

Running Briefs
c/o Tracey Martinson
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AK 99709

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Running Briefs



Spotlight on: Pat Kalen



By Muffy and Tuffy, Running
Briefs Roving Correspondents

Once, while out for a 16-mile run at temperatures ranging from 25- to 40-below and a stiff headwind, he ran backwards for 5 miles. Another time, convinced he had to run the marathon distance once in training, he ran two loops around Chena Ridge, with temperatures of -45°F in the flats. Crazy? You may be right. Read on.

Pat Kalen started running in June 1987, at the age of 41. With only 3-4 months of running and a training base of 26 miles per week, he finished the 1987 Equinox Marathon in 4:43:14. Pat says he ran as a "stealth runner": with the wrong clothes, a sockless left foot, and shoes that didn't fit. As he lay in the grass by the finish line, his first thought was "never again". A few minutes later he was thinking "that was kind of neat", and vowed to come back the following year, better prepared (that just goes to prove what I've always said about runners, Tuffy...they are schizo! Yes, Muffy, but he shaved a whopping 1:10:00 off his 1987 time).

After that first Equinox in 1987, he still didn't consider himself a "real runner". But one day, when he was visiting the Borough Mayor's office on business, he noticed "real runner" Bobbi Fyten at her desk. When Pat commented that local runners

must have to quit running in the winter, Bobbi was indignant. "No! That is NOT the way it is! Go get the right clothes, put them on, and GET OUT THE DOOR!" Then she invited him to join her running group, which he did.

Pat was born in Skagway in 1946 and is a 4th generation Alaskan. His great grandfather came to Skagway in 1897 during the Klondike Gold Rush and founded the Golden North Hotel. Klondike Relay participants will recall the spire that makes it the tallest building in Skagway. Pat says he wasn't able to run much while growing up because there really wasn't anywhere to run (the Klondike Highway wasn't built yet). So he spent his time hiking and climbing in the mountains around Skagway, and was given the nickname "mountain goat" by the other kids. Pat found he could outrun every kid in his high school, and he won most of the 4th of July races. He first came to Fairbanks in 1960 for a summer science program for "theoretically smart" kids (as he puts it). He moved here in 1963, lured by the memory of sunshine and 80 degree summer weather. Except for a brief stint in Anchorage ("too crowded with cheechakos") to take surveying classes, he has lived here ever since.

Even though Pat was a late-bloomer, he has already

run 40 marathons, including 7 in sub-3:00 (gee Muffy, you're a late-bloomer... what's keeping you?). The 1990 London Marathon was his biggest marathon, as well as the biggest in the world at that time. The race began in Greenwich, with a start for women, a start for elite men and (to quote Pat) "fast old farts like me", and then a start for everyone else. Pat was shivering in the pouring rain at the start, but after three miles the weather turned nice. He caught up to some men who were running a 6:30 pace and stayed with them for a mile or so. Then he picked up the pace to 6:20-6:25 and passed people continuously for what amounted to a sub-40:00 10K inside the marathon. He paid for that by hitting the wall at Mile 23, grinding down to 9-minute miles to finish in 2:54, which remains his personal best. (Say, Muffy, don't you run 400s at a 6:40 pace? Yup. One. And then I hit the wall.)

Pat claims the L.A. Marathon is his jinx because he could never break 3 hours there. The first year he ran it (1988), he trained hard, even running in the woods in the winter darkness. At the start, he fell in with Dave Hoffman (former Fairbanks runner) for the first 5-7 miles, but found that he wasn't breathing hard. So he picked up the pace and started passing people. The crowds were superb, and be-

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Running Briefs is published bi-monthly. Unlike two former editors, who write entertaining columns for real newspapers, Tracey writes marginal material for obscure scientific journals. So, please, if you have any exciting news that you would like to see here, please write it up and send it to Tracey at 1716 Reed Circle, Fairbanks AK 99709, or email at fmtam@uaf.edu.

Advertising

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Pat Kalen: No pain, no gain...*(Continued from page 1)*

gan commenting on his shirt, which had "Fairbanks, Alaska" written on the front and back. It generated a cheering wave as he passed by. He finished in 3:17:15, but still feels that he never caught up to where he should have finished. He learned that he should start a race at the pace he should run it. (Yes, Muffy, but maybe you should consider starting just a *little* faster...)

Pat admits that he owes some of his faster finishes to women (we aren't making this up!) because he found himself finishing at the same time as the women winners. In the 1990 Equinox, he caught up with Nancy Felix, passed her with a couple miles to go, and won the Men's 40-49 division. Nancy set a new women's record of 3:24. In the 1993 Seattle Marathon, a woman passed him and he decided to catch her. He almost lost her a couple of times at water stops, but kept working hard to catch up. It took everything Pat had, but he passed her near the end. He kept motioning over his shoulder for her to stay with him, and she ended up winning the women's race only 40 seconds behind Pat. Afterward, he gave her a big hug for inspiring him to a 2:57:40 finish. The next year, in the Seattle Marathon, two fast women leaders pulled him to a 2:58:03 finish, beating him in the chute. Pat lost to Mi-

chelle Mitchell by 1 second in the Santa Claus Half-Marathon, and has teamed with her to win the mixed division of the Two Way Torture Test.

It doesn't take too long to see that Pat is addicted to running. But, that is considerably better than an addiction to smoking. Pat has been smoking from childhood and has found it "sort of hard to stay quit". Even after trying hypnosis, he still battles with the problem but finds a good fast run can give him that famed "Runner's High". (Well, I'm sorry, Muff. I just don't know if 18-minute miles will get you there...) Pat also likes the feeling of being strong and in good health that comes with running. Because of his busy work schedule as a surveyor and frequent travels, Pat often has to run very early in the morning. When traveling he tries to run outside through the streets of the cities he visits, finding shops and places to return to later. At the same time, he enjoys watching the city wake up and "the night people disappear into the morning". If stuck inside the Anchorage Hilton, he just sets the treadmill at a faster pace than he thinks he can run (and then hangs on for dear life). Pat sees running as a mental game in which you make your body do what it can't do alone. (Tuffy, I'm *sure* he meant mental "case".)

The worst things about running for Pat are bad condi-

tions (high wind, rain, or traffic), or when he is too weak to run. He also doesn't like "junk" miles but claims to run a lot of them anyway. Pat defines a "junk mile" as anything "where you just run and go slow". (Well Muffy, I guess that makes you a running junky, eh?) Pat says he isn't very smart about running because he has never had time for any coaching. But he has a few words of wisdom: build your strength and remember to stretch (to which he adds "do as I say, not as I did"). Pat says his family "tolerates" his running. Nevertheless, his wife Susan is always there to support him and cheer for him.

Pat's running career has been somewhat hampered by hip problems caused by a leg-length discrepancy (one leg was 1 1/4" longer than the other). His Marathon Personal Worst (4:38) occurred at the 2001 Tucson Marathon, when both hip joints gave out. When asked why he didn't just quit the race, he said he figured it would take longer to get help if he quit by the side of the road than it would if he just limped to the end. Pat's high pain threshold, along with the knowledge that his hip joints were already as damaged as they were going to get, made it possible for him to finish. He claims it actually hurt less than walking. (Imagine that... No, Tuffy, every race *isn't* my Personal Worst.)

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After returning from Tucson, Pat made arrangements to have both hips replaced. Normally, doctors will not replace both hips at the same time because one good hip is needed to help drag the repaired hip around until it heals. However, Pat was determined to run the 2002 Tucson Marathon and beat his Personal Worst. When asked why he didn't just wait and run the 2003 race, he said he just couldn't have a year without a marathon. Since 1987, Pat has run at least one marathon every year, resulting in a streak that he refuses to break. Pat is a "streak" runner, which he considers a form of discipline that gets him out the door even when it doesn't seem like a practical idea, or even when, maybe, the streak should end. But, Pat being Pat, he registered for the 2002 Tucson Marathon on March 5th, 2002, and

then went to see his doctor. He somehow convinced the doctor to do both hip replacements within a week of each other by telling him that he had just registered for Tucson and now he *had* to run it. (Tuffy, don't you go to the doctor for an excuse *not* to run?)

In March 2002, he had both hips replaced within a week. It didn't take him long to understand why doctors don't replace two hips at a time. (Gee, Muffy, you have trouble getting out of bed even *with* your hips intact...) Pat has been outfitted with state-of-the-art hips with an estimated lifespan of 50 years. Even if he continues to run at his frenetic pace, he won't need new ones until he's 106. (That's about your age, isn't it Muffy?) Pat is finding that recovery has been more painful and taken longer than he expected, but his doctor considers him to be the Hip Replacement Poster Child.

When he was unable to walk, he went on 40-60 mile bike rides around Chena Ridge, Fox, and Farmer's Loop Ridge. By June he was able to run his first mile, which he admits took a frustrating 22 minutes. (So Tuff, what *is* his point?) Pat did make it to Tucson last December, finishing in 4:23. Unfortunately, he forgot his timing chip on the bed back at the hotel, so you won't find his time recorded anywhere.

Pat just completed his first marathon of 2003, and the 40th of his running career. He finished the Yakima River Canyon Marathon on April 5th, in 3:50:33, improving his Tucson time by 33 minutes in just four months. His wife Susan said that Pat is pretty pleased with his new hips, even though they cause a bit of a problem at the airport now. Every time Pat goes through the security checkpoints, he beeps. ☺

Local Runners Featured in Running Times

Fairbanks runners Kevin Brinegar, Bill McDonnell, Wayde Leder, Andy Holland and Mike Kramer were featured in the article "Fairbanks Foursome, Plus One" in April's Running Times Magazine.

The article, written by Fairbanks runner Matias Saari, details the runners' success at

the Boston Marathon (where all have run faster than 2 hours, 45 minutes and Brinegar was 89th overall in 2002) and expounds on the challenges of training through Fairbanks' winter months. The article concludes with a section about the larger Fairbanks running community in general. Photography is by Nora Gruner and

the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.

For those who may be interested, a handful of copies of the magazine are circulating in Fairbanks, so ask around! In addition, a text version of the article may be readable at <http://www.runningtimes.com> in the future.

2003 RCN Awards Social: Mark Your Calendars!

The RCN Executive Council recently chose the new Birch Hill Nordic Ski facility to be the venue for the 2003 Williams Cup Awards and RCN Social. The social will be held October 18, 2003, starting at 6pm, and will be in the popular potluck format. Please note that this is a change from the 2003 Events Calendar, which lists the University Community Presbyterian Church as the location.

Running Away from Home

L.A. Marathon, Los Angeles, CA, 3/2/03

Bob Hildebrandt 6:17:38

Valley of the Sun Marathon, Phoenix, AZ, 3/9/2003

Jim Madonna 3:32:47

Eisenhower Marathon, Abilene, KS, 3/29/2003

Bob Hildebrandt 5:55:53

Yakima River Canyon

Marathon, Yakima, WA, 4/5/2003

Pat Kalen 3:50:33

Bob Hildebrandt 6:01:23

Boston Marathon, Boston, MA, 4/21/2003

Kevin Brinegar 2:39:22

Wayde Leder 2:54:47

Andy Holland 3:06:49

Steve Bainbridge 3:45:05

Harvey Wing 4:31:54

HELP WANTED

Once again, it's time for the annual clean-up and repair of the RCN Equipment Trailer. The event will take place on Sunday, May 11th at 3:00pm, at the Toy Quest. RCN Equipment Managers, Kat Betters and Caroline Brown, are specifically looking for helpers who are "handy" and can fix things. Pizza and refreshing beverages will be provided, and Brown has agreed to lead a post-work party yoga session. Kat promises to reduce the number of reps at the May 13th track workout for any handy guy who helps out. So far, no promises have been made by women's track coach, Bruce Miller.

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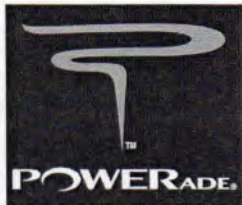
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Midnight Sun Run Provides Grants to Young American Award Recipients

This year the Midnight Sun Run Board of Directors elected to award \$1000 grants to five local students for the purpose of furthering their education. The grants were awarded to the five recipients of the Young American Award, given by the Midnight Sun Council of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). The Midnight Sun Council is currently in charge of directing the Midnight Sun Run, and the grants were funded using proceeds from the Midnight

Sun Run.

This year's recipients were Connor Cole of Fairbanks, Amy Vander Zwagg of Delta, Chinye ("Nonye") Chukwu of Fairbanks, Bjorn Olson of Tok, and Zack Via of Fairbanks. Via was selected to compete for one of five National Young American Awards to be presented at the BSA National Council Annual Meeting in May in Washington, D.C. Each of the five National Young American Award

recipients are given a \$5000 unrestricted grant.

Applications are distributed at the beginning of the school year to local high school counseling offices and the UAF Financial Aid office. They can also be obtained at any time by contacting Tasmine Bennett at 452-1976 or tabennet@bsamail.org. Applications are due by November 1st of each year. To be eligible, applicants must be 15-26 years old.