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May 2014

Issue **5**

WELCOME TO BOSTON

THIS ISSUE

<i>Presidents Address</i>	9
<i>Statue to Statue</i>	12
<i>Toughest Road Routes</i>	16
<i>1200 Mile</i>	29
<i>100 Mile Finish Line</i>	31



Two seconds. That's how far off I was from my Boston qualifying time on my first real concentrated effort to make the cutoff. Two lousy seconds. This was November of 2012. In February 2013, I had another highly annoying miss – 15 seconds. Who knew that something so irritating could happen in that few seconds? (Other than those awkward remarks made by your great aunt Frieda.) Finally, and with a lot of effort and the help of my pacer brother, I made the cutoff with a five-minute cushion at Mercedes Marathon 2013, putting me in line to register for Boston 2014. But just two months later when word of the bombings at the 2013 Boston Marathon began to spread, friends and family immediately starting emailing and calling me to ask if I was OK and if I was there.

No, I wasn't there in person, but knowing that I was going to try and go the next year, my mind and heart was already there that day. As I watched the news, I was in complete shock at what was happening, and I, like many of you, thought about what if that had been me. What if I was standing there by the explosions? What if that had been my little boy? I was sad -- for the individuals hurt, for the police searching for the

bombers, and for the entire city that was scared and shaken.

But along with that immediate sadness was an immediate determination to prove that evil would not outdo good. That sentiment wasn't just a Bostonian one. Runners around the world joined them in their quest to prove that you can't keep our kind (the kind who eat hill repeats for breakfast) down. So when my friends and family asked if I was still going to go to Boston after the bombings, there was never a hesitation for me. Yes, if they would have me, I would be there, a thousand times again yes.

Being my first time at the Boston Marathon, I wasn't sure what to expect, other than that I was pretty positive that I would love it. Big cities are my jam, and Boston fits that criteria.

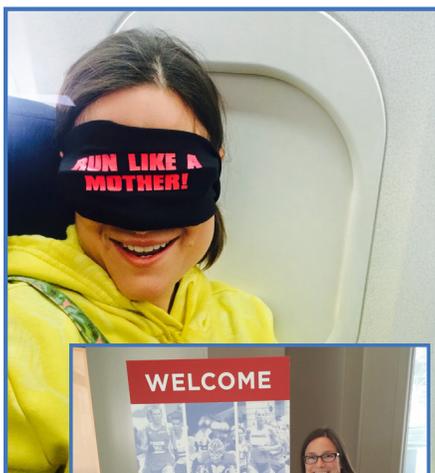


Flying over big city jams.



Packet pick-up alley.

The race expo was row after row after row and cool gadget after cool gadget after cool gadget to purchase. Pretty overwhelming if you are trying to cram it into an hour like we were. Of course, I was in search of Boston gear. Because of the expense, this is not a trip that I'm going to repeat often, so I gave myself the OK to buy all the things. The official merchandise from Adidas was very picked over by that final expo day so no luck there, but I found a couple of shirts from City Sports and New Balance, a hooded rain jacket from Saucony, a commemorative glass, and a car magnet, all with Boston themes of some sort. I still didn't purchase the official race jacket because in the end I decided that I wouldn't wear it enough to be worth the price, and my attitude was still meh about the design. Plus they ran out of size small in the first minute of the expo. Seemed to be a theme there. If you wear a women's size small, get there early.



Headbands also make good light blockers for plane naps.



Yes, Amory, we are stopping every five steps to take a picture.



Checking out the rundie selection while eating a yogurt sample. #expomultitasking

We arrived in Boston on Sunday afternoon to pick up my packet for the Monday race. By the time I got there, they were out of the shirt size I ordered at the pick-up table and gave me a medium to take to the exchange area in a nearby room. Luckily, they had the size I ordered there. Small panic attack avoided.



My favorite part was the message wall as you entered the expo, with thousands of hand-written messages from people from all over the world.

Local businesses on Boylston hung banners to support the race: strength lives here, humanity lives here.



And that was the feeling entering the corral on race morning. Luckily, I made a bus buddy on the way over who had been there the year before. She filled me in on what was about to happen. First, exit the bus and go wait in giant fields of people. There were people lying all over the ground, resting and waiting on trash bags, surrounded by half eaten bananas and Power Bars.

After we left the expo, we meandered over to the finish line. It was surreal to be standing on the spot of so much horror just a year before. As we approached the finish line, we saw a small memorial was still set up at the first bombing site. Even amidst the excitement, crowds, and noise of impending race day and the hustle and bustle to get everything ready, this was still a very somber and quiet place to stand. This was the point of my first of many tears over the next 24 hours.

I followed the bus instructions that told me to be there by 8 a.m. for my 11 a.m. start time, wave 3 corral 1. Once I arrived at the athletes' village after what felt like an endless bus ride, I had plenty of time to wait in line for the port-o-potty, grab a couple more snacks, take a million pictures, and borrow a sharpie from someone to write my name on my legs. Looking back, I should have gone with the name on the arms, much easier to read as someone zooms (or slowly trots) by.



Being a mid-morning start, I wasn't really sure how to eat. I went with the plan to eat a light breakfast and pack a million snacks in my bra pocket just in case I would need them along the way. While this is a spectacular race for cheering sections and inspirational moments, the nutrition on the course was just OK. There was only one gel station on the course at mile 17. The hydration was plentiful though, with aid stations with water and Gatorade on the right and left side at each stop, making it easy to pick your side and stick with it.

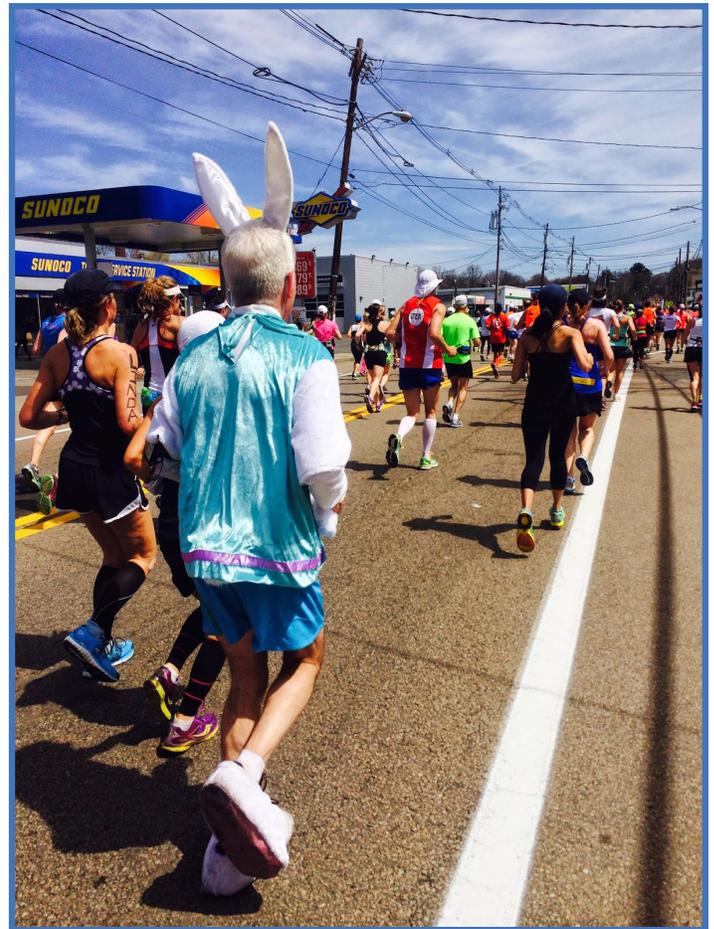
By the time they called us to our corral, of course I had to pee again. Thinking that someone's occupied yard or that very narrow tree seemed like a good choice, I was relieved to see another port-o-potty section right before the start line. So smart, Boston!

In most races, there's time when you feel alone on the path to the finish line. A time when you have to dig deep and make peace with pain and suffering all on your own. The Boston Marathon is not one of those races. Sure, there will still be the pain of effort, but you will never feel alone on the path to the finish. At least I didn't this year.

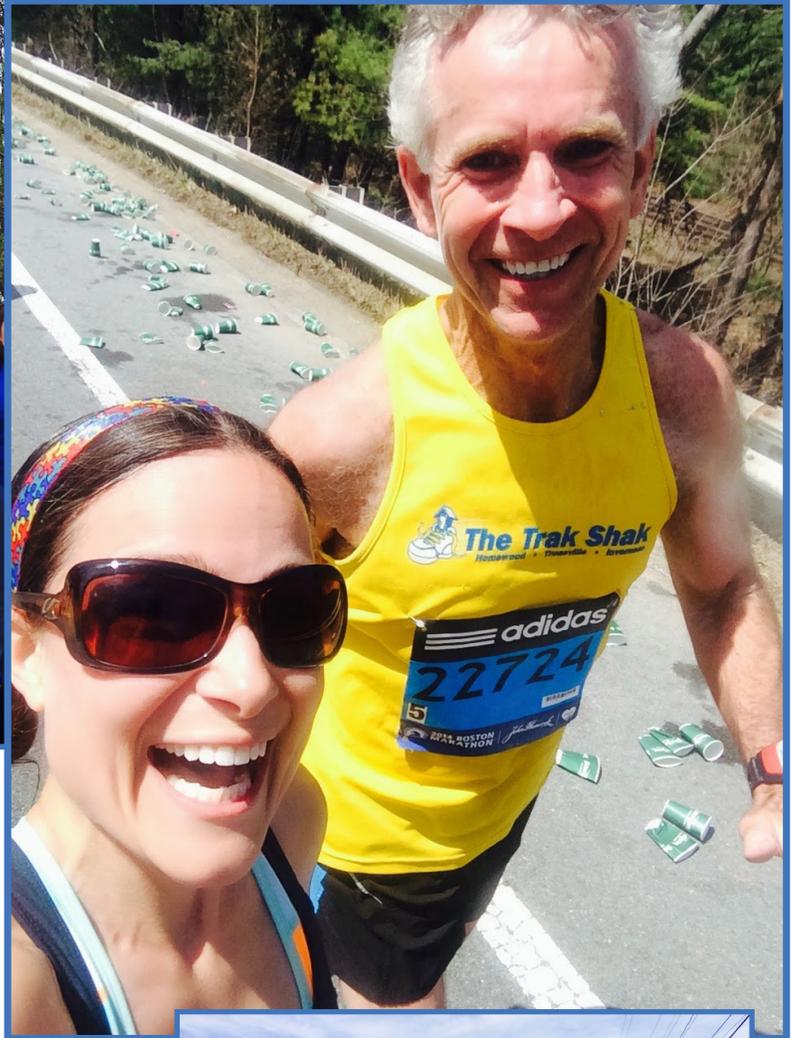
Basically, the only way to not see the words Boston Strong every second of this race was to run with your eyes shut. People wore Boston Strong shirts, made Boston Strong banners, spelled out Boston Strong on their store signs, and sharpied Boston Strong on their arms. Their message to the world was loud and clear. We ah Boston Strong!

Not only did the community offer tremendous, and tremendously loud (special thanks to the drunk people hanging from trees near Hopkinton), support, there were just some cool sites along the path. One of those was the Easter bunny guy who ran near me the entire race.

"Think this is hard? Try growing out bangs."



I liked running in his shadow because kids, and adults, were going crazy for this dude. Shouts of EASTER BUNNY!! rolled through the crowd like waves as he ran by them.



Also, if you are into running by popular people who can hype a crowd, I recommend finding someone with MIT written on their shirt. People go crazy nuts over that in Boston as well.

There were tons of other fun sites like a Santa Claus, a drum circle, a row of 25 trampolines, a guy with a fake mullet, a biker gang, an Elvis impersonator and running bros with matching mohawks.

And if you're patient enough, you might even find someone you know in the throng of 36,000 runners. It helps if they wear Trak Shak shirts so that you can identify Birmingham-ites from behind.

On top of the wild fun and Boston Strong-ness, there was just a whole plain lot of inspiration floating around. I saw more than one tandem Team with a Vision pair. This is where vision impaired runners are paired with someone to help them navigate the race. The team I saw used a tether between two runners and had a third run lead out in front of the pair that would help get water at aid stations and clear the path for them.



Team with a Vision.

Going into the race, I had read that Team Hoyt was making this their final race together. If you haven't read about them, look them up. The son has cerebral palsy, and the father has been pushing him in a wheelchair through races since 1977. It was an honor to be in the same zone as them and hear everyone cheering them on by name.



At some point I expected the runners to also thin out, especially considering how many people passed me in the first six miles, but that never really happened. The streets were as full as the sidelines.

Another cool part of Boston Marathon spectators is their interactions with the runners. If you raised your hands for support, they would give it right back. I ran with my phone the whole time to capture the experience, and anytime I aimed it at them for a pic, they would

work it for the camera.

If I had to vote for best crowd support, it would easily be Boston College. Other places on the sidelines could easily get you up to 10 or 20 high fives going in a row. But if you go in for a high five at Boston College, be prepared to ride that wave for a half mile. Hand after sweaty hand.

Meb with a giant lead when my husband snapped this shot.

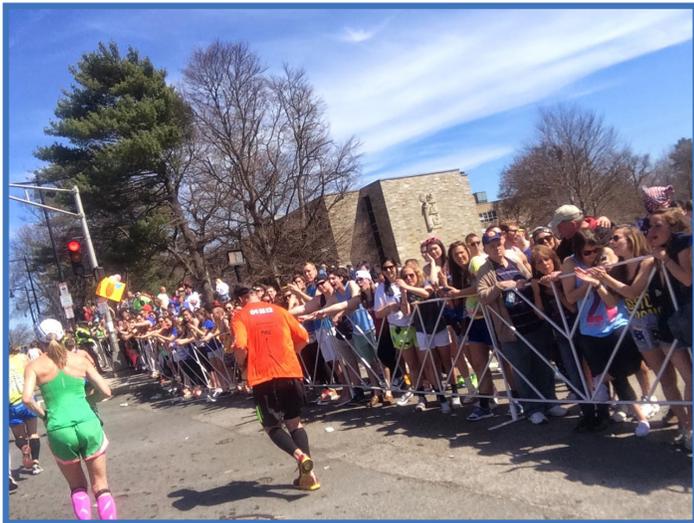
About halfway through my race, we started asking the people on the sidelines who won the race, and they shouted back, “The American! The American won!” My mind was so focused on Shalane and her race, that I had no clue until the finish line that they were talking about Meb, who a lot of us met last year when he signed books for us in Homewood. That could not have happened to a more humble, hard-working, deserving guy.

Because it had taken so much work for me to get to Boston, I saw the race itself as my time to relax and enjoy the ride, which definitely happened. My only performance goal of the day was to finish and to not walk on Heartbreak Hill. The course overall had a lot more dips and upturns than I thought it would, but I’m happy to report that Heartbreak Hill did not break me, although my right calf did cramp on the hill right before it. Even with that severe calf cramp, I just ran it out with some janky my-leg-is-now-paralyzed cramp form (you know it if you’ve seen it or done it) because I just was not going to stop running because of some Boston hill. My Alabama Oak-Mountain-yellow-white-connector pride would not allow it.



Boston College is ready to high five.

As you near the end, you start seeing the signs that you are almost there. Even if you’re not well acquainted with Boston, you know the Citgo sign, and you’ve heard of Beacon, Hereford, and Boylston. Once you reach that point in the race, the noise from the crowds is deafening. If headphones weren’t already pointless in this race (they are -- that is coming from a music lover!), this would be the time to drop them.



Taking a right on Hereford.

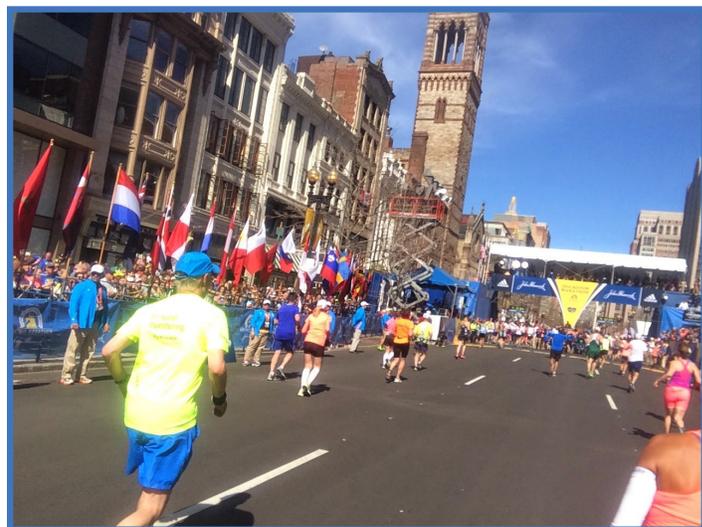


Corcoran mom and daughter on the bottom right.



*About to take a left on
Bolyston.*

This was the one part of the race that I almost wished that I had walked, although I think that the crowd would not have allowed it. It was just so overwhelming to take in the emotions, the crowds, the history, and what that specific day meant to the people of Boston and to runners around the world.



Running past the site of the first bomb.

Over the last year, I followed the recovery of those hurt in the bombings. Seeing their pictures and hearing their stories of recovery, sadness, and, again, determination was always, always an inspiration. But seeing those same people sitting on the sidelines right across from the site of the bombings the previous year was something I will never ever forget. As I ran by, I slowly realized that the people I saw sitting there weren't just anonymous faces, they were the faces of people I had read about and prayed for. I can't even write this without tearing up again. To suffer the kind of trauma they suffered and to come back one year later and sit on the site where you almost died takes a brave heart.

And that's what makes Boston. It isn't the beautiful course or the chance to PR, it's the people. They stand proud for what this race, the oldest of its kind, and this city represents, and they should.

Thankfully, this was a peaceful year at Boston, but without knowing what the outcome of the day would be, the people there did not hide away. Lining the streets of the city, they stood their ground and showed me and the world that they won't cower in fear -- that they are all the definition of Boston Strong.

-Lisa Booher

PRESIDENTS ADDRESS

—Jennifer Andress



Greetings BTC!

Once again we have a stellar newsletter put together for you this month, with many contributions from our wonderful members, and a beautiful layout job by our editor Andrew Nuckols. I will keep my column short and let you get right to these great articles!

I do want to recap two hugely successful events we held in April. The first was our Spring Social at Homewood Park. It was a picture perfect day, and we had activities for all to enjoy. Our Social Chair Katherine Dease worked hard to put on a quality event, and she hit this one out of the park! We held our regular weekly runs, with distances and paces to accommodate all of our members. We had lots of delicious food and coffee. We had an inflatable for the kids, and a kid's race complete with finishers' medals. And for the first time we featured one of our sponsors, Yoga Circle, by offering a class led by them in the park. It was a beautiful sight to see our members recovering from their earlier run by stretching and striking poses in the park on such a beautiful day! We signed up many new members, Statue 2 Statue and Race Series runners, and had a big closeout on our older BTC merchandise. Thank you all for coming out, and thank you Katherine for your hard work putting together such a great event!

And speaking of hard work and great events, the next weekend Race Director Judy Loo brought us the very best Statue 2 Statue yet! We had the largest number of finishers in memory, and another beautiful weather day. We had fast finish times, a visit from V from Vulcan Park and Museum, and another set of gorgeous race photos from BTC Photographer David Christy and his talented group of volunteers. We had a fun after-party brought to you by Dr. Craig Martin and the Liberty Animal Hospital. We even had a spirited group of BUTS members that ran Statue 2 Statue 2 Statue! They started at the Finish line, ran to the Start line and joined the race as the gun went off. You can read about it in Bill Woody's article in this newsletter. Thank you Judy, and thank you Assistant Race Directors Michele Parr and Debbie Cleghorne, for all of your hard work.

When you were out on the Statue course, did you notice our new signage and mile markers? We are working to bring you even more BTC race signage and possibly our own inflatable arch, so stay tuned for that announcement!

As we work to unify all four of our races, we are bringing back the position of Race Coordinator. We are thrilled to announce that BTC Past President Trish Portuese has joined us in this capacity and is already sharing her race expertise with us. Peavine Falls Race Director Alex Morrow is on deck with his race July 4th, and he, Trish and the entire BTC team are looking forward to bringing you a quality event!

We have two more staff positions to announce. Adam's Heart Race Director Allison Stone is also taking on the position of Vulcan Run Assistant Race Director; Race Director Danny Haralson and we are excited to have her join us in this role. And we have a new Saturday Morning Moderate Run Coordinator in Mark Criswell. Look for Mark to begin his weekly runs this month. Check out our website and our Facebook group page, and we will keep you up to date on Mark and his group as they get up and running this month!

Other events to mark in your calendar, along with Peavine Falls on July 4th, are a June 7th Saturday morning Run Social and a big night at the Barons game on July 19th. Once again we will offer member discounts for tickets. This year dinner will be included in your ticket price, and we will be seated altogether in the Home Run Court. We are bringing you this event along with our friends from Vulcan Triathlon, and are excited about a fun night at the ballpark! Stay tuned for further details.

Also this summer, be on the lookout for new BTC merchandise. The running hats and visors were a big hit at the social, and we will have new shirt and singlets at our June social. BTC Webmaster Dean Thornton is ready to pull the trigger on our online merchandise store; we will announce when that is open for business.

Finally we have a quick update on the pedestrian bridge at Hollywood Boulevard over Highway 280. Homewood City Councilman from Ward 5 Peter Wright tells us: “We are reevaluating the pedestrian bridge to be tied in with a new bridge, which is so sorely needed due to the congested traffic increasing on that bridge from Hwy 280 turnaround and the development of Lane Park in Mtn. Brook.” As always, we will keep you updated on this situation as it develops.

We always love hearing from our members, and we welcome your involvement in your club. If there are any areas in which you wish to volunteer, or any suggestions you might have, please email me at president@birminghamtrackclub.com. It can be in any capacity, big or small. We are all volunteers, so every person’s contributions are greatly appreciated! We look forward to seeing all of you soon at one of our upcoming events, and as always, we thank you for your membership!

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BTC Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the Birmingham Track Club (BTC) shall be the education and training of individuals in and around the community of Birmingham, AL, as to the benefits of jogging, running, and walking for fitness, health, and recreation.

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Race Results

Find the latest and most complete local race results at the following:

birminghamtrackclub.com
trakshak.com run42k.com

STATUE TO STATUE

—by Bill Woody

Statue to Statue to Statue (S2S2S) all started off as just a way of getting in some extra training miles while also running a great race. In 2013 Vanessa Stroud and I took off from the finish line about 6:15 and took our time running the 9 miles over to the starting line. She was in the process of training for the Western States 100 while I was looking for more miles before running the Run for Kids Challenge 12 hour race. We got to the start at Vulcan with about 10 minutes to spare before turning around and racing back with everyone else. We ended up finishing in 120th and 121st place out of 425 finishers.

I guess we both enjoyed it because a few weeks before this years race I asked Vanessa if she was interested in running the double again and got a very quick “Yes!”. I posted our race plans on the BUT’s Facebook page and before I knew it responses on running the double were pouring in. I was thinking we may convince a couple other crazy long distance loving runners to join us but had no idea of how many people would be drawn to the challenge. Interest grew to where Coach Al said this idea was picking up more steam than a barrel of whiskey rolling down the yellow/white connector at Oak Mtn! Turns out even die hard trail runners can run the roads if the idea seems crazy enough.

On race morning the BUT’s group met at 5:45 in the Boy Scout parking lot at Liberty Park. There were about 15 of us looking for that extra challenge above and beyond the already tough race course. For those that have run the race before you know what the last mile and ½ looks like. All down hill. Running the course in reverse means starting with a mile and ½ climb until you reach the water tower. We had two hours to reach the starting line so we took our time in this section of the course. The one good part about running the course in reverse is you get to run DOWN Stone River as opposed to trudging up it during the race. After a very enjoyable nine mile run at a “social” pace the group made it to the starting line with 15 minutes to spare. That left us with enough time to climb the hill to Vulcan and snap a few pictures of the BUT’s group with Vulcan in the background. Since we had started in the Boy Scout lot by the Statue of Liberty we figured we might as well run all the way to the other statue as well.

Now it was time for the toughest part of the run. Seeing how much speed and endurance was left to truly race

the nine miles back to the finish. It was getting warmer at this point so we knew it was going to be real tough to attempt a course PR. The group sort of split up once



the gun went off so I lost track of most of the others. I do remember taking off down the long straight away to English village and quickly realizing I was going way too fast. I was not going to be able to hold that pace for another nine miles with all of the hills at the end. By the time we got to Crestline I needed water and a salt pill as it continued to warm up. When we reached the uphill in Cherokee Bend I was popping down Chomps as quickly as I could trying to regain something resembling speed for the last downhill section. I managed to cross the finish line in 1:24:55 with Vanessa right behind in 1:25:48. I think Beau Talley was the first out of our group to cross in 1:20:36. Shawn Roberts came in at 1:28:14 while carrying the American flag for Team RWB.

We were not the fastest runners out there that day as Beau got 127th (out of 537 runners), I got 184th and Vanessa got 194th but we still all enjoyed the modified version of the race. If there is one thing I have learned to love about the BUT’s group it’s that they like to have a good time while running. Sometimes it reminds me of a social club with a trail running problem. You can throw some crazy running idea out to the group thinking there will be no takers and before you know it 20+ runners have responded with a “Count me in!”.

I want to thank race director Lucy Loo for working with us on Statue to Statue to Statue, the rest of the BTC and all the volunteers who helped to put on a great race! See you all next year for Statue to Statue or more! Hmm... do I see a triple or a quad in the future? Probably not because then we would miss the after race party and one thing a BUT's member is not going to turn down is a free beer.



Statue 2 Statue - 2014

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RANDOM MUSINGS ON RUNNING, CROSS TRAINING & THE MEANING OF LIFE

— by *Jeremy Clark*

**“Hello, my name is [your name here]
and I am a recovering... RUNNER.”**

**“Hiiiiiii, [your name], welcome and trust that everyone
here today understands your pain (literally).”**

I will preface this article with a statement that I am not a certified personal trainer, Physical Therapist or MD. Please consult a professional if you are dealing with habitual hurts and pains. What I can offer you is a couple decades of observation and personal experience as a runner (some of it competitively). What I propose is that you can be a better runner, spend less time in pain, have more fun and add years to your running career by adding CROSS TRAINING to your workouts. Ok, now that I have your attention I will make my case... Statistically speaking, your active healthy lifestyle should add some years to your life. Let's spend those 'golden' years standing on the podium instead of sitting on the porch popping Acetaminophen. I wasn't a big fan of Physics in school, and even less so when you consider that a runner that weighs 170 pounds exerts about 600 lbs of force on the foot and knee with each foot strike. Never had knee problems? Good on ya, mate! Most runners in my circles over the years have similar stories of aching knees, hips, stress fractures, shin splints, plantar fasciitis, the list goes on... So what does this have to do with cross training? Well, swimming and biking are two excellent low impact exercises that serve to maintain a cardio base during the offseason in addition to retaining conditioning during the season when you are recovering from a running injury. Few things are more upsetting than being in peak running form and then getting hurt. You miss out on the social element, the stress relief, the burned calories and the satisfaction that your weekly runs bring. But don't give up! Hit the gym, pool, bike (or your favorite indoor cycling studio), make some new friends and find another endorphin release to replace your 'runner's high'.

Numerous studies have shown that increasing core strength can make you a more efficient runner, which will in turn reduce the chance of injuries. Leave the heavy lifting for those trained to do so, but integrating functional fitness and strength exercises into your routine will pay back in spades. Besides, running down Broadway will not give you a chiseled six-pack. Multi-sport is fun! If your athletic world has been limited to running then I would like to introduce you to Vulcan Tri (www.vulcantri.com) and Team Magic



(www.team-magic.com) here in Birmingham, AL. I will quote Vulcan Tri's Mission Statement... “We are not a ‘team’. We are a club open to anybody interested in swimming, cycling or running – fast, slow, currently afraid of the water or pro.” Team Magic is one of the premier multi-sport event organizers in the Southeast, hosting triathlons (swim/bike/run) and duathlons (run/bike/run).

Oh, you're one of THOSE runners! You wouldn't consider doing anything else but your daily run because

it would just slow you down. Commit the name Lukas Verzbicas to your memory. If you are a fan of Track & Field you already know who he is. Lukas is one of only five American high schoolers to run under 4:00 minutes in the mile, two time National High School Cross Country champion and current U.S. high school national record holder in the 2 mile (8:29.46). Lukas and his coach both attribute much of his high school success to his high quality low mileage running supplemented with swimming and biking. In fact, after being recruited to the Oregon track team to run collegiately, his performance started dropping comparative to his peers as his mileage increased. Look for Lukas in the 2016 Rio Olympics. He had a bad bike crash last year and he is currently writing what could be one awesome come-back story. [Incidentally, be safe out there whether you are running, biking, swimming or hitting the gym! Lukas hit a downhill corner with a little too much speed, gravel and testosterone].

Lastly, variety is the spice of life! But don't take my word for it. Try any one of the things I suggested here and tell me I was wrong when they are hanging the age group medal around your neck. I'm out of space here for the meaning of life, so catch me on a run or bike ride and I'll give you my take on that one!

Jeremy was TN H.S. State Champion in the mile in 1988 (4:21), ran NCAA Div I Track and Cross Country at USMA West Point, and one season on the All Army Track Team. Currently he is a competitive age group duathlete and owner of Sweat and Gears (www.sweatandgearsstudio.com) indoor cycling studio in Homewood, AL with his wife, Lisa.

TWO OF THE TOUGHEST ROAD ROUTES IN THE SOUTHEAST PERIOD.

—by Eric Thomas

I have had the pleasure to run two of the toughest road routes in the Southeast in consecutive weeks on the past two Saturdays of April 12th and April 19th. I normally don't go looking for punishment like this, but hey it is Spring racing season, and really what better time to be outdoors right? I will give you two names, Jerri Haslem and Lucy Loo. These are the two ladies that you can send a thank you note to or leave a disparaging comment on their Facebook pages if you had the opportunity to participate in these two running events like myself. Of course I am kidding, Jerri and my new friend Lucy are two great women, with really wonderful personalities that draw you in and make you feel as though you have known them all of your life. The both of them really are valuable assets to the Birmingham running community. I also will give you two street names to remember, Center Street and Stone River Road respectively, for they both have quite a history on their own and are the main reason these said routes are so tough.

Let's get to the first road race, which really wasn't a road race in the purest sense. It was actually a 5k Spring Social and it culminated after the organization BPRBS concluded their free 7 week program for anyone who wanted to get off the couch and get to running. And oh boy, did they get to running! You see, anyone who knows Jerri Haslem, knows that she is serious about fitness. When her and co-founder Patrick Packer started Black People Run Bike & Swim, they wanted to target minorities to start getting healthy and fit. The group is not exclusive, but inclusive, because anyone can join and run with them. People of all ethnicities are encouraged to join, run with them, and like them on Facebook. Now running seems to be a booming sport more than ever now, with the color this 5k's, glow runs, costumed theme runs, obstacle events, and other various themed races that are popping up left and right. While I don't do many of those types of races, I personally have no problem with them either. I feel if the race interests you and that's what you like to do, then go for it. These two road races though, seem to bring out runners who are looking for a good challenging run and believe you me, that's exactly what you get.



At the Smithfield Enon Ridge Red Rock Social 5k, I ran through a little piece of Birmingham's history concerning the Civil rights movement and I didn't fully appreciate it until after the fact. This is where Center Street comes in to play. Some of the runners asked Jerri, who made up the route, where did she get the route from. In classic Jerri fashion, she kind of shrugged her shoulders, and jokingly responded that, "the route is the route" and "that's Dynamite Hill". I did a little research on Center Street and then I understood perfectly what she meant. Center Street is a long hilly street in Northwest Birmingham, intersecting with 8th Ave. West just down from historic Legion Field. The run actually starts right at the corner of Center Street and 8th Ave. in front of the Smithfield Library. You head north and as you run up Center Street, you can see it rise sharply a little over a quarter mile at the top of it. It is a quiet street with well kept houses and churches on both sides of the street. It looks as if it would have a nickname other than "Dynamite Hill", maybe a "cascade hill" or something like that from the reputation that it would have gained from kids in their youth who were brave enough to challenge it coming down on it with their skates or their bikes.

Bu it is indeed aptly named "Dynamite Hill" because back in the 1960's bombing's were so frequent that they shook houses along this street and put cracks in



trail system and it looped back going east toward Birmingham. The trail continues on towards the new Parker High School but for the purpose of this 5k, I had to exit to the right up a stair bridge that gave me a really good work out as I prepared to trek back across Center Street. So I came up the stair bridge and to my right was a nice little neighborhood church, Saint Peter Missionary Baptist Church. Now I was at the base of the end of Center Street, and again it was a challenging hill to climb, just to get back to that overpass that I had crossed earlier in my run. Once I made it back to the overpass, I knew it was pretty much smooth sailing, as it was just downhill cruising back to the Smithfield Library.

their walls. This all occurred because back then Center Street separated the city's whites from the city's blacks. The east side of the street was for blacks and the west side of the street was where white homeowners lived. The city of Birmingham actually had an ordinance that prevented blacks from buying property on the west side of the street. The street's history is actually quite fascinating to me, as there are green markers all along it on both sides of the street with tidbits of info detailing the history of the Civil rights movement. On this day, I managed to get to the top of this hill and I crossed the interstate overpass that really has a great view of the city. Looking west from the overpass you can see what looks to be a mountain, but is actually a man made quarry with what is an incredible amount of earth and rock that juts upward not too far from Interstate 20/59 westbound. Looking right to your east also is a great picture of Downtown Birmingham and it's skyline with the sights and sounds of much traffic that whizzes daily through Malfunction Junction. I continued on straight until I reached 12th Ave. W. and I hung a left down what was another steep hill. It wasn't long but I was definitely glad I was descending it. I ran right by Wilkerson Middle School on my left, a school I remember my mom telling me she attended growing up in Birmingham. I went through the stop sign at the bottom of the hill and turned right onto 3rd St. W. and then made a quick left onto the Enon Ridge/ Red Rock Trail System. I am really excited about what is going on in the Birmingham metro right now, because when all of the biking and running trails are completed and connected it is going to be something really special for this region. So ran what is a relatively flat part of the

Jerri probably could have made the route a little bit easier, and taken "Dynamite Hill" out of the equation, but I am glad she didn't, because like she said, "the route is the route". And all of the people that fought in Birmingham for Civil rights before my time, both black and white could have made their journey a little bit easier by moving off of that hill and letting the fear of dynamite explosions and shootings into their homes get to them. But they didn't, and because of their courage, we as a city are a leader in being a racially progressive place to live, and the world is better place because of that.

My new friend Lucy Loo; I met Lucy yesterday at my second Statue to Statue with two of my friends Dana Brown and his brother Clarence Brown. Lucy is very funny, friendly, and she did a wonderful job as director over this year's Statue to Statue 15k. Lucy joked with us that we were the "three stooges" because she thought that we were going to miss one of the buses that was taking everyone to the starting point of the race. We actually were waiting on a fourth member of our entourage, Marcus Shine, to get there before we made the journey by bus over to the starting point by the Vulcan Statue. I joked earlier that Lucy was responsible for how tough this race is, but she really isn't, as I believe yesterday was the 24th annual running of the race. Marcus was running a tad bit late, but he did make it on time to get on a bus, and we did make it to the starting point on time too. This being my second time running this race, I kind of knew what to expect. The weather was perfect, no rain, and not quite as chilly as last year. I heard it put this way, "it is a beautiful 10k, it's

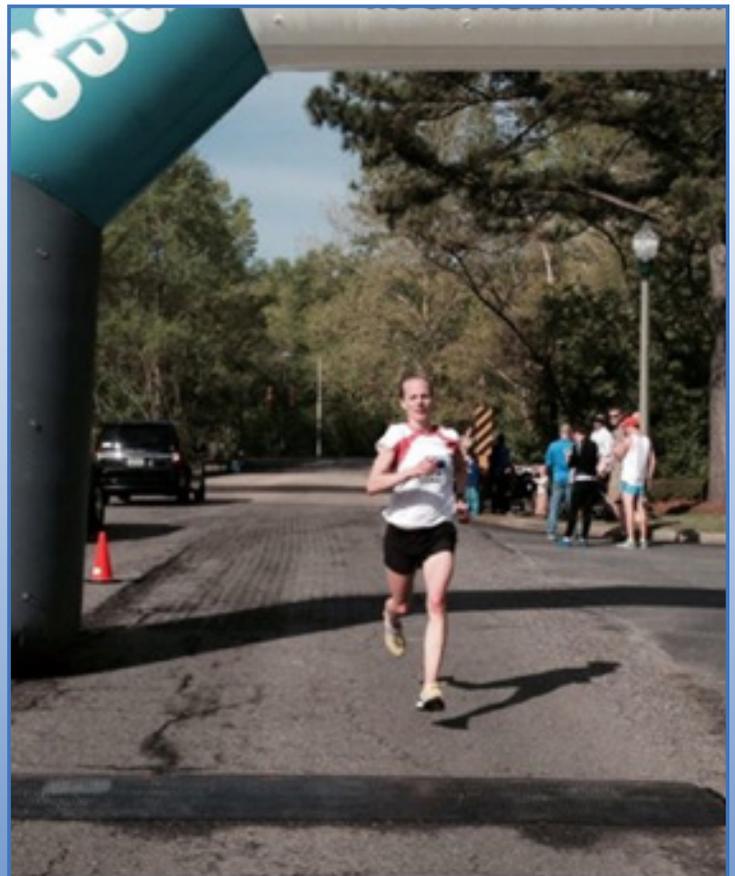
the last 5k that gets to you". I think that is an accurate assessment, and we will get to that last 5k and "Hell's half mile" in a minute. It really is a beautiful race. I tried to pace myself, and reserve a little energy for the "hills" that I knew would come later in the race. That strategy worked well and I was able to run with a couple of friends for awhile in Barry Blankenship and Chris "Chip" Ferrell. I believe that Chris also had the honor of running both of these tough routes over the past few weeks. This really is a beautiful route, going through some of the scenic Mountain Brook neighborhoods; I can see why whoever designed this race did so. The first two-third's of this race is actually so nice you can get fooled into thinking you've got it whipped; then comes the hills. STONE RIVER ROAD. I think "Hell's half mile" is what they call it. I found it funny that one of the photographers was taking pictures of us runners just cruising happily along about a half a mile before we got to the base of "Hell's half mile". I guess he wanted to get everybody during some of their happier times of the race. Running it last year, I knew what to expect, but I still had to mentally prepare myself for it before I got to it, so I had a slight advantage over some of the unsuspecting runners who had no idea what they were about to get themselves into.

As we entered the base of "Hell's half mile" I began to see many runners start to walk. I walked most of it myself last year. I came up with a strategy at the last second, and thought to myself, "this is all mental, I can do it, Just look down at the ground, don't look at the other runners walking, and don't look at the top of the hill to see how far I have to go", "doing that will only discourage me". I hardly run with my head down, even on hills, as I normally just lean forward, keep my strides close together and keep my legs churning. This new strategy actually worked, as I passed many runners going up the hill. But I made a mistake and looked up about three- fourths of the way up and paid attention to others walking and saw how far I had to go. I stopped and walked briskly, caught my breath and started back to running and made it over the top. I felt pretty good and was quite exuberant to see my Black People Run Bike and Swim teammates cheering me and the other runners on at mile 7. That was unexpected, I saw them before I heard them at mile 3, and they really had the runners pumped up with their cheering at different points along the route. I rounded that last hill on Stone River Road and successfully navigated it without stopping and made my way to the last mile and a half, which I knew would be all downhill. Easy sailing, one would think, not having run this course before. But I knew better, and as ESPN Analyst Lee Corso would say, "Not so fast, my friend!" My lower body is still sore now as

I type this, but a good sore, as I knew running downhill pretty fast for a mile and a half was going to give my lower body more than a good workout. I rounded the corner and sprinted across the finish line in 1:18:59. Not too shabby, I had knocked about 5 minutes off my time from last year's run. We headed over to the post race afterparty in which BTC always does a fabulous job at. With my new friend Lucy Loo running things, this party was no different. Fabulous BTC President Jennifer Andress passed out awards. A couple of my friends who are really fast, Steven Miles and Chris Zenker, won awards in their respective age groups. All in all, I would have to say it was a great race on a great Easter weekend. Last year, I believe we ran this race the week after the Boston Marathon bombings, showing support and unity for the victims of that great race. This year, we ran it the Saturday before the Boston Marathon, and we still support Boston, because Boston is strong, runners are strong, and as runners we will keep coming back again and again. That's the only way we know how.



*Statue to Statue Overall Winner,
Mark Pepin*



*Female winner and 2nd place overall
Carman Hussar, Statue to Statue*

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*Packet Pick Up
Shilonqua Lee, Susan Chandler, Terri Chandler,
Race Director Judy Loo, Debbie Cleghorne, Michele Parr*

*Kim Benner, Kentucky
Derby Half-Marathon. Kim
and her husband Eric are
running a race in each of
the 50 states.*



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BTC Long Run Coordinator Natalie Ferguson gets ready to outfit our 4 runners traveling to Japan to represent the BTC in a half-marathon.



*Kemper Sarrett and
Brad Clay*

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Nathan Jemison at Ingolstadt Half-Marathon in Ingolstadt Germany April 26 2014.

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*Barry Blankenship junior league 5k april 2014
regions park*



*Kim and Eric Benner Rock n Roll
Half Marathon in Dallas, TX*



*Jerry Smith at Ohio University campus
in Athens, Ohio where the Athens Half
Marathon finished.*



*Tampa on April 3 to take part in the inaugural AMCP
Foundation 5K Run for the Future*

Brad Clay, BTC Past President and Ruth Seifert

SEND US YOUR PICTURES WITH YOUR BTC APPAREL

We want to see where you have been running, representing the BTC! Email photos to:

president@birminghamtrackclub.com



[Facebook.com/BirminghamTrackClub](https://www.facebook.com/BirminghamTrackClub)

BOSTON

STRONG



*2013 Boston Marathon bombing survivor
Dr. Scott Weisberg.*



BTC Secretary Kelly McNair





*1200 Mile Coordinator Ali Hoover with
Lanni Marchant*

*Mary Creel and Teresa Burst with Bart Yasso
at Boston Marathon*



Mountain High Outfitters Memorial Day Trail Race May 24, 2014

6 Mile and 12 Mile Trail Races

Oak Mountain State Park - 8:00 a.m.

3rd Race in the Southeastern Trail Series

Website: SoutheasternTrailRuns.com



1200 MILE CLUB

—by Alison Hoover

“April hath put a spirit of youth in everything” -William Shakespeare

It is time to enter your April mileage, and since I share a birthday with Shakespeare, I will borrow from him this month for inspiration.

At last count this morning, we had a total of almost 80 000 miles logged this year by the members of the 1200 mile club. That is an astounding number, and I have been astounded by many things this month. We had BTC members running and competing in so many races and venues this month, and the Statue to Statue race, which honors both the memory and spirit of youth of Ellis Porch, was a huge success. This year’s Boston Marathon honored the spirit and memory of those lost and injured by last year’s events, and I was one of the very fortunate BTC members who was able to participate.

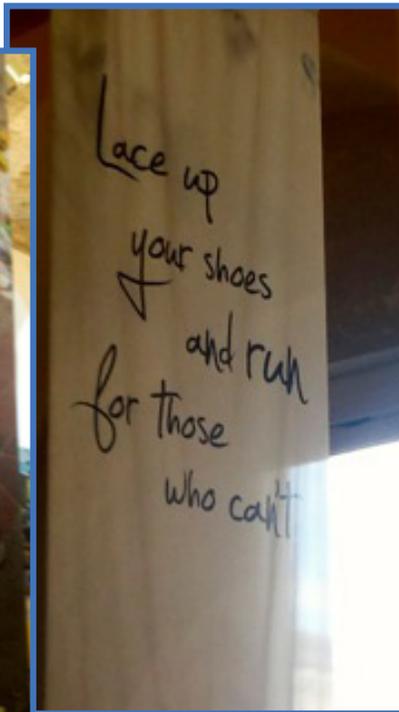
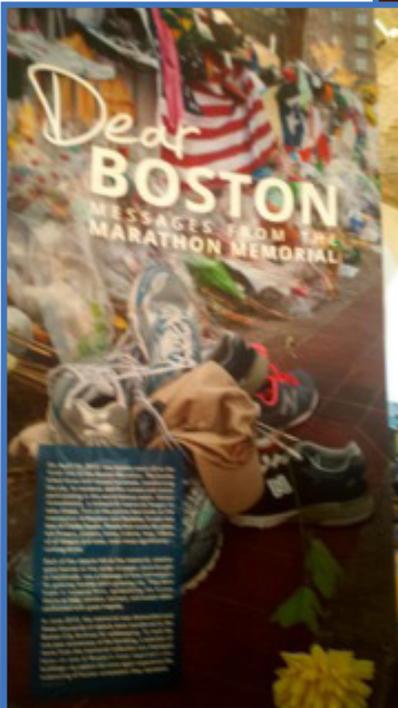
It is my wish that every runner can experience the power of this race. It is difficult to put into words what this experience felt like this year, but from the moment you arrived in Boston, and even en route, there was just a pulse in the air of positivity, resolve and strength. You would see someone sitting at their flight gate and know from their shoes or compression socks where they were going, and there was a visual high five that would pass between people. The race expo was being evacuated when I arrived, and the emergency alarms were going off, but people weren’t really leaving. The man next to me said “No way they are going to ruin this this year”, and probably foolishly, I stayed too, and met up with other Birmingham runners, and then just by chance, Carlos Arredondo and Tatyana McFadden at the juice bar outside the expo. There was an incredible energy of goodwill in the air around both of them, and a woman from Oregon put a medal around Carlos’ neck which



her local track club had sent with her, to give to people that she met. People just seemed so approachable and giving, and willing to share, no matter what. I had the crazy idea before going to Boston to try and meet one of my home town running heroes, and despite our Facebook stalker (me) introduction, Lanni Marchant gave me her cell number and readily met me at her hotel, where she became a member of our 1200 Mile Club.

Having never been to a Red Sox game until this point, it is difficult to gauge what the usual excitement level is, but there was an amazing vibe there as well, and so many people were wearing hand knit yellow and blue scarves knit by Marathon Scarf Project, an idea hatched by the Old South Knitters Club of the Old South Church on Boylston. Theresa Burst, Mary Creel, Mary Adamy and Jamie Witter were all lucky recipients of these works of art and heart. Everywhere you went, there were beautiful pots of yellow daffodils, wrapped in bright blue with the words Boston Strong, and you felt the strength. Visiting the Dear Boston memorial at the Boston Public Library, and reading the heart felt letters that people left, as well as the monuments made of running shoes and notes on trees, was a very moving

experience. Computers had been set up so that anyone that had thoughts or experiences to share from last year, could commit them to the screen in a communal story book. The huge square of anonymous running shoes, and the banner urging runners to lace up for those who can't, made you want to head for the start line then and there, and made you appreciate the gift that we all share. Running is truly a gift, and anyone that is sidelined with an injury knows what a loss they feel. Keep on logging those miles, and if you are going through an injury right now, hang in there and know that the whole 1200 Mile Club misses you and wishes you fast healing. Boston Strong!



100 MILE FINISH LINE

— by *Suman Silwal*

Since 2012, when I started to transition from the regular marathon world into the trail and ultra-marathon world, I was frequently asked if I would ever run a 100 mile race. I heard many horror stories of running 100 mile races and the challenges they bring, and so my answers ranged from “never” to “maybe one day” or “only after crossing the Boston Marathon finishing line.” As a runner, we all want to progress and challenge ourselves to “go beyond” and find personal limits. I could have stopped at a 5k, but at last count, I’ve run 41 marathons and ultra-marathons. Eventually, I would run a 100 mile race after running a few 50 miler races – a natural progression of a runner.



March 29 and 30 marked the inaugural year of the Lake Martin 100 (LM100). After giving much thought to it, I signed up for the Lake Martin 50 mile race, with the option of moving up to the LM100. My trail running mentors, Vanessa Stroud and David Touch (the race director of the LM100), kept telling me I was ready for my first 100. However, like most would say, running 100 miles through day and night was just unimaginable. I didn’t know how runners could get ready for such an epic event and run that much in one setting. Every time I thought about running the LM100, I started to break out in a cold sweat.

As I was getting ready for the race, I found myself packing two bags - one with what I needed to volunteer after I completed the 50 mile race, and another to run the 100 mile race. When I got to the LM lodge – the race headquarters-- and started talking to other runners, I realized that I actually might be prepared for the 100 mile race after all. A few friends who’d trained with me or knew about my training told me that I was more than ready. Still, 100 miles is 100 miles, and I’d never run an all-night run. One of the runners at the lodge, who overheard me talking about my lack of experience running trails at night, told me that he had a similar issue when he was pacing someone through the night. He was told that “Running at night is like bleeding – it’s natural.” That comment boosted my morale a bit. I went to sleep at

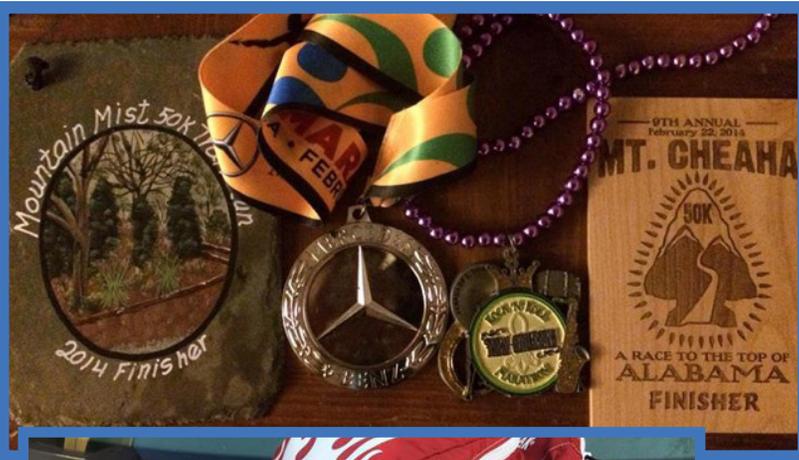
night thinking of running the LM50 and woke up with a sudden thought – if I go for the LM100, the worst possible thing that would happen to me is that I could not finish and would instead settle for the 50 mile race I’d planned to finish. It would be good training for future 100 milers and help me “go beyond” my current distance.

In a race environment, I am the type of runner who runs only distances that I am committed to run. There was no way I would commit to a 50 miler and run a 100 miler. So when I got to the stable, where the race started, I requested to exchange my 50 miler bib to a 100 miler bib. For better or worse, news flew quickly to my trail running community – “Suman is going for 100.”

And so there I was, 15 minutes before the race started, with a commitment to something I had never done before, with many unknowns and unanswered questions. But I had no time to think about what I had just committed to do. I had just enough time to drop my bags, pin on my bib, and line up for the race. Once I began the race, my heart was at peace, and my mind and body were ready to go the distance. I was there to complete the journey to my first 100 mile finish line!

How does one train for a 100 mile race?

A common answer I hear from runners who train for a 100 miler race is “you really cannot train for a 100.” What? No training, really? I did not understand the concept. I had a long Facebook conversation on this topic and solicited much advice. One of the common tips in the conversation was to do a long run of around 30-40 miles,



because it took a bit longer to recover from it. I found during the LM100 race that it had, in fact, helped me (more on this later). In December, I attempted more back-to-back races when I ran the Rocket City Marathon and the Birmingham Ultra Trail Society's (BUTS) Barely Ultra.

Once the calendar rolled to 2014, my goal was to run slower paces and cover longer distances to get ready for 3 ultra-marathons and three 4:30 marathon pacing group gigs I had signed up to run. I ran most of my road training run at 10:00 – 10:15 paces to train for pacing marathons. Before I ran Mt. Mist 50k, we had a run nicknamed “Got Hill?” where we continually climbed up and down the hills of Oak Mt. I ran 4 races: Mt. Mist 50k, New Orleans Marathon, Mercedes

Marathon and Cheaha 50k, all in less than 4 weeks. It was an epic experience. In all these races, I was covering distance at a much slower pace than normal, which helped me to recover quickly. I did not realize these experiences were slowly preparing me for the LM100 in March. Something I'd started since the Tranquility 50K in November was using running to recover from running. I was trying a concept called “Iron Cuts Iron”, which translates to “running to heal running pains”. The idea was to run at a much slower pace, but still run post long runs and races. In the past, I used to take a few days off after a race. The day after I paced the Mercedes Marathon, I ran to get ready for the Cheaha 50k. Because I was running at an almost walking pace, one of the neighborhood kids even yelled at me, “Why are you NOT running?”

followed by 10-15 mile runs over the next few days. Several people also recommended that I also do some night runs. Mostly, it seems people build up to the 100 mile race rather than just running 80-90 mile training runs.

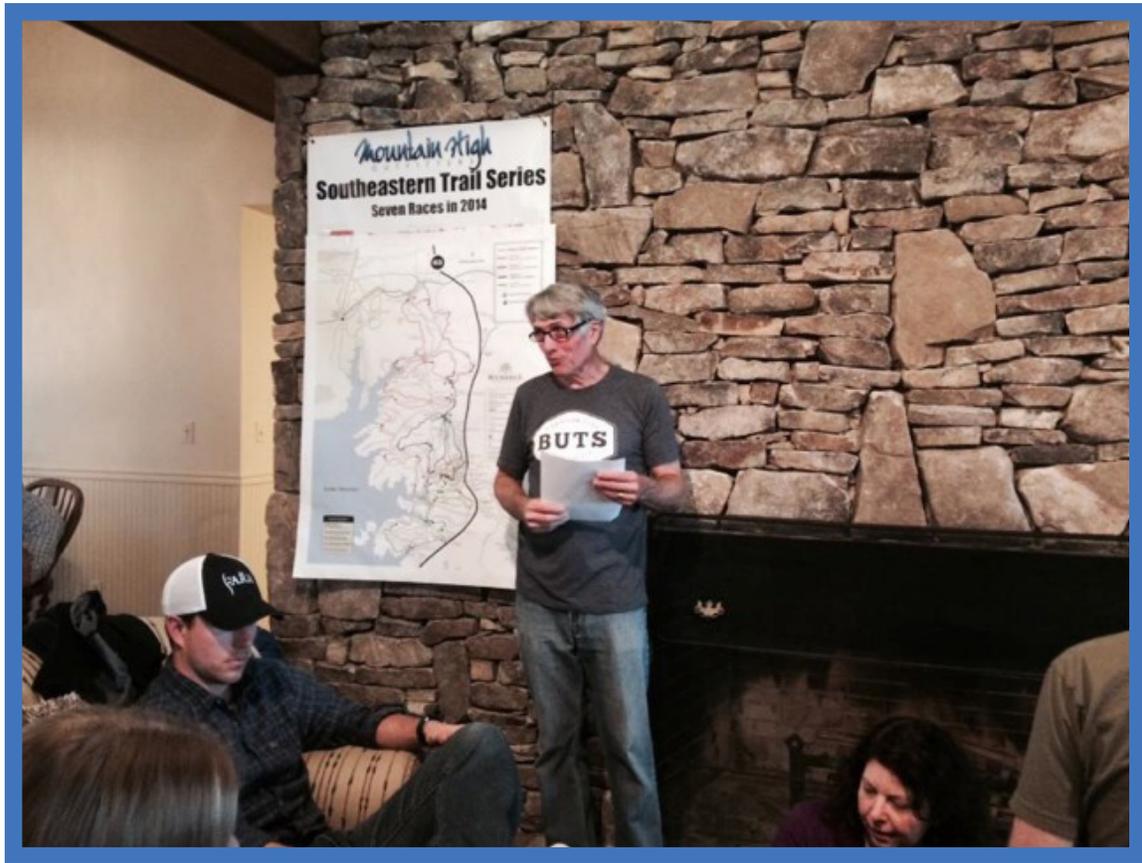
Little did I know that my training actually may have started in February 2013, when I paced a 4:30 Mercedes Marathon group and in less than a week, ran the Cheaha 50k. I also ran two other weekend races back-to-back: the Country Music Marathon and the Kids Challenge 50k. Through the summer of 2013, I ran many trails and road runs with different combinations including road to trail runs to prepare for summer and fall races – I enjoy summer training, and this is where I logged most of my miles. Also, the 2013 Birmingham Stage race by Southeastern Trail (<http://www.southeasterntrailruns.com/>), which covered 53 miles in 3 days at 3 different mountains around Birmingham, helped to boost my confidence in distance racing. Even though none of the stage races were an ultra-distance race, I felt a sense of accomplishment after finishing these weekend races.

In November of 2013, I had an opportunity do some extreme trekking around the Mt. Everest region. I grew up in Nepal. For city dwellers from Kathmandu, trekking was always for people who came from outside of the country. It was not for local folks like us. But when I finally tried it, I loved every minute of my trekking experience. At the beginning, I thought trekking might hurt my running,

When I started the month of March, I had three races planned – one 5k, the Publix GA marathon, and the LM50. I ran the 5k for speed, finishing with a sub-21 minute time. The next day, I attempted my last epic 40 mile training run (Disclaimer: I would not advise anyone to run a fast 5k and then a 40 miler the day after). I had a lot of friends join me to start the run for some distances. Some ran 5 miles, some ran 10-15 miles, and one, Ryan, stayed with me until the 31 mile mark. I was committed to run 40 miles, so I did it. It took me around 10 hours from to start to finish. It was both my first run beyond a 50k distance and my first run past 7 hours in duration. I was very happy to finish this 40 mile hangover that I had wanted to do for so long. At the end of the run, I knew that I could now finish my first 50 miler. After my 40 mile run, I continued to run every day until Thursday of that week.

I paced the hilly course of the Publix GA marathon on March 23rd. Once the GA marathon was over, I tapered for my last race of the series that I had started in January. I ran 6 quick trail miles with friends from the Georgia Ultra Running and Trail Running Society (GUTS) at the Kennesaw Mountain trails north of Atlanta. It was spring break week, so I took a few days off to hang out with family and rest and recover for the LM50.

Between the months of January and March, I ran a varying combination of trails, roads and the treadmill. I never



logged more than 60 miles in a week or more than 176 miles in a month. Depending on the week, I ran 4-5 days per week. This was a hard winter, so I tried to minimize outdoor running as much as possible. Staying healthy through this process was important.

That was the extent of my training. You may be wondering if this really prepared me for a 100 mile race. . . .My answer: I guess it did. I didn't know until I tried it. As I look back, I assume others had trusted in my training and my ability to run 100 more than I had trusted in myself.

Finally, it made sense why others had told me I could not really train directly for a 100 mile race. But, I believe those back-to-back races and building miles had helped me get ready for the race.

Race Day:

The Lake Martin area had around two inches of rainfall before the race started and a lot of rain leading up to the race day. We knew the creeks would be flooded a bit, but we did not know the course was going to be a muddy puddle. Within a mile or so from the start, we started to see signs of what was to come for the rest of the course: mud, mud and more mud. Even though only 10% to 15% of the course was covered with mud, it felt like more than 90%. Because the course was a loop course, we were going to see those muddy parts of the course again. As the day progressed and more runners passed through that

mud, it started to get worse. Small water crossings were flooded the most.

I am well known for taking off at the start of a race. But, from the start of this race, I stayed in the middle of the pack group. As the day progressed, I moved up. My goal was to run five miles per hour during my first 25 miles. I walked even the smallest hills at my trekking pace. When I felt like I was giving any sort of hard effort, I slowed my pace. I knew I needed to save as much energy as possible.

By the time I finished my first 25 miles, around 5 hours after I'd started, my shoes were completely muddy. Margaret advised me to hold off on my pace until I'd finished my first 50 miles. Very early during my second loop, I caught up with Dawn, a mother of three and an ex-US Army Captain, who was running her first 50 mile race. As we ran, we realized we were running at almost the same pace. We kept each other company for the entire 25 mile loop. At mile 31, I hit a wall, but I was saved when she gave me an energy gummy. We had less than a mile to go to the BUTS aid station. I was very hungry and a bit dehydrated. When I arrived at the BUTS Aid station, I learned that Gordon had brought some vegan food just for me (thanks, Gordon!) Those vegan cheese quesadillas saved my life. I carried a few of the quesadillas to eat later down the road. I soon was back on track and running normally.

My goal was to get to the BUTS Aid Station before dark

on my third loop, so Dawn helped me to push and stay focused. We ran where we could. We shared our life stories and kept on moving, which helped our miles go quickly. We also decided to break up the race into terms of aid stations, which helped us visualize the race in small manageable parts.

I finished the first 50 miles in approximately 10 hours and 30 minutes. Dawn was the second overall female finisher for the 50 mile female race. I was so proud of her, as well as thankful. Unless I am pacing, I do not usually run with others - I am either too fast or too slow. This time was different. In the end, we helped each other reach our goals.

I changed my shoes and clothes and was off to begin my third loop. By this time, I was headed towards a lot of unknowns. The only thing I knew was that I was still okay and able to run. I was not scared of miles or of the distances I was covering. I was drinking and eating more now. Starting on the third loop, I was more careful about the mud, and I tried to stay as dry as possible. Still, it was hard to avoid the mud and creek crossing. Because the rain stopped early in the morning, the creeks started to go down a bit. When I got back to the BUTS aid station at around 58 miles, it was almost dark, and it had started to get a bit chilly. I ate, put on a long sleeve shirt, buff headwear, and head lamp. I was off to start my first true night trail run. As I headed down to the trails, it felt natural. I had a bright headlamp with brand new batteries. I ran at almost daylight pace. When I looped back to the BUTS aid station, Kyle, the president of BUTS, reminded me that I was in third place overall, with about an hour lead. I told Kyle I didn't care about being third overall at this point -- my goal was just to keep on running from aid station to aid station and finish the race. Coming as a top finisher was not my goal. When I arrived at the stable, Johnathan was ready to serve me some hot veggie soup. The warm soup felt great during the cold night. Being a vegan, it can be hard to find options during races, especially post race. But, the event organizers, David and Marye Jo, knew that I would be there, they made sure that we have some vegan food options as well.

Last 25 miles:

I knew the last 25 miles would be the hardest, almost as if the first 75 miles were easy. I'd already slowed my pace due to distance and the dark. I was excited to know that this would be my last loop. The last words I recall hearing from my trail buddy Sony before I left the stable area were, "you're still third overall. How's that for a motivation to finish your race strong, Suman?" My answer was the same one I'd given to Kyle: I did not want to think too far ahead at that point. The night before the race, Margaret had mentioned that "from miles 80-90, a lot of runners get in trouble." I had come a long way – too far to take a DNF. At that last loop, I was more determined than ever



to finish this race.

I'd been using my headlamp for so long, the brightness had started to diminish. I used my flash light to navigate me through the woods. Past the BUTS aid station, around the 83 mile mark, and post-midnight, in the thick wood, I got a bit disoriented. I almost went back to the aid station the same way that I came, but I backtracked. I lost about 10-15 minutes but learned a good lesson. I arrived at the BUTS aid station for the last time around mile 87. Like always, Kyle, Vanessa, Howard and my other BUTS friends were there to cheer me on. Before I left the aid station, Kyle said: "Get it done Suman!! If not, I will disown you." I told him, "I will try my best." That was the first time I realized that I actually had a chance to finish the LM100 and place third overall. It finally became a motivation factor for me to finish the race strong. Those late miles, I was hardly running, but still moving forward towards my goal.

I left the stable area for the final time at 5:15 AM, around the 93 mile mark. I was excited that I only had 7 miles remaining to finish my first ever 100 mile race. I knew that I had this. I also was happy that the sun would be coming up soon. It was a clear night, so I knew I would get to see the sun rise. With Coke, food, and support, I

was able to keep on going.

When I first saw daylight, I was about 3-4 miles from the finish line. Once daylight arrived, those trails looked so different. I did not even realize I'd run those same areas during the night. I kept my slow moving pace, but I did not want anyone to pass me on my last miles. A competitive nature and determination to finish were set in my mind. When I made that last turn towards the stable, I said to myself "Get it done!" At last, I arrived at the stable -- 25 hours and 3 minutes after I started my 100 mile journey. I ran through mud, rain, cold temperatures, more than 13,000 elevation gains, daylights, night, two sunrises and a sunset. Yes, I was finally done. When I stopped, I was not sure whether to cry for joy or scream at what I had accomplished. Nevertheless, it was celebration time, and I crossed another big achievement off of my list.

I managed to finish my first 100 mile race without a pacer, a crew, any big planning or extreme training. I am glad it turned out to be a happy ending.

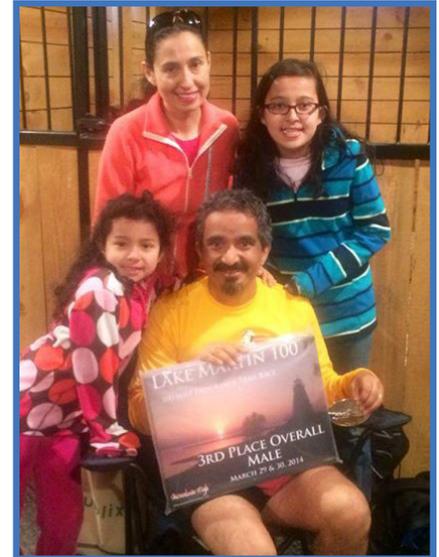
Post-Race:

My family finally arrived after I finished. They did not get to see my memorable finish, but I was happy and thankful that they were there to share those post-race moments when my energy was completely drained and I could hardly move.

Once I sat on a chair, I could not get up. Everyone helped to bring food, coffee and beer, and Johnathan even took off my shoes (which I am thankful for). I could barely move. This felt like was my first marathon experience all over again.

I spent most of Sunday and Monday catching my sleep

and feeding my hungry body. It took me all the way to Wednesday to finally fully catch up with my hunger, and it took me a week to catch up with sleep. Even though I tried to run a few miles, it took me more than a week to even have a desire to run again. Others experienced 100 milers have told me that it takes around two months to fully recover from a race like this one.



Conclusion

Now, I have to learn to trust my training and ability. If I didn't try the LM100 this time, I would have had to wait another 2 years or so before I could try again. Now that it is off my list, I feel that I can do more. I did not realize how much a 25 hour journey can change a person's life. I am blessed to have continuous support from my family and friends. Without that support, I could not have completed this journey.

Someone recently asked me: "Is this the limit, or do you plan to 'go beyond' 100?" My answer was: "This is the limit – for now!"

Common questions I was asked and comments post 100 miler:

Did you take breaks?

- I read and heard that some people take quick naps and some keep on going. I took breaks when I reached the aid station and sat only once, after I finished my 50 miler and needed to change clothes.

Do people actually run from beginning to end?

- I had heard similar questions before this race. Running ultras, I know that walk breaks are part of the race. I ran where I could, but walked most hills or ran/walked hills. Most walks were power walks. When I felt that I was giving more effort than necessary, I also walked.

Did you get scared at night?

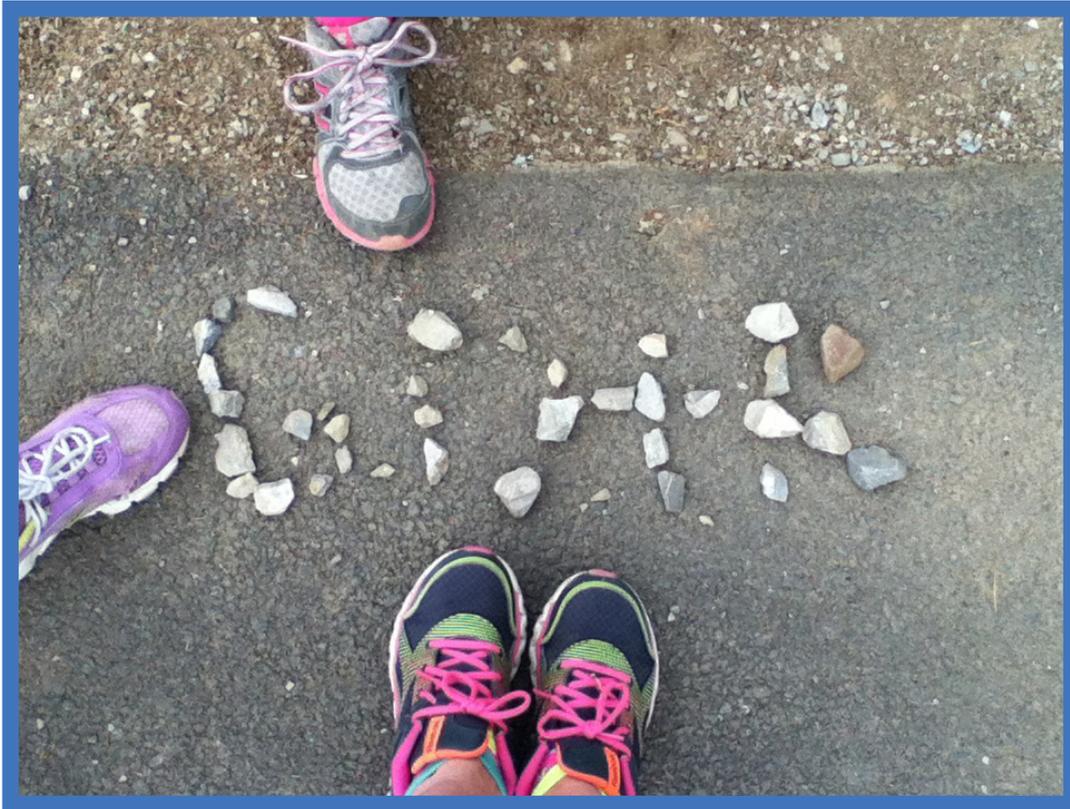
- Not really. I had not run a night run before, but I was in the woods during nights. Growing up in Nepal helps as having electricity 24/7 everywhere is a luxury. US forests do not usually have wild animals like tigers and etc., so that was not a problem, although I did see squirrels and deer.

Did you eat anything?

- Some people have crews who give them food and other stuff. I was self-crewed. However, aid stations had plenty of food, including vegan food just my trail running buddy brought just for me. It was well taken care of.

GIRLS ON THE RUN

— by Rebecca Smith



Most Girls on the Run lessons are structured fairly similarly: there is a discussion about the topic for the day, a warm up activity/game that ties into the lesson, a follow up discussion, then the workout where the girls do a lot of running in preparation for the 5K followed by the ever important “Energy Awards.”

This structure works great for the girls (and the coaches), as it is a wonderful way for us to incorporate an important life lesson with healthy living in a fun way. The girls often bring up great discussions (like yesterday’s lesson when one girl asked, “What do you do if someone wants to hang out with you, and they’re not a bad person, but you really don’t want to be around them?”) throughout the lesson that encourage discussions about what being a “Girl on the Run” truly means.

Last week, I got to teach one of my favorite lessons in the curriculum, one that I often need a reminder of as well: how to deal with gossip. We are girls, so let’s face it; we will encounter, and most likely spread gossip at some points in our lives. The Girls on the Run curricu-

lum realizes this but wants to help the girls find ways of dealing with it. We practiced responding to gossip by changing the subject or standing up for the person being gossiped about. We practiced Stopping, Breathing, Listening (to our hearts) and Responding, or the SBLR method. The girls had a great time and seemed to really get a handle on some ways to respond to gossip.

But my favorite part was what came afterwards. This lesson breaks the mold as far as typical structure, the perfect break even for those of us that like consistency. For the workout, the girls completed a scavenger hunt. Doesn’t sound like a workout? Have you ever seen kids racing to be the first ones to complete some sort of activity? That’s right, without knowing it, the girls ran more than they may have ever run in a typical practice run around the track.

The girls were put into small groups and given an iTouch to take around the field and use to take photos when they found one of the items on the list. They found things like heart-shaped rocks, clover and dande-

lions. They created GOTR (Girls on the Run) with nature items.

What I love most about this lesson is not the work-out itself, although it is probably one of the best that the girls do, it is what they find on the scavenger hunt. No, not the clover or the wildflowers, but those genuine grins on their faces. These girls are of different ages, races, and backgrounds. They were not grouped with their best friends for this activity, and yet, look at the smiles on those faces! Maybe we all need more scavenger hunts in our lives!



They took photos of one another doing jumping jacks, running or doing push ups, They took photos with Girls on the Run founder, Molly Barker, They struck poses and let their true, beautiful personalities shine through.





RAGNAR RELAY: ATLANTA

By Kendall Harris

On the weekend of April 4th, eight women from Birmingham traveled to Atlanta, Georgia to compete in the Ragnar Relay series. This group has participated in two previous Ragnar races. The races have ranged in distances from 120 to 200 miles. This particular relay is a 120-mile trail race at Georgia International Horse Park. A few of these ladies are fellow BTC members. The eight ladies of the group are Lesley Vedel (team captain), Angela Pewitt, Sharon Cheung, Vickie Harris, Ashley Dawson, Kim Harradine, and Kathleen Bowen. In order to get more insight on the Ragnar Relay team, the team captain Lesley Vedel and I had an interview.

Interview

KH: Thank so much for agreeing to this interview. I first would like to ask you what the team group name is and a little bit about the history about the group.

LV: We are the Fab Femmes and the 2014 Ragnar Trail Atlanta was our third year to run in the Ragnar Relay Series. I have been the team captain for the last three runs. The members have changed each year depending on each runner's availability. We have 5 members who have participated in all three of the Ragnars.

KH: What other Ragnar races have the Fab Femmes been in?
How is the Atlanta Ragnar Trail Race different?

LV: We have run in three relays as the Fab Femmes. The first was the 2011 Tennessee Ragnar (Chattanooga to Nashville) and, last year we participated in the 2013 Florida Keys Ragnar (Miami to Key West). The Atlanta Trail Run was much different in that we had 8 members tag-team running a series of three densely wooded trail loops that totaled 120 miles. The race took us a little over 25 hours to complete. Each team set up a campsite in a central location called the "Ragnar Village."

KH: How did you prepare for running in the woods, especially for running at night?



LV: I trained for this relay at Oak Mountain State Park and it definitely helped, but honestly nothing will prepare you for running on a heavily wooded trail in the middle of the night with nothing more than a headlamp. One of the more difficult (and fun) parts of the run was the 6.4-mile “granite slab” trail. The key to this leg was being prepared to walk the difficult sections and not push yourself too hard.

KH: How did getting rest, sleeping, and eating between turns work in this race?

LV: We had two large tents for sleeping and a canopy tent for chairs and coolers. When we were not running we were either eating, sleeping or enjoying the activities provided by Ragnar.

KH: What were the most memorable parts of this race for the group?

LV: Time spent with the other ladies is definitely my favorite part of the Ragnar experience. We have always worked so well together and we have a lot of laughs along the way. A band played throughout the night, we made S’mores over a huge campfire, received massages and perfected our yoga moves.

KH: What was an interesting site you saw in the race?

LV: The Ragnar Road Series is known for being a crazy and flashy experience and this year’s Trail Relay did not disappoint. A shirtless man running by in a tutu and wig was not uncommon.

KH: What advice do you have for people that may want to get involve in Ragnars in the future?

LV: Just jump in there and join a team! Or organize your own team with a group of great friends. You will not be disappointed. The Ragnar Series is set up so that almost any level runner can find a spot that makes them comfortable. The Ragnar organization is extremely professional and they make the experience seamless, but be sure you have a great team leader. We make all the difference.



BTC MINUTES

MARCH 19, 2014

Attendance:

Board – Jennifer Andress, Alex Morrow, Kelly McNair and Russ Hiller; past – President – Brad Clay

Executive Committee – Kemper Sarrett, Julie Elmer, Allison Stone, Katherine Dease, Jamie Witter, Alan Hargrave

Others – Randy Lyle and Charles A. Thompson

Agenda

Membership – Jamie

- Current membership: 1086
- 333 membership cards from January to date.
- 350 expired in October that have not renewed
- We will run a membership renewal special at our social on April 12.
- Run Gardendale was a success; 3 new members joined. Jennifer recommends we go back in June; Jennifer took several boxes of old BTC shirts and gave them away to participants and to a group going to Uganda for missions work.
- Kemper will begin highlighting in our monthly newsletter 1-2 supporting agencies/business that offers benefits to our members.
- Membership and Statue 2 Statue drive at our April 12 social

Financial report - Russ

- Vulcan – sponsorship moneys are still coming in – profited \$15,960.00 in 2013
- Adam’s Heart – loss of \$1620.00 in 2014; loss of \$1532.00 in 2013
- Race Series moneys will also go towards Adam’s Heart
- Projections are that we may do better than last year on Adam’s Heart once BTC Race Series \$ comes through
- 100-110 – registered for the Race Series through Race It
- Russ requested access to Race It to pull #'s and reports
- Squares – can we differentiate between merchandise, membership and race fee? Suggestions – make a note of what the purchase within square; people who use a square for membership will also need to fill out a paper application to track membership; use voice text to record notes within square. You cannot say the member name for privacy. Suggestions for tracking dollars: use numerical codes i.e. 1)Membership, 2)race entry, 3)Merchandise
- On-line store – Jennifer and Dean are working on launching on-line merchandise sells.

Social - Katherine

- The next social is scheduled for April 12 at Homewood Park. Rusty Holley is our point of contact.
- We’ve rented 2 pavilions (side by side), with power, for the price of 1. Total cost for the pavilion rental is \$125.00.

- Social hours: 7-10am (until 11:00 if needed for clean-up)
- We are responsible for cleaning all areas.
- No music until 8am
- What kind of event and prizes for kid fun run?
 - a. medal or ribbon
 - b. Use triple crown 2013 medals as awards for the kids
 - c. Suggested activities for the kids: face art, climbing wall rental from 1st Avenue Rocks, bounce house from Fun Source
 - d. Food for kids – donuts – decorating station
- Food for adults – trucks worked well for the Vulcan social as it kept people around longer
- long run at 6am, moderate run at 7am, kids run at 8am
- budget: quarterly social (\$1200.00) or monthly social (\$300.00)
- motion on the table to spend \$1200.00 for this social – approved
- Does BTC have liability insurance? Yes
- Will we have a waiver for rental equipment used at the park? Does the park have us sign a waiver as well?
- June social – Octane or Church Street coffee; July social – Baron’s game – box v seat? Botanical Gardens – September

Statue 2 Statue - Alex

- He contacted a timing company out of Memphis called Best Times. The projected annual expenditures for all races would be \$9000.00 – 10,000.00. We would not see a race profit if we went with this source.
- SSG is willing to do a race-to-race contract
- Other vendors are placing bids
- Motion on the table to use SSG for Statue 2 Statue and the cost would be the same as last year – approved.
- Bid from DG? – not technically chip-timed – 1 man operation
- Event Technical Services – Albany, GA (another timing company)
- Researching many chip-timing companies
- SSG - \$900.00/race – can’t beat this deal but there are issues with SSG
- BTC arch would be nice and can use this as a way for businesses to advertise
- Shirts – New Balance – royal blue
- 3 extra policeman this year to ensure safety
- Need volunteers – Michele Parr is coordinating
- Over budget due to medals and \$ for police
- Over 100 registered currently
- Email Judy to contact SSG to secure their services

Peavine Falls - Alex

- Peavine Falls has been named the state of Alabama championship race for non-standard races; in 34 years, it’s never been a championship race.

Positions Needed - Jennifer

- Marketing position available – Beth Feller is stepping down and moving to Tuscaloosa; Katherine has a referral
- Moderate Run Coordinator

Merchandise - Jennifer

- Visors and hats: 25 for ~ \$10.00/each with embroidery
- Is this to make \$ or spread the logo?
- We cover our cost with little profit
- Motion to spend \$250.00 for hats and visors – motion approved

Policy Update- Julie Elmer

Parliamentarian Julie Elmer made a recommendation that the Club standardize its treatment and handling of Race Directors for BTC events. From a legal perspective, the Club's liability exposure is greater if Race Directors are paid employees (agents) than if they are volunteers. As it stands now, most Race Directors for Club-sponsored events are volunteers, but a few years ago the Club began paying the Vulcan Run Race Director. This discrepancy, which does not appear to be based on objective criteria or a negotiated arms-length transaction (as required by Club Bylaws), potentially exposes the Club to allegations of discriminatory treatment. The Club should establish objective criteria and expectations for Race Directors, and regularly (Julie suggested every 3 years, but Kemper asked whether we should evaluate yearly instead) evaluate Race Directors' compliance with the objective criteria. These standardized procedures would be more consistent with the general practices of the RRCA and insurer recommendations. Several different suggestions were made regarding who should evaluate Race Directors. Alex Morrow suggested that an Evaluation Committee, consisting of one Executive Committee Member, one Director, and at least one Member-At-Large, be appointed to serve this function. Regular evaluation periods would have the added benefit of providing volunteer Race Directors an opportunity to turn the reins over to another volunteer at a natural transition point.

- Ideas or suggestions on the table: can we hire a consultant, if needed, for assistance with managing and directing a race? Could we hire a race director? Yes, but would need to be arms-length transaction approved by the Directors or Executive Committee, based on an objective need for paid services. The Club should consult with its insurer before making such a hire.
- Vulcan was very profitable last year but it was a loss the two previous years.
- Why did the Club start paying the Vulcan Race director a few years ago? Charles Thompson stated that it was because of the time and effort involved in managing that particular race. Past President Brad Clay stated that, at the time, VR race attendance had been declining and some members of the EC in place at that time suggested that payment might incentivize the RD to work to increase race participation. Alex Morrow and Julie Elmer stated that other races – particularly Statue to Statute, which is a point-to-point through several jurisdictions – also require a great deal of time and effort, and that director is not paid.
- Motion made to standardize treatment of Race Directors – all EC members in favor, except Russ. Charles Thompson also stated his opposition to this vote. Charles further stated that he is in favor of Danny. However, the President and Parliamentarian stated that this is not about Danny personally, but about fair and equal treatment of all Race Directors and minimizing Club liability exposure to the extent possible.
- Additional suggestion: Open up the opportunity for BTC members to become a Certified Race Director through RRCA.

RUNNING RAMBLINGS

— Compiled by Randy Lyle



Quotes

“Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.”

~ **George W. Bush**, 43rd President of the United States

“Resolve never to quit, never to give up, no matter what the situation.”

~ **Jack Nicklaus**, American professional golfer

“Those who committed these cowardly acts may believe that they have shaken our resolve to defeat terrorism. They could not be more wrong.”

~ **Doc Hastings**, current member of the U.S. Congress since 1995 representing Washington’s 4th Congressional district

“No amount of time will weaken our allegiance to avenging those lost in the horrible attacks. America has a sharp memory, a firm resolve, and a commitment to her own.”

~ **John Doolittle**, member of the U.S. Congress from 1991 to 2009 representing California’s 4th Congressional district

“Above all, we must realize that no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women. It is a weapon our adversaries in today’s world do not have.”

Ramblings

The Boston Marathon Boston Strong

Normally I try to write something here that I think will be informative or interesting to the members of the BTC. The more I have thought about what to write this month, the more I find myself reflecting on last year’s Boston Marathon. Since I wrote on that topic last month and since this article will be published a few weeks after this year’s marathon, I intended to write about something else. However, the fact that today is 15 April 2014 and everyone in the media is commemorating the one-year anniversary of the terror attack on Boylston Street, I cannot think of anything else. No matter what I try to do, my mind is drawn back to that day exactly one year ago today. I feel like I have to write something related to Boston, as much as for therapeutic reasons as for anything else. It may only be helpful for me, and I apologize if that turns out to be the case.

I started last year’s Boston Marathon in the last corral of the last wave. Our wave started at 10:40am EDT, forty minutes after the first wave. Being in the last corral, I did not cross the start line until 10:49am. Since my goal was to run the marathon in four hours, I looked at my watch as I was crossing the timing mat. At that moment, I told myself that I had to be at the finish line by 2:49pm. I burned that time into my mind. My whole plan was built around finishing in four hours and I was right on plan for 23 miles. That is when I starting feeling a pain in the lower part of my quad near my knee. I had never felt a pain like this. I do not know how to describe it since it was not exactly a cramp but it was just a dull ache at first. Thinking I could run through it, I pressed on trying to stay on my plan. Before long, the pain was such I had to walk. It was so frustrating because the walk break(s) would cost me my four-hour goal. My previous PR was 4:05 so I reset my goal to beat that time. However, it was just not to be on that Monday afternoon. Just as I settled into a comfortable pace

with the goal of enjoying the last mile or so, the police stopped us about a half-mile from the finish. At first, we had no idea what was going on. I had never been stopped during a race. Apparently, neither had anyone else. Initially, the frustration was building among the runners because we were starting to get stiff and sore just standing around. Once the news of the bombings began to circulate through the crowd, everyone's attitude changed. Some were crying. Others were frantically trying to reach family and friends. Many were panicking as they tried to contact their loved ones waiting at the finish line. Later that night, I learned that the first bomb exploded at 2:50pm.

Needless to say, finishing a marathon, even one as iconic as Boston, became an extremely low priority once we heard about the bombings. We all realized in an instant what is truly important in life. Regardless of the hard work and sacrifice put in by everyone running, it all pales in comparison to the value of human life. In that instant, we knew our race was over. Thoughts turned to those injured or killed and hoping that the numbers affected would be minimal.

To me, it is fitting that this year's Boston Marathon will take place on the day after Easter. For us Christians, Easter represents a new beginning and a new covenant (or testament) with God. Up until the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus, the people of Israel had to follow a specific ritual of sacrifice to atone for their sins. The selfless actions of Jesus, being the only sinless person to ever live, paid the price "once for all" (Romans 6:10) for anyone that will accept His sacrifice. For a year, the people of Boston and the greater running community have tried to learn to deal with what happened last year with anticipation toward this year's marathon. In some ways, this year's marathon is a new beginning of healing and celebration around this great event. They expanded the field from 27,000 to 36,000 because they know the resolve of runners and they knew there would be a burning desire to run this year. This morning, I heard media reports estimating that there could be one million spectators lining the course as well.

I know this will be an emotional weekend for just about everyone involved. Those that were hurt last year, both physically and emotionally, will have to relive their experience as the world remembers what happened. Some are going back because they think they have to or the terrorists will win. Others are going to run in memory or honor of someone. Still others want to go as a show of support for the Boston Athletic Association as well as the people of Boston.

Regardless why you care about this year's Boston Marathon, say a prayer for those that are still hurting. Say a prayer for those that are still missing their loved ones. Do not forget about the family and friends of 29-year-old Krystle Campbell, 23-year-old Lingzi Lu, 8-year-old Martin Richard and 27-year-old Sean Collier. The remembrance will be especially hard for them. Think of the dozens still recovering physically and psychologically from the injuries they received last year and offer up a prayer on their behalf. Many of these victims have to learn to move ahead in life with severe injuries.

We owe it to all of those that were directly affected by the bombings at last year's race to stand up to hatred and be strong in the face of adversity. We cannot let the evildoers prevail. We must hold our ground against terror. We must be strong. We must be **#BOSTONSTRONG!**

