

Trails & Tails



January, 2008

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Hokie Spirit Memorial Run: Making the Impossible Possible

By: Peggy Weiss

People around me have told me about the "runner's high" and the "zoning out" they experience while running. I have never enjoyed running. I have experienced pain and more pain. The grimaces and rashes of marathon finishers have confirmed my belief that running is torture. Who would do this willingly?

Then came April 16. I was locked in my office, unable to get to my children, unable to understand the situation, unable to control anything I was experiencing. It was impossible that this was happening. Ironically, my husband was running the Boston Marathon. He knew nothing about the events until late in the day.

Fortunately, I was able to drive away from campus that day. Finally able to pick up my children, talk to my husband, and cry. There were hundreds of phone calls and emails to return, memorials to attend, and children to answer. Again, I felt out of control and unable to help anyone.

As we all tried to get back to our lives, I got an email about the Hokie Spirit Memorial Run. Raising money to endow a scholarship—what a fantastic idea. It included all of the things that were important to me: education and using the gifts of one's abilities.

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Champs Running Club to Meet Tuesdays at 5:30pm

The Champs Running Club is open to the Blacksburg and Virginia Tech Community. All runners and walkers of any skill level are welcome while we join together to build healthier Hokies. Come to enjoy community, support, coaching, and exercise each Tuesday evening.

Multiple running programs will be available to choose from - 5K, 10K, 10 miler, and Half Marathon training.

If you attend three Tuesdays, you receive a FREE club t-shirt. Champs Restaurant will provide a discount on food after the run.

The Loss of the Striders?

Every volunteer organization struggles for volunteers. The Blacksburg Striders are no different. After many years of the same people leading the organization many have stepped down with no one rising up' to take their places. After years of service to the community, these folks need a break.

Now the organization that puts on the two best known running events in town, The Blacksburg Classic and the Draper Mile, has no president and no race director for the upcoming Classic. The same people who have built up these races and support many other events around town with their knowledge and equipment have in a sense retired from the club. No new blood has stepped in to continue the club and help it grow. Are we all so busy that the club can no longer go on?

The Striders have served an important purpose in town. Through their informative website, the best races in town that have always been well organized and great fun, they have supported other events with equipment and helping sustain programs that help get kids into running, like the Blacksburg High School cross country running

Cont on page 3

Where: Champs Restaurant - downtown Blacksburg

When: 5:30pm run

Every Tuesday from Nov. 27—May 6th.

Blacksburg Girls Win 10th State XC Championship! Dorrell wins boys race!



Top row left to right: sophomore Kathleen Stevens, junior Ling Biesecker, Coach Ingrid Burbey, junior Trinity Foreman (holding trophy), Coach Marcia Barrow, sophomore Leah Fitchett. Bottom row, left to right: freshman Jennie Welsh, sophomore Joanna Stevens, senior Laurel MacMillan, freshman Sarah Dorrell, senior Avery Mattingly, Coach James DeMarco

Blacksburg High School cross country running history keeps getting better. The girls won their second consecutive and tenth overall state title. Blacksburg girls increased their lead of having more state titles than any high school cross country program in the state. Virginia's largest high school and AAA power Lake Braddock has the second most with eight.

The Bruins were led by Laurel MacMillan's third place finish. She ran a personal best of 18:23 on the 5 kilometer course. Blacksburg's strength was in its pack. In the sport of cross country each team can run seven runners and the top five runners from each team score with first place earning one point. Second earns two, etc. The team with the lowest amount of points is the winner. Milbrook High School and Hidden Valley High School both had three runners finished before Blacksburg's sec-

ond runner. The Lady Bruins won though because they had all seven team runners in before any other team's fourth. Joanna Stevens placed 17th in 19:13, twin sister Kathleen Stevens was 20th in 19:25, senior Avery Mattingly was right behind in 21st (19:26), and sophomore Leah Fitchett was 28th in 19:39.

The sixth and seventh runners for a team still have a valuable role in adding points to other team totals if they beat any of the other teams top five runners. Freshman Sarah Dorrell was 31st in 19:49, followed by junior Trinity Foreman in 19:51 (33rd). Blacksburg won titles in 1982, 83, 84, 85, 86, 89, 90, 92, 2006, 07. They have also been second three times—1980, 81, 2005.

The Blacksburg boys won the District and Region IV titles this year and finished 5th at the state meet. Peter Dorrell became

Blacksburg's second state champion in XC. Lee Cross won back in 1989. Peter ran the fifth fastest time historically on the state course with his blazing 15:16.

Sophomore Matthew Howard improved seventeen spots to place 30th and ran a personal best of 16:24. Senior Christian Viehland placed 33rd in 16:31. Freshman sensation George Carter ran 17:05 for 63rd. Senior Andrew Milauskas placed 64th in 17:06 for Blacksburg's top five scorers. Junior Brad Schmitt had a PR day with a 17:11 and 70th place finish. Junior Austin Peton finished 97th in 17:36.

The boys improved one spot from last year's sixth place finish. The Blacksburg boys xc program has won five state titles. Blacksburg won in 1984, 85, 86, 88 and in 98. They were second in 1973.

Continued from page one: The LOSS of the Striders

team and Kipps Elementary School race. They have been the back bone of the running scene. Go to Christiansburg or Radford and you won't find much.

Blacksburg has a large running population that hasn't been brought together. Champs Running Club, the Virginia Tech Triathlon Club, Tech on the Run, Team n Training, RunAbout training groups and races, and numerous people out there have no idea about any of this that could provide mutual benefit.

Several board members wonder if the club should exist and does it provide a function. The Striders are a very quiet organization. Most people don't know they exist except that they enjoy the Striders' events. The Striders seem to be struggling to find a sense of purpose. And with that purpose to find people to make it happen. Should they become an events organization solely? If so, do

they have people willing to step up and put on those events?

Do they try and become more of a social club with weekly runs and hanging out for a few drinks afterwards—like the renowned group, the Hash House Harriers? There are several "clubs" like this in town but if they could join together under one organization it could be much bigger and less work to do.

So what kind of club do we want? And what are its members willing to contribute to make the goals a reality?

So what can you do? The people that have run the organization for so long are not going to abandon the club. They will be there to assist anyone that comes along. If a few people want to contribute to the club the task gets pretty easy to do. If it is just one or two people, it be-

comes a lot of work and the club will eventually not exist.

Many of the people who have worked so hard are on the front cover of the newsletter. They are, for the most part, retiring and want others to continue the mission of the club.

Do you have ideas or want to start a program or help in some way? On January 16th (Wed) we will have a meeting at 7pm at RunAbout Sports. RunAbout will provide free pizza and also a door prize of a free pair of shoes to those that come. You don't have to sign up for anything. Just see what it is all about and perhaps make some suggestions.

Besides, the more people taking part the more fun it all gets.

College Corner: Burbey Adjusting to College



Editor—Ariel Burbey graduated from Blacksburg High School and is now a sophomore at William and Mary. Ariel competes for the Tribe in cross country and track. In high school Ariel won the state champion in the 1000 meter run and set the school's 800 meter record of 2:13.19. She also ran 5:05 for the mile. Known more as a middle distance runner she has also had success in cross country with an All State finish as a senior and an 18:32 5K personal best.

We thank Ariel for sharing some of her thoughts.

Entering college my freshman year, I was ready to prove to my new coach that I deserved to be there: on the team,

wearing a D1 school uniform, and training with some of the best athletes in the country. After a rough cross country season and a red-shirted track season due to a femoral stress fracture, I realized that college running is a different ball game from high school.

It's been an intense mental challenge not PRing every time out on the course and realizing that two years ago, you would have beat yourself. Even though it has been challenging and sometimes disappointing, I have learned so much about training at a different level and just living on your own. Instead of mom making me steak every night for dinner (which I totally took for

I think many times, people get discouraged when they don't see immediate results, but I'm just excited for the next few years to come.

granted), I have to be so careful to remember to take my iron supplement every night. One of the most important things I have realized though, is to look at the big picture. I think many times, people get discouraged when they don't see immediate results, but I'm just excited for the next few years to come.

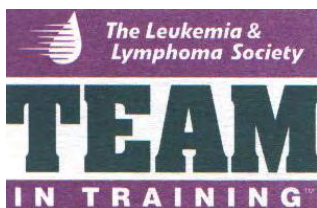
Continued from page one—Making the Impossible Possible

Except it meant running. Not just running but running 26.2 miles! As I filled out the online form and hit the submit button, I wondered how I was going to do this but figured I could always walk (who would know anyway?).

Enter James DeMarco, his staff, and the Hokie Memorial Run training group. I was so intimidated when I showed up for the first session on the high school track. My hands were clammy, my mouth dry, and my thoughts cloudy. I thought, “Look at all of these people in their running gear, talking about splits, meters, marathon bests, and world track events. I don’t know what these words mean. This is going to be impossible.”

Somehow I got through that first day. I was the last one in every activity but, for some reason, it didn’t bother me. Every Tuesday and Saturday, we get together to train. I’m still last but everyone in the group makes me feel like I am an important part of something.

As impossible as it might have



Did you know.....

- That Team in Training is the largest endurance sports training program in the world?
- That 340,000+ participants have raised \$800+ million to fund research, education, and family services for persons with leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkins, and myeloma?
- That your participation is needed, valued, and is one of the most rewarding things you'll ever do?
- That beginners become successful athletes and veterans are challenged to reach new goals?
- That there are opportunities to participate in half-marathons, marathons, century rides, and triathlons?
- That you are supported by teammates, experienced coaches, and mentors?
- You can check out this web site to read about 2008 events: <http://www.teamintraining.org/va/>?

seemed weeks ago, I have been running. Every long run we do is the new longest run of my life—I ran 18 miles last Saturday.

Because of this experience, I won’t laugh at people who run for four hours straight anymore. I’ll actually BE one of them. Training for the Hokie Spirit Memorial marathon has given me back some sense of control and made me feel as if I am doing something

worthwhile, even if the goal may seem impossible.

Editor update—Peggy finished the Marine Corp Marathon in 4:49.50 for her chip time. She said it was a wonderful experience and very hard. She said she probably will never do another marathon. A week later Peggy emailed about some training tips because she wants to run the Shamrock Half Marathon! Awesome!



Some members of the Marine Corp Marathon Training Group: Matt Rittler, Phil Thompson (assistant coach), Megan Rittler (hand in air), RaeLynn McAfee, Eric, James DeMarco (Coach) and Bill Whitsett. Photo by Peggy Weiss

Enjoying the Life that I Have

By Liz Roots

I began running in my first year of high school coached by Mike Fitzgerald at Broad Run High School in Ashburn, VA. At the time running was about friendship with teammates and for the pure enjoyment of the sport. By my senior year of high school, it became a defining part of who I was. Every practice was a stepping-stone to making my physical and mental race stronger and better. At the end of my high school running career, I was running my 800 meters, 1600, and 5K at 2:25, 5:21, and 20:49, respectively. It was exciting to have done well but sad to know that my running career would not carry over into college, or so I thought.

I spent my first year of college as a proud Mountaineer in the hills of West Virginia at West Virginia University. I continued running on my own, racing up the steep hills of Morgantown, always focused on keeping in shape. I suppose it was for a bit of the spotlight since my peers soon gave me the nickname “the runner girl.” The transition into college life had gone smoothly with academics and

It would take almost two years for me to put on a pair of running shoes again.

running still being a core part of my life. However, at the end of my first year I found myself completely heartbroken. Coaxed by a better education in the field of chemistry and cheaper tuition, I transferred to Virginia Tech. Transferring colleges was one of the toughest things I have ever had to do in my life. I was so traumatized at the loss of my friends and familiarity of my first college campus that I spent my first year at Tech with intense depression. My low mental state

carried over into my passion for running and my desire to run stopped. It would take almost two years for me to put on a pair of running shoes again.

Things began to look up when I joined my sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma, my second semester at Tech. Through this sisterhood, I was able to shed the cloak of depression and enjoy living again. With high spirits came the desire to race. I purchased my usual 2A Asics from RunAbout Sports and found myself exploring the Virginia Tech campus on foot day after day. Perhaps it was the endorphins, but bringing running back into my college life made me develop a new love for Tech. Virginia Tech finally became more than just a place for me to study. It became my cross country course.

The events of April hit extremely close for me. I lost my sorority sister and friend Caitlin Hammaren, and one of my closest friends, Jarrett Lane. It is impossible to put into words the feelings I experienced. Emptiness seemed to consume my life. I stuck close to friends and we became each other’s support system, helping each other deal with the loss as best we could. In May, one of my friends from this group received an announcement that the Marines had given Virginia Tech 100 bibs for the Marine Corps Marathon in October in honor of the events in April. Each runner was challenged to collect \$1,000.00 dollars to put toward a scholarship. The timing of this was perfect since I was back in running form and had been looking for a race to compete in. How could I not run for Jarrett and Caitlin? The goal was set and all I needed to do was train and prepare for my first ever marathon.

I knew that the marathon would take a lot of time to train for and hoped that the dedication and mental focus would help alleviate some of the anguish from April. Relief came through James DeMarco’s offer to provide a training group for everyone running the marathon as a sign of support for the Hokies. The training started gradually with our first workouts being slow but steady. The goal was to build a strong foundation for the countless miles that

our legs would be put through. The group, a mix from college-aged students to energetic elders, met every Tuesday to work on our speed and tempo. Every Saturday we met for distance runs, from which I have come to love running at Pandapas Pond. I have found that as every practice goes by I am strengthened, not only in the physical and mental sense, but also in the heart. After the events of this past spring, I have learned how important relationships are. The group that I have been training with for the Marine Corps Marathon has become not just a group of runners but also a group of accountability partners, encouragers, and fellow enthusiasts for running and life. Having come back to running after transferring to Tech, it has taken on a completely new meaning for me. Running is my time to relax, build

I have found that as every practice goes by I am strengthened, not only in the physical and mental sense, but also in the heart.

friendships, strengthen myself, reflect and remember loved ones I have lost, and most of all, to enjoy the life that I have.

Editor note—Liz ran 3:31.42 to earn a Boston Qualifier in her first marathon!



Hokies Cross Country

The Virginia Tech Hokies women's cross country team had an up and down year. They earned a national ranking after last year's fantastic season when the Hokies ended up 18th in the Nation with their first trip to the national championships.

The Hokies placed 5th at the ACC Championships and their top three runners competed right with Florida State, the team champions.

The regional championship, the meet that decides who competes at the national meet, took place two weeks later. Coach Thomas' team peaked perfectly as three of his top four runners had their season's best races.

Hokie sophomore and All ACC runner Kelly Clark had the off day when 800 meters into the race her racing shoe came off. She ended up running the rest of the 6K event with just one shoe. Clark finished 68th and judging by her great season she would have been a top twenty finisher.

Placing Clark where she would have hypothetically finished, the Hokies could have won the event or been a very close second to winner NC State. The Lady Hokies have improved tremendously over the last few years and should know that on any given day they can compete with the best teams in the Southeast.

Junior Tasmin Fanning, a Virginia native, will represent the Hokies at the national championships with her third place finish at Regionals. She should have a great shot at earning All American honors. Senior Natalie Sherbak was the first individual not to make it. Natalie had a fine run to finish 10th.

Men's Cross Country—The

Hokie men placed fifth at ACCs and had the program's first All ACC runner with Paul LePenna's 11th place finish. ACC freshman of the year last season, Devin Cornwall, just missed earning All ACC with his 18th place performance.

The Hokies had their highest team placing since joining the ACC.

At Regionals, the men placed seventh out of the 29 teams in the region and were led by Devin Cornwall. Cornwall has had a very impressive young career as a Hokie.

For more information on the Virginia Tech cross country team check out www.Hokiesports.com

Want to Help with Our Local Running Trails?

The Friends of Pandapas Pond (FOPP) build and maintain the trails at Pandapas Park—a regular hotbed for our runners. FOPP has a blog that updates when trail work will happen and the location.

To check out the blog site go to www.friendsofpandapas.blogspot.com or to sign up on the email list, contact either Chris Betz at East Coasters Bike Shop (blacksburg@eastcoasters.com) or Kerry Wood at kwood@appalachiantrail.org

VT Indoor Home Track Schedule

Come cheer on the Hokies. The women are the ACC defending champions and the men have some of the finest athletes in the nation. The cost is free and inside Rector Fieldhouse, next to the softball stadium and behind the soccer stadium.

Jan 12-13, Feb 16-17, Mar 3rd

GO HOKIES!!!

Want to Own Part of a Running Store?

Crazy man runner John Schwiker wants to sell three of his shares of RunAbout Sports. Schwiker is an Alaskan resident and a good friend of mine. He invested in the store when we were first trying to get open. I call John crazy because he does the Iditarun which is a race in Alaska that follows part of the famous sled dog race; the Iditarod. It goes for about 300 miles in extreme conditions.

If you are interested, please contact James at Runabout Sports for all the details/ advantages of being an owner of Runabout Sports. The shares were purchased for \$1500 before we opened. Last year we sold seven shares for \$2500 apiece. You can buy just one, two or all three. He may go lower on price, not sure. Could be a cool Christmas present.

He just got married and the wife wants a new kitchen.



Volunteers hard at work building great running trails (and mt. biking).

Brush Mountain Breakdown Results—Trail Race at Pandapas



The 2007 Brush Mountain Breakdown was a great success and the runners enjoyed perfect Fall weather with a beautiful and colorful landscape.

Brush Mountain Breakdown

15 Miler

1. Christopher Clarke, 22, Male, 1:43:35
2. John Troy Owens, 28, Male, 1:44:35
3. Aiden McHugh, 18, Male, 1:45:41
4. Justin Tucker, 22, Male, 1:51:35
5. Mark Lattanzi, 41, Male, 1:56:50
6. Jake Losse, 18, Male, 1:59:01
7. Mark Barrow, 47, Male, 1:59:50
8. Joey Turner, 37, Male, 2:00:03
9. Jay Seago, 31, Male, 2:00:57
10. Ben Adamo, 29, Male, 2:00:59
11. Ben Goodwin, 28, Male, 2:01:01
12. Marc Edwards, 43, Male, 2:01:34
13. Bill Floyd, 55, Male, 2:01:51
14. Daniel Fisher, 31, Male, 2:02:16
15. Heather Fisher, 21, Female, 2:02:16
16. Tim Brown, 21, Male, 2:05:50
17. Jordan Lynn, 19, Male, 2:06:16
18. Dave Hopkins, 28, Male, 2:06:39
19. Trevor Downs, 34, Male, 2:10:30

20. Ben Wurst, 19, Male, 2:10:45
21. Laura Hamm, 23, Female, 2:19:24
22. Alan Raflo, 51, Male, 2:23:18
23. Steven Daskal, 34, Male, 2:24:31
24. Jennifer Daskal, 32, Female, 2:24:45
25. Chance Margheim, 25, Male, 2:26:11
26. Amca Bejan, 35, Female, 2:28:08
27. Lon Weber, 41, Male, 2:28:09
28. Anita Finkle, 41, Female, 2:34:24
29. Jay Finkle, 44, Male, 2:34:24
30. Michael Stowe, 37, Male, 2:34:41
31. John DeRosset, 28, Male, 2:38:19
32. Rebecca Slivka, 22, Female, 2:42:23
33. JP Palmer, 42, Female, 3:04:41
34. Michael Holland, 52, Male, 3:04:41
35. Arthur Sarakas, 61, Male, 3:04:50

8.5 Miler

1. Dan Britten, 49, Male, 1:03:59
2. Caman Skelton, 14, Male, 1:07:05
3. Graham Peck, 18, Male, 1:07:08
4. Tyler Welsh, 19, Male, 1:09:31
5. Ryan Burbey, 16, Male, 1:12:03
6. Scott Botten, 21, Male, 1:14:28
7. Charley Kelly, 28, Female, 1:15:28
8. Henry Peck, 50, Male, 1:16:50
9. Kimberley Homer, 46, Female, 1:23:14
10. Molly Ison, 25, Female, 1:23:14
11. Mary Norris, 45, Female, 1:24:12
12. Leslie Clark, 25, Female, 1:27:27

13. Megan Walz, 16, Female, 1:29:09
14. Celia Dodd, 30, Female, 1:29:10
15. Elizabeth Dunn, 34, Female, 1:29:23
16. Colleen Gentreg, 45, Female, 1:29:26
17. Elizabeth Scott, 28, Female, 1:29:29
18. Eric Bernhardt, 45, Male, 1:30:30
19. Ingrid Burbey, 47, Female, 1:30:46
20. Hans Bernhardt, 38, Male, 1:32:34
21. Kaylyn Peck, 16, Female, 1:35:20
22. Bob Kraus, 38, Male, 1:37:17
23. Tom Porter, 38, Male, 1:39:42
24. Jen Pollard, 34, Female, 1:44:17
25. Donna Downs, 33, Female, 1:47:31
26. Tom King, 58, Male, 2:21:45
27. Meg Bruch, 54, Female, 2:21:47

4 miler

1. Matt Gessner, 25, Male, 44:20
2. Scott Wilson, 25, Male, 44:21
3. Kirk Holcomb, 60, Male, 45:20
4. Mike Nolan, Male, no age, no time
5. Mary Pat Meaney, Female, no age, no time

Hokie Spirit Memorial Run!! UPDATE

The goal of the Hokie Memorial Run was to raise \$100,000 for a scholarship to be named for the victims of April 16th. As of print time the runners raised over \$200,000! Not only did this group of 100 runners put the miles in but they have also helped leave another reminder of the wonderful people we lost last April. We shall never forget.

Many people have asked how the group of runners did that were coached under Runabout Sports. We are proud to say they all finished. Two people did not run due to IT band issues but one is hoping to do a Spring marathon.



Shoe Review: ASICS Gel-Evolution 3

(Runner's World)

We Say: The updated Evolution is about half an ounce lighter than its predecessor, and it features a wider arch bridge that has been reinforced with thicker ribs for added pronation control. With its roomier forefoot, the shoe should fit more foot types. Asics also dropped the ankle collar height slightly and shifted the lacing system back, so the shoe wraps the rearfoot more snugly. Recommended for average-weight runners with flat arches who want a relatively lightweight motion-control shoe.

Wear-testers Say: "Good arch support and stability, with plenty of room in the forefoot." - Hayley Jackson

"The fit was comfortable out of the box, but the heel felt a little loose." - Louise Forsythe

Price: \$110

Widths: Standard-4E (M) Standard-D (W)

Weight: 12.6 oz (M) 10.3 oz (W)



2007 Blacksburg Classic—Letter from the 2007 Race Director

The 2007 Blacksburg Classic
--- Maarten van Gelder

(mostly written in the week following the race)

Waking up Sunday morning in an ice covered world made me realize how fortunate we had been with the weather for the Blacksburg Classic the day before. It could hardly have been nicer. There was no wind to speak of and the sun, not hindered by any clouds, warmed all, making it feel warmer than the 50 degrees it became by mid-afternoon. The great weather made many decide that running would be a fun thing to do, and race-day sign-ups were plentiful. The field of 5K and 10 Mile runners grew by nearly 150 race-day entrants; a total of 361 runners finished either the 5K or 10 Mile race. The fun run, too, saw quite a run-day addition, to about 30.

From all I could tell, the day was a success, with pretty quick results, and great door prizes, which were donated by Run-About Sports, and East Coasters Cycling and Fitness. I thank the runners for entering the Blacksburg Classic, and making it the largest run in Blacksburg, the Echo and Foxtrot company of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets for safeguarding the course, Virginia Tech Recreational Sports for advertising the event to the campus community, the Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad for having an ambulance on site and two cyclists on the course, and Mish Mish for providing services to the race. Many volunteers made this event possible: Art Snoke, Brenda van Gelder, Connie Bowden, Betsy Nardi, J.P. Palmer, Anca Bejan, Catherine Rice, Christine Haimann, Kim Homer, Brian Love, Robert Krickus, Steve Nagle, Greg Lemmond, Mike Holland, Jerry Cross, Steve Miller, Paul Farrier, Julia Integlia, Lauren Robbins, Valerie Hardcastle, Andrew Warren, Ellen Rabun, Aaron Goldstein, Cameron Patterson, Tim Driscoll, Peter Lazar,

Magda Kanska, John Linford, Liz Rucker, Chris Lasher, Marcia Barrow, and Peggy Leister. I thank you all for helping to make the 2007 Blacksburg Classic a great event.

The 2007 race was the third in a row for me as race director. Three is a nice number, and for me the number to call it quits at for a while. It is thus time for someone else to step forward, and take on the 2008 Blacksburg Classic. It is a most worthwhile undertaking. The race is a great service to the community as is evident from the large turn-out every year. It would be missed!

Maarten van Gelder

Director, 2007 Blacksburg Classic

Looking for that Special Gift?

Ho, Ho, Ho! Looking for that unique gift that will make your favorite runner jolly with joy?

#1—Do you have a sweaty runner on your list? Try the **Neat Seat!** It covers the car seat and seat belt, is perfectly contoured, and basically acts as a towel so that sweaty runner can drive off without damaging their car seat or getting all sticky.

#2—Every woman runner could use another good **Jog Bra**. You would not go to Walmart for your shoes so why go to Target for a quality jog bra? Try Champion, Brooks, Asics premiere models. Your wife will be thrilled!

#3—**Breath Thermo®** fabrics from Mizuno. This is some Hot Stuff! The light fabric acts as a unique type of insulation fabric that generates heat from the absorption of moisture. Heat is generated via a chemical exchange between perspiration and the properties of the Breath

Thermo® fabric. This is especially useful for the protection of the muscle groups and protecting the human body from cold temperatures. Mizuno makes gloves, hats, headbands, tops and pants in this unique fabric. Come by RunAbout for a demonstration.

#4—**Running Shoes!** Every runner's favorite item, their running shoes. If you don't know your favorite runner's shoes it's best to get them a gift certificate (of course to Runabout!) A \$100 gift certificate will pay for most shoes.

#5—**Running Socks**—Socks have gotten unbelievable. From socks that keep your feet ten times drier than cotton, to socks made for the right foot and the left, to socks that actually move heat to cooler parts. If you haven't gotten a good pair of running socks,

you are missing out. Make sure to add it to your Christmas list.

#6—**Marathon Pack**—Have a friend running a marathon? Get them these goodies—Bodyglide, Clif Blocks, GUs or Gels, a good pair of running socks, a running log, and the latest Runner's World.

#7—**Massage Stick**—A generous stocking stuffer. Help your favorite runner enjoy their runs more by giving the gift of injury-free running. The massage stick helps keep muscles knot free!

#8—Brrrrrr—A nice pair of running **gloves** or **hat** for your wintry runner.

#9—**Heart Rate Monitor**—A new gadget to help your runner get into great shape.

Athlete Spotlight: Tasmin Fanning



Tasmin Fanning has become one of the top distance runners in the collegiate ranks.

Tasmin Fanning finished 12th in the nation at the recent NCAA XC Championships in Indiana to earn All-American honors. Tasmin made history by becoming the fourth Hokie to earn All American honors in the women's program. Her 12th place finish is the best in the program's history. She graduated from Western Albemarle H.S. in Charlottesville where she and her sister Jess led their school to six state championships. Now a Hokie, Tasmin has gone from a top Virginia high school runner to one of the top distance runners in the collegiate ranks. Tasmin's best event may be the metric mile where she has run 4:17 (the equivalent of a 4:37 mile)!

I was thrilled when Tasmin agreed to be interviewed. The format is question and answer and was done through email.

Local Runs and Events

Weekly:

Tuesday Night Runs—Champs Running Club 5:30pm—all abilities—start at Champs Restaurant in downtown Blacksburg on Main Street.

Wednesday Night Runs—From Runabout Sports 6pm—all abilities—2-10 miles

Saturday morning runs—7:30am at the Blacksburg public library

Runabout also offers one interval workout a week and a long run. Meeting times change depending on time of year. Call 552-9339 for more information. No cost.

RACES and TRAINING

Frosty 5K—Blacksburg—behind Food Lion on North Main Street. February 2, 2008 12:00pm.

Blacksburg Classic 10 miler and 5K—February—depending if a race director is found.

Blacksburg Striders Summer Training Program—every day except Sundays and starts June 10th.

Summer Decathlon Series—VT Track every Monday at 5:30pm starting June 10th

High Performance Distance Academy—July 7th-12th and July 14th-19th for 7th grade to graduating h.s. seniors. Held on the VT campus. Directed by Runabout Sports.

Draper Mile—during the Friday of Stepping Out Celebration in Downtown Blacksburg.

Summer Sizzle 5K— September 1st at 6:30pm in Blacksburg—Corporate Research Center.

Brush Mountain Breakdown Trail Race—October 19, 2008 (15 miler, 8.5 miler, 4miler distance)

Check out the Youth Kids Track League this summer. Call Runabout Sports for details.

#1) Congrats on an incredible race at NCAA's! Did you think you could place in the top fifteen heading into the meet?

When thinking about the race, I knew I could get All-American, it was just going to be a matter of going out there and actually doing it. But top-15 in the nation? I admit I hadn't considered doing that well.

#2) You have made tremendous progress in the last two years. To what do you attribute your rise to one of the nation's top female distance runners?

Thank you! I believe my progress has come from consistent training by Coach Thomas, a strong family support system, and always giving what I have for any particular day while staying focused on the end goal.

#3) You show tremendous range with your 4:17 1500 meters personal best last spring to a 12th place finish at the 6K distance for the NCAA xc championships. Do you think you might move up in distance in track or

Continue on page 12—Tasmin Fanning

Blacksburg Striders Membership Information



The Blacksburg Striders welcome all interested runners or those who would like to become involved with the running experience in any way, on any level. Membership fees include:

1. Newsletter subscription: published to inform you of upcoming races and results of past races, and furnish informative articles on training, physiology, racing, etc.;
1. Reduced entry fees to Blacksburg Striders events;
2. Opportunity to participate in fun runs, meetings, and social activities;
3. Participation on racing teams of all ability levels;
4. 10% discount at RUNABOUT Sports (801 University City Blvd., Blacksburg, VA); <<http://www.runaboutsports.com/>>.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership fees enclosed (check one): Individual: ___ 1 year (\$10.00); ___ 2 years (\$19.00); ___ 3 years (\$27.00)

Family (any number): ___ 1 year (\$14.00); ___ 2 years (\$27.00); ___ 3 years (\$39.00)

Make checks payable to: Blacksburg Striders

P.O. Box 764

Blacksburg, VA 24063-0764

Name _____ Birthdate _____ Sex _____

Street _____ City _____

State _____ Zip code _____ Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Occupation _____ Campus Address (if any) _____

E-mail address: (please print VERY clearly) _____

Please help support the Striders by indicating which of the following committees you might be interested in working with:

Newsletter _____ Fun Runs _____ Meetings _____ Races _____ Social _____

Any other suggestions: _____

BLACKSBURG STRIDERS CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION WAIVER

I, _____, know that running and volunteering to work in club races are potentially hazardous activities. I should not enter and run in club activities unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decisions of a race official relative to my ability to safely complete the run. I assume all risks associated with running and volunteering to work in club races including, but not limited to, falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and/or humidity, the conditions of the road and traffic on the course, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. Having read this waiver and knowing these facts, and in consideration of your acceptance of my application for membership, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the Road Runners Club of America, the Blacksburg Striders and all sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in these club activities even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver.

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

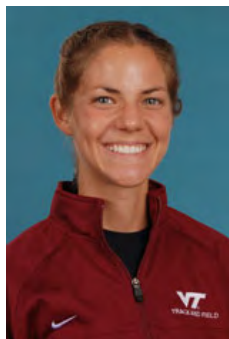
PARENT'S SIGNATURE (if under 18 years of age) _____

DATE _____

Tasmin Fanning—Athlete Spotlight from page 10

continue to drop your time in the 1500 meters? (basically what are your goals for this upcoming indoor/ outdoor season)?

Our goals for the upcoming track seasons are definitely to continue to develop my speed in the 1500 because the faster I can close in a longer race, the better position I will be in to compete well.



#4) You and your sister Jess (another outstanding runner for VT) have always been on successful teams. At Western Albermarle H.S. you were part of - I think five - state championship teams. Since coming to VT the women's programs has made tremendous strides including its first trip to the NCAA national meet last year and a top twenty national ranking. What do you think is the magic behind successful teams?

At Western it was an honor to be a part of six state championship teams among other relay titles. I've found that for teams to be most successful it's important to focus and take the work and recovery seriously and to like the people you are working with. But, equally as important as the collective strong work ethic is the ability to keep it light, and remember to have fun; after all, that's why most of us started running anyway!

#5) Between balancing classes and training schedules - do you enjoy being a Division one student - athlete?

Being a division I student athlete is a privilege and experience I would not trade for anything. Some people say we sacrifice so much, especially with

having three seasons. I don't consider it a sacrifice at all. I wouldn't have it any other way.

#6) To all our younger readers that aspire to run in college - what would you suggest to them?

I would have to say that if you want to run in college, talk to the different coaches and find a good fit for you. Do realize that it is a commitment and be sure you love it as much as you do in high school if you continue running in college. Being a part of a college team, (especially Tech's!) is incredibly fun and you will make some great memories. But, enjoy your time in high school and definitely stay focused on what you want.

Also—VT Sports Information Department interviewed Tasmin. Here is their interview.

Has it hit you yet that you can say you are the 12th best runner in the country? And that's it's the best any Hokie (woman) has ever done at the national championship?

"The accomplishment hasn't quite hit me yet. I have to remind myself when I wake up. On the women's side for the Hokies, this was the best finish yet, but I hope it sets a standard for all of us to improve on in the future."

-Were you surprised at how well you performed? What were your thoughts immediately following the race?

"I wasn't surprised at my finish, but more happily satisfied. I knew I could be All-American and compete with the best out there, but it was just a matter of actually doing it, or how well I could do it. After the race, I was tired, but very happy. I didn't know my exact place, but I knew it was top 15, which exceeded my expectations, and all I could do was smile."

-According to Coach Thomas, you kept improving your position as the race went on. How did you make that happen?

"In a field of 250 runners it's important to get out well, but not to expend all your energy at the start to do that. I managed to get out in a pack towards the front, and rolled with that momentum for the first kilometer of the race. People started

dropping off the pack, and I kept my composure and began picking some people off. With less than 2K to go, I was starting to feel tired, but I looked in front of me and saw some girls, and knew I could get to them. It was a lot of challenging myself to pass people even when I was tired, but I knew that they were, too, so why not make a move? Coach was giving me my placement throughout the race, so I always knew where I was. When he counted me in placement for All-American, there was no way I was going to lose that."

-The team just missed out on qualifying for the second-straight year, so how important was it to represent Virginia Tech all by yourself?

"Not qualifying as a team was devastating. Last year we were 18th but we were not satisfied, and we were eager to come back this year to improve. We didn't get that chance as a team, but I knew I could represent Tech well and show some people that had the team been there, we would have done some damage."

Thanks, Tasmin! Good Luck—We will be cheering you on! On page six we have the VT Hokies indoor track schedule posted. Come cheer on Tasmin and the rest of the Hokies at Rector Field house. Entry is open to the public and free.

Resources Needed for Blacksburg Running Park

With the land behind the new Blacksburg Middle School owned by Montgomery County for school use development, we have a place to have a new football and soccer stadium for our high school kids but also a chance to have a running course. The course would be completely on grass and could turn out to be a state of the art XC course with the right amount of help. If you would like more information please contact James at RunAbout Sports. We need all types of help. RunAbout's phone number is 230-2154.

Runners: ODU Needs Survey Completed

Greetings from Old Dominion University's Department of Exercise Science, Sport, Physical Education, and Recreation! As a member of the Road Runners Club of America, you possess valuable knowledge and experience on exercise and training. We invite you to complete a survey at the following URL:

<https://periwinkle.ts.odu.edu/cgi-bin/qwebcorporate.cgi?idx=4JU6VF&rk=TWANUJ>.

Please click the link to access the survey.

Please click the link to access the survey. We are examining the association between the use of various medications, particularly statin medications (a type of cholesterol-lowering drug) and the incidence of muscle pain and injury among runners. Variables of interest include running training, racing habits, participation in other activities, use of medications and dietary supplements,

and incidence of various types of muscular problems.

The survey has been approved by the Darden College of Education's Human Subjects Review Committee and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. We value your privacy and pledge to safeguard your information in a confidential manner.

Although we encourage you to participate in our survey, your decision to decline our invitation will not jeopardize opportunities to participate in future research at ODU.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this invitation to participate in this survey. As runners and cyclists, we believe the results from this study could provide some very useful information for physicians, athletes and physically active individuals to make appropriate decisions concerning me-

dicinal drug use.

We wish you a happy and safe Holiday Season.

Sincerely,

Mel Williams, Ph.D

David Branch, Ph.D.

David Swain, Ph.D.

Writers Wanted!!

Do you have a story to tell? Do you have a favorite run that you think others would enjoy? Are you inspired by one of your friends? Do you have a funny tale to tell about your non running friends? Tell us your stories. We need a newsletter that reflects our running community. Please send any contributions for the next newsletter to james@runaboutsports.com. THANKS!

Blacksburg Striders Newsletter
c/o RunAbout Sports
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Suite One
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Mail To: