the course and a water way along side us. Todd dips himself in the water, cools off and starts motoring past people. I start to feel sorry for myself and wonder what happens if the pacer passes out! I ask him if it would be wise to slow down since the race is still young. He says he is feeling good. I am glad *he* is as I am sweltering. We start to pass people. He is joking with fellow racers as he whizzes by them. They do not appreciate his humor.

### <u>6:00 pm</u>, Mile 66. Cavitt Jr. High School-where this all started 12 hours ago:

We are waiting for Todd and Mark to come in. It seems they should be in by now. Peter Kirk is chomping at the bit to start running. He still has a couple of hours to wait. Peter starts making friends at the aid station. He is nervous that he will lead Todd off the course as the darkness settles in the course has been known to be confusing and not well marked. A race veteran tells Peter that as long as the runner has a good sense of direction they will be fine. Peter gets all fired up as he tells the guy: "My man (Todd) is a hunter, he will NOT get lost!" The pace crew is counting the minutes until Peter starts running with Todd.

### <u>6:30 pm</u>:

Todd and Mark arrive at the Jr. High. Todd has reached the 0 on the scale of 1-10. He has had some bad moments out on the trail according to Mark. He gets weighed in and his weight is normal. He sits for a moment, has some soup and starts to get back some energy. Kevin and Todd leave the aid station around 6:35pm.

On through the night Todd runs. He runs over hill and dale, through city streets but mostly trails. He has regained the energy he lost earlier in the evening and never seems to waiver as he plugs on through the darkness.

### Sunday, September 28, 1:00 am, Mountain Lion Knoll: mile 83.5:

The most interesting aid station. A huge music festival is winding down and a bunch of slightly drunk, sun burned partiers are trying to find their cars while these punch drunk, sun burned runners are trying to find the aid station. Not sure who will feel worse the next day...Todd and Peter arrive and Peter has pushed Todd through past numerous other runners and through some difficult moments. Todd is definitely in the top 10 at this point.



Todd at mile 66-a low point

#### 3:00 am: mile 94:

Only a 10K to go. I get the honor of running the final 10K with Todd. Todd is still in good spirits. He is talking and making fun of his crew. He is getting a kick out of us all telling him different versions of the same stories about events of the day and night.

# and big rocks. Todd starts hammering down the path. I can not keep up. I picture him falling down and breaking his leg $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the finish line. I wish he would slow down, but there is no stopping him.

### <u>3:49 am:</u>

Todd crosses the finish line. 100 miles. 100 degree weather. 21 hours and 51 minutes. 7<sup>th</sup> place overall. 3<sup>rd</sup> in his age division.

### 3:50 am:

Todd has to get on the UC Davis medical table as you may recall he has agreed to participate in a study. He lies patiently while they poke and prod at him. We are very curious if he will be able to get back up when they are done. The results from this study should be interesting! He is able and off he goes to the shower.

Marie, Mark, Peter, Kevin and I are so proud of him. We are honored to help him out and will never forget the experience we had that weekend.

And I think my husband was happy to hear me say that that was the first time I have ever attended an endurance event and didn't come away motivated to participate myself. I will leave these distances to my running buddy Todd!

### -Cathy

### Somewhere around mile 96:

Todd is not happy. Todd is tired of running. Tired of his water bottles. Tired of energy bars and gels. Tired of being on his feet. Just Tired. He tells me to get ahead of him 20-30 vards, lock in а comfortable pace and just stay there. I do as I am told.

### Mile 99.75:

We are back to where it all started almost 22 hours ago. I get chills as I see the lights at the Junior High where the finish line awaits. It is <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> mile down this single track path with divots The Crew: Kevin Wolski, Peter Kirk, Todd, Marie Bertolone, Cathy DuBay, Mark Mathewson



# SATURDAY

The Empire Runners Club Presents The Last 10 K					
anc	l Fina	l 2-Mile	9		
of 2008 <u>Date/Time:</u> Saturday, December 20, 9:00 a.m. start. <u>Site:</u> Start/Finish at Howarth Park, Santa Rosa. Near intersection of Summerfield Road and Sonoma Avenue. <u>Courses:</u> 100% paved, flat to gently rolling.					
		dult	Youth (18		
If pre-registered by Dec. 13:	with <u>shirt</u> \$22	no <u>shirt</u> \$10	with <u>shirt</u> \$20	no <u>shirt</u> \$8	
Late or race-day registration:NA*\$10NA*\$8*T-shirt by pre-registration only.A few may be on sale race day for \$15.					
Current Empire Runners Club Members receive a \$3 discount on entry fees Sign up on-line: www.empirerunners.org					
Checks payable to: Empire Runne Send entries to: John Anderson,	1110 Corne				
lame N	lale Fe	emale Age	9		
Address					
Club Member: Yes No T-Sh	irt size (pre	e-reg. only): ९	6 M L	X XL	
Race Entered: 10K 2-Mile (Checks payable to Empire Runners)					
aiver: In consideration of your accepting my entry, I, intending to be legally bound, do hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, and					

Waiver: In consideration of your accepting my entry, I, intending to be legally bound, do hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, waive and release forever any and all rights, claims, or damages I may accrue against the Empire Runners, the City of Santa Rosa, and all officials of this race, their successors, representatives and assigns, for any and all injuries suffered by me while traveling to and from, and while participating in the Last 10K footrace held December 20, 2008, at Howarth Park, Santa Rosa, California.

### INFORMATION: 527-0673

Signed \_

We gratefully acknowledge our...

## **Empire Runners Club Sponsors**

To find out how to become a Club Sponsor visit the club website (www.empirerunners.org, see "Sponsors") or contact the Sponsorship Administrator, Dave DeSelle, at 707 523-3590, daviddeselle@sbcglobal.net.

### Partners in Fitness

The following fitness-related businesses or organizations display the Empire Runners Club Poster or offer Club race schedules for the benefit of their clients:

FLEET FEET SPORTS -- 111 Third St., Santa Rosa: 569-1494

HEART & SOLE SPORTS, 65 Brookwood Ave., Santa Rosa, 707 545-SOLE

### Member Discounts

The following businesses or organizations offer discounts of at least 10% to Empire Runners Club members:

DONORS

### Friends

The following have given annual cash or in-kind donations to the Empire Runners Club of \$100 or more in value:

### <u>Allies</u>

The following have given annual cash or in-kind donations to the Empire Runners Club of \$200 or more in value:

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The following have given annual cash or in-kind donations to the Empire Runners Club of \$500 or more in value:

KZST & KJZY

CULLIGAN WATER OF SONOMA COUNTY-707-545-1330 SIR SPEEDY PRINTING-3451 Airway Drive Santa Rosa, 707-546-3900 **EVENTS WITH SOLE, INC., www.winecountrymarathon.com** 

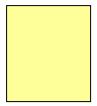
*Champions The following have given annual cash or in-kind donations to the Empire Runners Club of \$1000 or more in value:* 

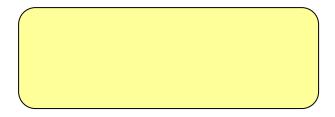
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### **Empire Runners Club of Sonoma County**

# **December 2008**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 Race: 8:00a - McGuire's Breakfast Run, Santa Rosa	1 7:00p 1932 Yolo Court, SR: 6.5M at 7:30 pace	2 <u>6M with street</u> <u>sign intervals</u> 5:30p 3390 Princeton Drive, SR	5:30p Fleet Feet shoe store, 3rd St., SR	4 <u>6M with 2.5M at</u> <u>medium-strong</u> <u>pace</u> 4:30p Howarth Park	5	6 8:30a Training Run, Railroad Square, SR
7 <u>pace</u> 8:00a Parktrail Drive at Summerfield Drive	at 7:30 pace	9 <u>6M with</u> <u>20x30-sec. at 2M</u> <u>G.P.</u> 5:30p 3390 Princeton Drive, SR	10 5:30p Fleet Feet shoe store, 3rd St., SR	11 Newsletter Deadline: Nate Koch, Editor 7M at medium pace 4:30p Howarth Park	12	13 Race: 10:00a - Herald Angels 12K & 25K, Angel Island S.P. 8:30a Training Run, Railroad Square, SR
14 <u>11M at</u> <u>comfortable pace</u> 8:00a Cobblestone Trailhead on Channel Drive	15 7:00p 1932 Yolo Court, SR: 6.5M at 7:30 pace	16 Jingle Bell Run, 5:30p, St. Rose Church, 320 10 <sup>th</sup> St., SR	17 5:30p Fleet Feet shoe store, 3rd St., SR	18 <u>4M at</u> <u>comfortable pace</u> 4:30p Howarth Park 6:30p Club Meeting, MV RT Pizza	19	20 <u>Race:</u> 9:00a - Last 10K & Final 2M, Santa Rosa
21 <u>8M at medium</u> pace 8:00a Lawndale Trailhead on Lawndale Road in Kenwood	22 7:00p 1932 Yolo Court, SR: 6.5M at 7:30 pace	6M with 3M at medium-strong pace 5:30p 3390 Princeton Drive, SR	24	25 <u>Sec. at</u> medium-strong pace 4:30p Howarth Park	26	27 8:30a Training Run, Railroad Square, SR
28 <u>comfortable pace</u> 8:00a Parktrail Drive at Summerfield Drive	29 7:00p 1932 Yolo Court, SR: 6.5M at 7:30 pace	30 <u>6M with</u> <u>20x30-sec. at 2M</u> <u>G.P.</u> 5:30p 3390 Princeton Drive, SR	31 5:30p Fleet Feet shoe store, 3rd St., SR	1 <u>5K Race</u> Resolution Run 5K, 10 a.m., Montgomery HS	2	8:30a Training Run, Railroad Square, SR





Are your DUES DUE? Check to see or renew online at <u>www.empirerunners.org</u>. Click on "Join/Renew."

Mark	Your Calendars!		
Sunday, Nov. 23	PAUSATF Cross Country Championships Golden Gate Park, San Francisco		
Thursday, Nov. 27, 8:30 am	Wild Turkey Ramble Fun Run Channel Drive at Cobblestone Trailhead, Annadel		
Sunday, Nov. 30, 8:00 am	McGuire's Breakfast Run, 3K & 10K? & Potluck! Hidden Valley School, Santa Rosa		
Thursday, Dec. 11	Newsletter Deadline, Nate Koch, editor		
Tuesday, Dec. 16, 5:30 pm	<b>Jingle Bell Run &amp; Potluck</b> (meet 5:30, run at 6, eat 6:45) St. Rose Catholic Church, 320 10 <sup>th</sup> St., Santa Rosa		
Thursday, Dec. 18, 6:30 pm	Club Meeting, Montgomery Village Round Table Pizza		
Saturday, Dec. 20, 9 am	Last 10K & Final 2-Mile Howarth Park, Santa Rosa		
Thursday, Jan 1, 2009; 10 am	Resolution Run 5K Montgomery High School		

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