



The **GROC** **Newsletter**

SPRING 1993

**Spring 1993
Intercenter Competition**

This Spring's Intercenter Competition will begin with the Goddard Two-Mile Fun Run (and/or walk), which will be held on Wednesday, April 28th. If you can't make it that Wednesday, come out for the make-up run/walk at the DuVal High School track on Friday, April 30th. Both events will start at 12:00 noon! For safety reasons, we ask that roller blades not be used in this competition.

The 10 km race for walkers will be held Monday, May 3rd. This race will be held on center, starting at 11:00 a.m. in front of the Health Unit. The 10 km race for runners will be held on Wednesday, May 5th, at the Greenbelt Lake (Buddy Attick Park) starting at noon. The 10 km make-up will be held on Friday, May 7th, at the Greenbelt Lake starting at noon.

Applications for all races can be picked-up at the Health Unit. If you have any questions, contact Diane Kolos (x3880) or Chuck Powers (x8061). Completed applications should be turned in to John Gilligan at the Health Unit.

HELP!!!
by Diane Kolos

It may be news to many of you that it takes approximately 45 volunteers to

make the Fun Run a success. Since many of our volunteers see the fun that others are having and wish to participate in the next race, our turnover rate is rather high. We are, as always, looking for volunteers to help with the race on April 28th and the other races in the Intercenter Running Competition (IRC), which follow during the next week and a half.

If you know of someone who would like to be in the "thick of the action" but can't or doesn't want to run the race, please ask them to contact our volunteer coordinator Carol Russell at x9416 or me at x3880. If you are a runner or walker with an injury which prevents you from participating PLEASE consider helping out---we are always short-handed and people with experience from previous races are our best volunteers because they know how things work. Remember that volunteers count as participants for the team participation trophy so you can also make a team captain very happy.

Marine Corps Marathon

This year's Marine Corps Marathon will be held on Sunday, October 24th. The Marine Corps has kindly sent me five entry applications for this year's race. If anyone is interested in getting one of these applications, please contact Chuck Powers.

I also receive applications to other races, which I usually put in the Health Unit. If you are interested in finding out which races I have applications for, either contact me at x8061 or take a walk over to the Health Unit.

So You Want To Run 50 Miles! by Michael McCumber

Endurance running, which includes ultramarathons, is a world of running which is relatively unknown to most people, runners and non-runners alike. For instance, most of you are probably unaware of any of the following feats, each of which is indeed impressive: Andy Jones ran a 50 mile road race in 4 hr 54 min. , Helen Klein completed five trail 100-milers at age 65, and Dave Warady won the 1st Annual Trans Am race in 1992 (from Los Angeles to New York City, about 3,000 miles) in a time of 521 hr 35 min. 57 sec.

Of course, few endurance runners are as capable as these people, but even the most ordinary ultrarunner can perform accomplishments that may seem impossible to an observer. For those of you who have felt the pain of a marathon, running 50 miles may seem like madness. Imagine finishing the marathon and still having 24 miles to go! Yet, many runners are able to run 50 miles and more, and they can do it with surprising ease.

This article is based upon an excellent article by Peter Gagarin entitled " A Beginning Ultrarunner's Guide to Running Fifty Miles", which appeared in the October, 1990 issue of Ultrarunning magazine. Peter is a US. national class ultrarunner, and a former national champion orienteer. In his analysis, Peter identifies three important considerations for the beginning 50 mile runner: training, race strategy, and problems.

As any racer knows, training is important, but proper training is vital to

success. The important training issues are the following:

1. Weekly mileage. For a beginner, the training mileage for a marathon is probably sufficient for a 50 mile run. Generally 30-50 miles may be enough (it is for me), but some people may want to increase this to 60 or 70 miles, or more. Just don't get hung up on total mileage. You should be more concerned with running smoothly and injury-free.

2. Speed work. The slower speeds of endurance races do not require speed work. If you are just interested in finishing within the time limit, skip the speed work and just run at your normal training pace (in actuality, that really is speed work for ultrarunning)!

3. Slow work. Peter suggests "to practice running with the minimal effort". Running relaxed helps to conserve energy, and this will be important since you will be running for many hours. You will also need to practice walking. This may be anathema to most runners, who are conditioned to sprint like a rabbit on a race course. But in a 50 mile race, this can be the difference between a DNF and finishing within the time limit (and maybe not feeling too bad, at that)!

4. Long runs. A key ingredient in your training, this is how you train your body to endure the long period of exertion that you will experience in a race. How far you go should be a personal decision. Peter suggests forgetting about distance and running for about 3-5 hours. I am a distance person, not a clock watcher. Thus for me, the most effective long runs will be at least 20 miles in length; 30-35 miles for the longest runs work well for me. For week-to-week training, many people follow an approach similar to marathon training, alternating a long run on one weekend with a shorter distance (about half as long, or less) on the following weekend. I have found that a long run on each weekend is ideal for me, but again this is a personal decision. Once I am running near my peak distance, I vary the length of the long run

by only a few miles from week to week. Remember, when you do your long run, this is the ideal time to incorporate walking into your routine. This routine will help you in a race without significant hills; otherwise, the hills will dictate when to walk. When you walk, try to walk briskly, if you can.

5. Specific training. Practice running/walking hills if they are a significant part of your race. Learn to walk quickly and efficiently up the hills, and then run downhill. If you are planning to run a trail 50 miler, get as much practice as you can on trails. And if you are planning to run at high altitude or in very hot or cold weather, train under these conditions as much as possible.

6. Eating and drinking. In an ultra, you will need to drink very large amounts of liquid. Remember, when you run an ultra you will get dehydrated no matter what the weather is like. You will also need to eat. When you do your long runs, practice eating and drinking. This is best done while you are walking. Also be sure to start drinking early and do it often. Discover what foods and drinks you can tolerate and in what amounts. It is a good idea to experiment with a variety of food and drink, since you may develop an intolerance for some types of food or drink as a race progresses.

7. Tapering. As with marathons, it is necessary to taper your mileage during the last week or two before the race. Little benefit is gained by maintaining a hard training pace. You will be best prepared if you are well rested and well nourished (and hydrated) by race day.

Once you have completed your training, you have conditioned your body to withstand the stresses placed upon it during the course of the race. Now by applying an intelligent race strategy, you will get the most out of it. Consider the following tips for running an ultra race:

1. Be sure to be fully hydrated before the race. Start several days prior to the race

and continue on race day. This is very important! I find it is also a good idea to have something to eat in the hour or two prior to the race, for instance, doughnuts or bagels.

2. Although you may have pre-race jitters, especially for your first race, try to relax. Remember, 50 miles is a long way to go and there is no need to hurry. If you start off like a jack rabbit, you will regret it 20 or more miles into the race. You will CRASH! Of course, slower and smarter runners will enjoy passing you later. What you want to do is to run the pace for which you trained, to be steady and smooth. You should be able to talk to other runners; ultras are the ultimate social events. If the race is hilly, remember to walk the uphill and run the downhill. But don't run the downhill too fast or carelessly, as this can lead to blisters and it can trash your quads, which you will regret later.

3. Take advantage of the food and drink at all aid stations. Don't be macho and pass them up; that could be a serious mistake. Also, try to minimize the time spent at aid stations. It is tempting to stay a while and even to sit down and rest. But remember, that the minutes spent at the aid stations quickly add up and this could become a factor in finishing within the time limit if you are careless. Often, you can grab some food and drink in a minute or two. By consuming it while you walk or jog away, you can save some precious time.

4. Be sure to walk during the race. If there are no hills, then alternating walking and running using a ratio which seems good to you (hopefully you practiced this). I usually walk 5 minutes of each half hour; I have also tried 8 minutes of running and 2 minutes of walking. I haven't found that either of these ratios has any significant advantage over the other.

5. Focus on short distances. Fifty miles can seem like an impossible distance to cover. For trail ultras, I focus on the

distance to the next aid station, which is usually 3-6 miles. This is a distance which I know is easily attainable and it will not take a long time to run it. In this way, I find it easy to let the miles and hours pass by. On a track, however, it is difficult to overcome the boredom of running 200 laps for a 50 mile race. The best advice I can give is to strike up as many conversations with other runners as you can get and listen to music if it is available.

No matter how well you prepare for an ultra, problems can arise. How you respond to them will be the difference between a DNF and crossing the finish line. Peter addresses several problems which are common to many ultrarunners:

1. Upset stomach. You never can tell when, or if, this will occur. An obvious option is to quit the race. But if you want to grit it out, you can try the following: take antacids (they sometimes work); switch the kind of fluid you are drinking, especially if it is sweet; try a different kind of food; or walk for a while and just tough it out.

2. Blisters. One way to prevent blisters is to avoid running too hard down hills. Another suggestion from my friends is to wear nylon socks and shoes that fit properly (they should be about one-half size larger than you usually wear since your feet will swell during the race).

3. Biomechanical problems, such as cramps or sore joints. Proper nutrition will probably help to avoid cramps. Peter suggests that stretching, adjusting your stride, or changing shoes may help to ease other aches and pains. He suggests training on a course which has some hills as a preventative measure, especially if the race course is generally flat. If problems persist no matter what you do during a race, don't hesitate to quit. It is best to minimize the damage so that you can run another day.

4. Running out of energy. This might just be due to dehydration. If this is the

case, drink more fluids and eat something sweet (e.g., candy, cookies, etc.). You will start to feel better in minutes. You might also consider walking for a while. This may be just the boost your body needs. It is not uncommon to have swings between feeling energetic and feeling drained. You need to accept this as part of the package and work through it.

So there you have it!! Train properly, run a smart race, and prepare for problems. It takes a long time to train for an ultra, and it takes a long time to run one. But the experience is unique, especially on trails. To me, it is the best way to run. However, you can only appreciate what I say by giving it a try yourself. Best of luck and may you enjoy many happy miles.

Dirt Road Derby

The monthly Dirt Road Derby will start up again in May. The Dirt Road Derby is run on the third Wednesday of every month starting at noon in front of the Health Unit. The run is usually about 2 miles, and is run on the dirt trail around Goddard. Come out and join the fun and fitness!

GROC Executive Board 1992-1993

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Newsletter inputs can be mailed to Chuck Powers at Code 313, or through email:

cpowers.313 (3+Mail)

How Am I Doing?

by Chuck Powers

Did you ever want to compare your performance in one race with that of other distances? Or did you ever want to compare your running performance at age 40 with your performance at age 30?

Well, the National Masters News and the World Association of Veteran Athletes have compiled a book full of tables for different track and field events (including racewalking) just for that purpose. This book is titled "Masters Age-Graded Tables."

Let's say we have a runner who ran a 5 km race at age 30 in 22:00, a 10 km race at age 30 in 45:00, and a 5 km race at age 40 in 23:00. This runner is interested in determining if he's a better 5 km or 10 km runner, and if he is running as well at 40 as he was at 30. Well, he can use the Age-Graded Tables to help determine this.

The Aged-Graded Tables allow you to convert your racing time for an event into a performance rating. This is done by comparing your time to standards set for that event. OK, let's go back to our runner discussed earlier. The standard for 5 km at age 30 is 12:57, which gives our runner a performance rating of 58.9% ($12:57/22:00 \times 100$) for his 5 km at age 30. For his 10 km we get 59.8% ($26:55/45:00 \times 100$), and for his 5 km at age 40 we get 59.7% ($13:44/23:00 \times 100$). From looking at these performance ratings, we see that our runner is running better at age 40 and is a better 10 km runner than 5 km runner.

If anyone is interested in looking at these tables or copying a few of them, please contact Chuck Powers.

Special Sidelines

Special Sidelines highlights other fun and fitness activities. What we call a Sideline, is the main event for some. These include orienteering, ultrarunning, triathlons, racewalking, and weight lifting.

GROC members are willing to field your questions about their Special Sideline.

Orienteering

Jane Jellison (x8563)

Racewalking

Renny Greenstone (513-1610)

Triathlon

Bob Phillips (344-4911)

Ultrarunning

Mike McCumber (x4074)

