
Trails and Tales

Blacksburg Striders PO BOX 764, Blacksburg, VA 24063

January 5, 2004

<http://civic.bev.net/striders/>

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President's Corner

Aaron Goldstein

We had a couple of very successful events this past Fall including a general meeting in October featuring a presentation by James DeMarco, and a holiday party in December. A big thanks to the 50+ people that came out, brought food, and made the events a big success.

Great things are afoot for the upcoming year. Katherine Phillips is hard at work planning the Blacksburg Classic scheduled for Saturday February 28. In addition she's been helping out with membership affairs and has arranged a 10% discount at RunAbout Sports for all members.

Lastly, I want to send out a big thanks to all the people past and present that have been involved in keeping the club going. These people whose names appear on the left side of the page have for many years handled all the little things need to be done.

We're always looking for new people to help out. If you'd like to volunteer, there are plenty of opportunities. Just give me a call.

Hope to see you out running!

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Holiday Party

On Saturday, December 6, the Striders hosted a Winter Party at the University Club in Blacksburg. The party was the first big social for the club in a long time, and was open to both members and non-members. The New River Bike Club was also invited in order to promote joint activities by both groups. Attendance was very good, with nearly 60 people attending - from toddlers on up!! It is hoped that future social activities will follow.

Beth Howell

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Two Friends and a Marathon

Just past mile nine of the 2003 Richmond Marathon, on the most scenic stretch of the course running beside the James River, I heard a familiar voice.

"You look like you are right on pace young man," Ed Smith said in the West African accent familiar to most Blacksburg runners.

I grinned, relieved to see a running buddy. Ed and I hadn't seen each other before the race, but it was no surprise that we ran into each other on the course. It was bound to happen.

For the past four years, we have passed each other on the trails of Blacksburg, occasionally hooking up to log a few early morning miles together.

Both of us were Richmond marathon veterans – one more successful than the other. In both 2001 and 2002, Ed had passed me on the course around mile 21 as I struggled with severe cramps. He stopped to walk with me for a few blocks, encouraging me not to give up and empathizing with my pain and frustration.

When we met up on a run this past July, we realized we were both once again gearing up for the same race. Instead of continuing on my way, I turned around and finished my workout with Ed. That was the start of our ritual.

For nearly every Saturday through November, we ended our training runs together on the Huckleberry Trail. Only once – the week before the marathon – did we plan our run and actually start together. But we always hooked up at some point – and I began to count on it, knowing Ed would make the last hour of those 20-milers more bearable.

Of course, there were many members of the Striders who were out there every week too.

We ran with Marshall Overstreet during a horrible thunderstorm in August.



Craig Hill was out there every week too, training much harder than us, but slowing down every now and then to join us.

Despite running all those training miles together, Ed and I never talked about running together in the marathon. If it happened, it happened. But we both wanted to run our own race.

Ed and I were on pace to run a 4:00 marathon when we found each other on Riverside Drive during the Nov. 15 marathon, just before the only significant hill on the course. We climbed up from the river and found a nice cruising speed at about 8:50 a mile. It was a great day for running, overcast, with a temperature in the low 40s.

We crossed the halfway point at 1:55:54, the slowest first half of my five marathons. But I was counting on Ed – and his personal best 3:40 marathon – to help me defeat my demons and avoid the cramps that had prevented me from running a marathon under four hours.

Ed told me about his upcoming trip to his homeland of Sierra Leone. I gave him a two-minute tour of Virginia Commonwealth University, where I went to college.

We enjoyed the T-shirts – “Plane fare from Buffalo: \$400, Hotel: \$125, New shoes: \$90, Another marathon with my wife: Priceless, read one favorite.

Around mile 17, Ed began talking about picking up the pace. Gun shy, I resisted and continued to plod. Finally, at mile 20 (2:56:40) Ed set me straight.

“You are a strong runner,” he said. “Let’s go. We can run these last six at an eight minute pace.”

And so we were off.

I don’t think a single runner passed us the last six miles, and though we slowed for a final slug of Powerade at mile 22 we never stopped.

“Find a runner ahead of you and just pick them off one by one,” Ed said.

My thighs were screaming as we neared the finish. I never lost my fear that my

muscles would cramp, but I trusted Ed's coaching and my training.

Our last six miles were faster than any others. We crossed the tape, side by side, at just over 3:46 minutes.

It was one of my greatest experiences. Not because I set a personal best -- but because I shared it with a good friend. I couldn't have done it without him. Thanks Ed.

A total of 19 Blacksburg runners finished the Richmond Marathon, according to the race Web site. Here are the results:

Brian Baitis 3:43:50
 Todd Cantrell 3:50:42
 Adam Childers 3:29:05
 Philip Gregory 3:31:00
 Paul Heilker 3:51:54
 Craig Hill 3:37:28
 Michael Johnson 3:29:56
 Brian Love 4:33:59
 Sarah Mullins 3:59:22
 Marshall Overstreet 3:25:49
 Kevin Pline 2:30:22
 Michael Price 3:14:23
 Ellen Rabun 4:21:45
 Melissa Robens 4:11:25
 William Robinson 4:12:25
 Dan Shafer 3:23:15
 Ed Smith 3:46:16
 Michael Stowe 3:46:11
 Jane Weiseman 4:12:14

Michael Stowe

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Some Blacksburg Striders History...

The Blacksburg Striders will be 24 years old in 2004 (the club, that is)! Many members may not know of the Striders' long history.

Here I am sharing some recollections of mine (with lots of input from Beth Howell). Hopefully this article will become the first in a series in which others do the same! Disclaimer: All the information below is from memory! Beth reports that she has a "Box" with all sorts of Striders records and memorabilia -- perhaps it can be broken out at some point to expand upon the recollections here...

The Blacksburg Striders was founded in 1980 as the "Virginia Tech Striders" by John Merna, as an official Virginia Tech student organization. Attendees of the first meeting included Beth Howell (then Dillinger), Katherine Phillips (then Tietz) as secretary (I actually think I still have the original notebook somewhere!), Paul Smeal, Vahan Janjigian, and Chris Gibson, now a four-time winner of the JFK 50 mile ultramarathon and living in Pennsylvania. There were only a handful of members, most of them Virginia Tech students and faculty. The first treasurer was Brenda Hayes. Beth Howell took over that role around 1982 and has done so well we won't let her quit! Informal weekday group runs started on the drillfield in front of Burruss Hall at 5:00pm. We even had Virginia Tech Striders T-shirts in light blue with dark blue print... Sadly mine met the rag bin several years ago before I realized it might someday have historical value! At some point the club's name was changed to the "Blacksburg-VT Striders" and later the "Blacks-

Blacksburg Striders Singlets

White coolmax mini-mesh with green logo on front. See them modeled by Ed and Mike in the photo on page 2! We still have a few left in men's and women's styles in select sizes... \$15 each. Contact Katherine Phillips at kmpvpi@vt.edu or 552-0395

burg Striders" when the membership became primarily non-students. Besides John Merna past presidents include Doug Austen, Craig Rogers, Wayne Howell, Diane Beckwith, Maarten Van Gelder, Hans Bernhardt, and Mike Holland.

Striders' races have a long history. A Halloween 5k was held for a couple of years in the early 1980s, starting and finishing on the drillfield, with runners in full costume and prizes for best costume. Beth still has a T-shirt from that race (go Beth - you are even better than me at holding onto things!!). The Blacksburg Classic debuted as the Foxridge Classic in 1986 in a snowstorm with about 8" of snow on the ground and Craig Rogers at the helm. The race has been held every year since then, with the name eventually changed to the Blacksburg Classic as the course moved away from the original that started at the Red Lion Inn and traversed the Foxridge bike paths. A number of individuals stepped up to direct the Classic over the years and in some cases last-ditch efforts saved it from extinction (e.g. Mike Holland held the race as an 8K in May 1998!). Other former race directors are Diane Beckwith,

Maarten Van Gelder, and Hans Bernhardt.

The Draper Mile began in 1982 with Chris Gibson as Founding Director. When Chris left the area, Todd Scully (world-class race-walker and owner of The Jock Shop, a former running store in downtown Blacksburg) and Steve Miller (owner of Mish Mish in downtown Blacksburg) took over and co-directed the race. Beth Howell and Steve Miller have been co-directing the event since the mid-1980's. The course is known for being slightly downhill and fast ...and never certified. The best times are long-standing: 3:54 for men (Gary Cobb in 1987) and 4:46 for women (Karen Wierwille in 1982).

More recently the Brush Mountain Breakdown was conceived by Chris Betz and Wayne Howell during many, many trail runs together. They started by offering several group runs, which were enjoyed by numerous club members who had not tried trail running before . . . the first group run was held in December 1998, with about 30 participants. The first Brush Mountain Breakdown 16-Miler and 6-Miler was held in October 1999, and again in 2000 and 2001. Many still hope it will some day be revived (any potential race directors out there??)

Other Striders activities include the annual Summer Decathlon Series founded by Mike Holland in 1997, Saturday morning group runs starting from Gillies/Bollos by the Hosners and Myers and a varying assortment of others over the years since

the at least the mid-90s, and the BASH-HASH runs recently initiated by Aaron Goldstein.

Another Striders' tradition that was hopefully revived this year is annual parties. We had a winter party in about December, a regular summer-time pot-luck get-together, and annual pizza parties at Beth's house . . . crusts and sauce provided and everyone brought toppings and we made all the pizzas there! Backstreets used to give about 12 dough balls. When they stopped giving us the dough already made up (for inventory reasons), they did share their recipe for crust with us . . . Diane Beckwith, Sharon Myers, and Beth were usually the crust makers.

That's all for now...I hope I have *jogged* some people's memories and that other long-time members will share their thoughts too! And let's get out the "Box" at our next party!

Katherine Phillips



I Ran With the Kenyans

I ran with the Kenyans, for the first few yards, and they were out of sight within the first mile. It was by luck-of-the-draw that I started up front and had lined up late enough to enter the pack from the front; something about chip time and real time being the same. However, it was obvious from the start that the Kenyans were not

using Higdon's or Galloway's training plan.

My first marathon was three years ago in DC - the Marine Corps, using Higdon's plan with the idea of just finishing. It must be assumed that most life-long runner's goal is to do a marathon and I fell into it. Higdon served me well, although on reflection it was a devilish plan. What is remembered is weeks of being tired and in a bad mood, aching joints and near-injuries. There was no speed work involved, just miles to assure reaching the end. I ran 3:49 but knew I could have done better.

The next year was devoted to Higdon again but in the end injuries prevented running just weeks before the planned assault on Richmond and Tucson a month later.

Frustration prevented any races in 2002.

Enter Galloway. Kay Kriz lent me a book on running marathons by Galloway. It made sense. I have been running on-and-off for thirty or more years and felt a schedule based on all my reading made more sense than Galloway. Charts and times and schedules were created and none seemed quite right so I adopted Galloway as he meant it.

Galloway believes in miles and speed and rest. For older runners no more than four days a week, however the long runs are up to 28 miles and the speed work culminates in twelve one mile intervals. Walking is an integral part of the long runs, something that most serious runner may have trouble

embracing - I did. A shuffle stride is part of his plan to save energy and, with reservation, I came to accept it and develop it. All the midweek runs are relatively easy with the truly grueling work on the weekends. All his ideas seem to work.

During the race, planned stops for walking and water were reduced from every two miles to every four - it was a chilly day. The shuffle stride, even though practiced for months but at a much slower pace, created leg problems near halfway and had to be abandoned for a more normal, longer stride. Walking breaks took a back seat to pride once a good time was in sight. And in the end Galloway's basic training persevered with a 3:25.

For those among us wishing to finish a marathon, any plan is good. Tack it on the refrigerator and stick to it. Richmond is a good race to run because it is relatively flat for Blacksburgians, maybe hilly if you are from the eastern part of the state. For those wishing to run for time, I recommend one of Galloway's plans. This is the first year of training hard that didn't bring with it surly moods, aches and strains and doubt about what could be accomplished. I lined up on race day knowing that time was the only issue - the distance had been done many times.

Marshall Overstreet



Do You Yave a Sockish Personality?

Most of us, whether we've been running for just a few years or virtually our whole lives, have something about our attire that sets us apart or makes us recognizable. For some runners, it is all about always having the newest Saucony jacket or the new Nike breathable tights, or the latest Asics singlet in bright blue. For others, it is all about having the latest gadget, such as the new GPS device that tracks not only your distance but also records your average pace (that'd be good for those of us who tend to slack off in the middle of a run!). And for still others...perhaps they always wear one particular hat. However, there's a sub-group of runners that express our personality in a different way. How is that? Just look down...on our feet! Yup, you know it! It is our socks!

So what's the big deal about socks, you say?? Well, over the years I've found that some of the most fun you can have at a local race, or at a 6 pm Wednesday group run from Runabout Sports, is checking out people's socks. Now, if you've never bought a "fun" pair of socks, you won't know what I mean. But the next time you are shopping, either at the local running store or on-line, check out the selection of socks! You'll find the high-performance, "wicking" socks (from a variety of manufacturers like deFeet, SockGuy, Lin, etc) in abundance!! And it's not just

the colors that make them unique...it's the design!

So if you're in a great mood when you go out for a run, you might wear the smiley socks...if you're in a "I'd rather be doing anything else but running mood", you might wear your socks proudly displaying a beer stein on the sides. If you love sweets, you may have a pair or two of the Ben and Jerry's socks. Socks come adorned with coffee mugs, ice-cream cones, pigs with wings, turtles (perhaps for days when you feel like a slow-poke), cop socks (with donuts on them, no less), socks that tell a story (like the pair that features a dog next to a hydrant...), daisy socks, snake socks, tortoise and the hare socks, hula-girl socks ...and the best part in noticing another sock lover who enjoys displaying a part of their personality in their socks is getting to know them! I must have met 30 new folks in Boston who were wearing the new shark socks, or frog socks, or American flag socks just by saying "Wow! I love your socks...where'd you get them?"

So...remember that next time you pass someone on the trail who has a "cool" pair of socks...say hello! Who know, you might find a new running partner!

J.P. Palmer



Membership and Dues

In December I took over managing the Blacksburg

Striders membership. Steve Miller did a really good job for many years and now I am going to give it a try! I noticed that many people on the membership list have not paid dues for over a year or two, which is understandable since traditionally there have been no expiration notices sent, and no noticeable difference in the flow of newsletters or other membership "benefits!" My first task is figuring out which people wish to remain members. Last week I sent a letter and membership form to *expired* members and will give everyone till the end of January to renew if still interested. After that time I am going to update the active membership roster. I will also be printing membership cards that can be used to obtain a 10% discount at Runabout Sports and discounted entry fees at Blacksburg Striders events.

You may ask, "What do I get for being a member?" A broad answer is being a part of an organized group of runners to promote and enjoy the sport of running for fun and fitness. The club sponsors competitive races, fun runs, a newsletter, information/educational meetings, and social events, and maintains a web site (www.civic.bev.net/striders) and e-mail list serve with local running and race information. Specifically, individual members receive a newsletter subscription, reduced entry fees to Blacksburg Striders events; an opportunity to participate in fun runs, meetings, and social activities; participation on

racing teams of all ability levels; and a 10% discount at RUNABOUT Sports (208 North Main St., Blacksburg, www.runaboutsports.com). Dues offset the cost of insurance and supplies for races, pay for party and social event supplies and newsletters, and subsidize the cost of awards for the Summer Decathlon Series and club singlets.

Blacksburg Striders dues are \$10/year for an individual and \$14/year for a family (any number), with a discount for multiple year memberships. A membership form can be found at www.civic.bev.net/striders/member.htm, or contact me, Katherine Phillips, at kmpvpi@vt.edu or 552-0395 for more information.

Katherine Phillips



Regular Blacksburg Running Groups

<u>Day/Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Tue/6:00p goldst@vt.edu	Front of Bollo's
Wed/5:00p james@runaboutsports.com	Runabout Sports
Sat/7:00a jhosner@vt.edu or smyers@vt.edu	Front of Bollo's
<i>Call ahead. Times may change</i>	

Race Calendar

Select events from <http://www.starcitystriders.com/calendar.htm>, <http://active.com>, & <http://www.civic.bev.net/striders/calendar.htm>

January 10, 2004

Charlotte Marathon and 10K
<http://www.runforpeace.active.com/>

February 21, 2004

Myrtle Beach Marathon
<http://www.mbmarathon.com/>

Masai 5K Trail Race

Observatory Trails
Charlottesville, VA 8:00 AM
<http://www.badtothebone.biz/trail.shtml>

February 22, 2004

Anheuser-Busch Colonial Half Marathon;
Williamsburg, VA 1:00 PM
www.tribeclub.com Rick Platt (757) 229-7375 email rickplatt@juno.com

February 28, 2004

Blacksburg Classic 10 mile and 5K; Saturday, 1:00 PM (1-mile fun run at 12:30PM).
<http://www.civic.bev.net/striders/classic.html>

March 13, 2004

Martha Jefferson Hospital's 8K, Charlottesville, 434-295-9153...<http://www.marthajeffersonhospital.org/>

March 20, 2004

Shamrock Marathon and 8K, Virginia Beach 7:30 AM
<http://www.shamrockmarathon.com/>

March 20, 2004

Kinabalu 10K Trail Race, Foxhaven Trails, Charlottesville, VA 8:00
<http://www.badtothebone.biz/trail.shtml>

April 17, 2004

Charlottesville Marathon and
Half Marathon; 8:00 AM
<http://www.charlottesville-marathon.com/char.shtml>

May 8, 2004

Smith Mountain Lake
Triathlon, 8:00 AM,
<http://www.set-upinc.com/2002racepages/smithmtlake/smithmtlake.shtml>



BLACKSBURG CLASSIC
10 MILE & 5K
and 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk



Saturday, February 28, 2004 - 1:00 PM
(Fun Run at 12:20 PM)

A Blacksburg Striders Event

Sponsored by

Montgomery Regional Hospital
Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine,
and New Town Fitness

Supporting Sponsors: MISH MISH, East Coaster's, RUNABOUT Sports, Bogen's, 5-Borough Bagels

Entry Fees: 10 Mile & 5K: \$14 if postmarked by February 10, 2004, \$18 thereafter. Blacksburg Striders paid members receive a \$1 discount on entry fee. Each participant will receive a long-sleeve race T-shirt. Pre-registered runners are eligible for several prizes to be awarded in a random drawing before race day. **Fun Run/Walk:** Without T-shirt: \$3 (before or on race day); With T-shirt: \$12 (before race day, \$15 on race day).

FOR SAFETY REASONS, NO STROLLERS, ANIMALS, OR HEADPHONES ARE PERMITTED ON THE COURSES DURING THE RACE!

Packet pick-up and race day registration: Begins at 10:00 AM on race day at Margaret Beeks Elementary School, 709 Airport Rd., Blacksburg, VA. **Race day registration for all events will close promptly at 12:15 PM.**

Awards - 10 mile and 5K: Overall: Prize money and an award in the men's and women's divisions, as follows: **\$100 to first overall, \$50 to second overall, \$25 to first masters (40+), \$25 to first grand masters (50+).** Age-group awards three deep, male and female, in the following categories: 8 & under (5K only), 9-12 (5K only), 13-17 (5K only), 17 & under (10-mile only); 18-23, 24-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-64, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70 & over. Each 12 & under finisher will receive an award. Runners are eligible for one award, which will be determined in the following order of priority: overall, masters, grand masters, age group. **Fun Run:** Each fun run participant will receive a medal.

Course: The 10-mile and 5K are rolling courses through Blacksburg near the Virginia Tech campus on roads and paved footpaths. All miles will be marked. Water will be available on both courses. Course description available at <<http://civic.bev.net/striders/classic.html>>.

Post-Race: Free food and beverages for runners after the race at race headquarters. Awards ceremony and drawings for door prizes will follow as soon as possible after each race. Results will also be posted at <<http://civic.bev.net/striders/classic.html>> the week after the race.

Restrooms: Available at race headquarters (no showers).

Snow Schedule: In case of excessive snow/ice, the race will be rescheduled for Saturday, March 20, 2004 at 1:00 PM. Information will be available on Friday 2/27/04.

For further information: Contact Katherine Phillips at (540) 552-0395 or e-mail (preferred) <kmpvpi@vt.edu>. Or visit the Blacksburg Striders web site, <<http://civic.bev.net/striders/classic.html>> (course descriptions and a downloadable entry form are available).

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2004 BLACKSBURG CLASSIC

Race day registration for all events will close promptly at 12:15PM.

Leave Blank _____

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Mailing Address _____
 Street address _____ Apt. no. _____ City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

____ Male ____ Female Phone Number _____ Age as of 2/28/04 _____ Personal Best in race entered _____

E-mail address (PLEASE PRINT VERY CLEARLY): _____ T-shirt size (S, M, L, XL) _____

EVENT: ____ 10 Mile: **\$14** if postmarked by 2/10/04 ____ 5K: **\$14** if postmarked by 2/10/04 ____ Fun Run - *Without T-shirt:* **\$3**
(\$18 thereafter) **(\$18 thereafter)** *With T-shirt:* **\$12** through 2/27/04; **\$15** race day

Send entry and check (made payable to Blacksburg Striders) to: Blacksburg Classic, c/o Katherine Phillips, 1975 High Ridge Dr., Blacksburg, VA 24060.

Waiver: In consideration of being permitted to participate in the 2004 Blacksburg Classic, I, _____, do hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and assignees, release and forever discharge the Blacksburg Classic, The Blacksburg Striders and their respective officers, employees, agents, subsidiaries and affiliates, all sponsors, the Town of Blacksburg, and all those persons involved in organizing and manning this event from all claims, demands, losses, damages, actions, cause of action or suits of whatsoever kind or nature, arising out of my participation in the Blacksburg Classic on 2/28/04 or 3/20/04. I agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless, VPI & SU and their officers, agents and employees from any claim, damages and actions of any kind to nature, whether at law or in equity, arising from activity, provided that such liability is not attributable to the sole negligence of the University. I realize that some of the activities may subject me to certain stresses and hazards not all of which can be foreseen. I desire and consent by signing this form, to take part in all such activities. I assume all the ordinary risks normally incident to the nature of the activities and agree that the University or any of its officers, agents and employees conducting such activities will not be responsible for any damages or injuries resulting to me.

Furthermore, I also agree that I have appropriate health care coverage for this activity. My insurance company is _____ and my

policy number is _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Relationship if Participant is under Age 18 years:
 Date: _____

January 5, 2004 - *Trails & Tales*

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Blacksburg Striders
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