

Running Briefs  
c/o Tracey Martinson  
1716 Reed Circle,  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Volume X, Issue V  
10 Years of RCN  
1993-2003

October 2003

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### The 2003 Williams Cup Series

The logo for Williams, featuring the word "Williams" in a bold, italicized, sans-serif font. Above the text is a stylized swoosh or arc that starts under the 'W' and ends under the 's'.

Proud supporters of  
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Thank you, Williams!

# Running Briefs

## Race strategy annihilated by "The Terminator"

By Monte Jordan

My personal strategy for placing in the top three of my age group is to enter a little-known or 1st time "annual" race. Since my race pace is my biggest handicap, I need all the help I can get. The smaller the number of participants, the better my odds are. Now some of you probably remember the old Annihilator race held in Nenana, which unfortunately hasn't been run in many years (see below). I had always enjoyed the "Tuff Enuf" challenge of The Annihilator, and ran that 10K several times during my racing "heyday." Then this summer Christine and Gary Shields resurrected The Annihilator under the new name of "The Terminator". When I heard that they were planning 5-year age groups, visions of revisiting past racing glories began jogging through my imagination. I could hardly sleep!

Karen and Sid Swerman organized the first Annihilator, ca. 1987. Although billed as a 10K, the course that first year was closer to 4 miles (and a missed chance for my 10K PR). The following year, Steve Bainbridge (who was then serving time in Nenana as the City Manager) offered to ensure 10K authenticity by enlisting the aid of his surveyor friend Pat Kalen. They routed most of the course through the woods (to experience the joy of yearly trail clearing) and established the infamous route conditions that brought increasing numbers of adventurous runners to meet the challenge until the final running of the event in

about 1992.

The race began at the Historic Nenana train depot. The actual start time was never certain in that it depended on when the Southbound train from Fairbanks crossed the railroad bridge that afternoon. This was usually somewhere between 4 and 5 p.m. As soon as the caboose headed towards Anchorage, Jack Coghill would point his shotgun skyward and pull the trigger. The shotgun blast propelled an eager field of rowdy runners across the train bridge, and up a mostly perpendicular trail to the top of the mountain. This was followed by a short rappel down to a gravel road that led downhill before turning back into the woods onto a rooted trail. After "tripping lightly" (or heavily, as the case was more likely to be) through the leaves and trees it was a relief to switch to the grassy uphill power line route. This ended rather abruptly at the edge of the shale-covered road bank of the Parks Highway leading back to Nenana. Runners who survived the sliding and stumbling rocky ride to the shoulder of the road trotted along the highway to the bridge. Once across the bridge, runners faced the challenge of scaling the guardrail and negotiating more gravel before beginning the final sprint (in rock-filled Nikes) back to the finish at the train depot. Not surprisingly, the route had almost as many liabilities as obstacles and finally succumbed to the Alaska Railroad's fears about legal responsibility.

Christine and Gary Shields had been trying for 3 or 4 years to resurrect this once popular 10K without success. This summer the Native Council enlisted their help with the hope of bringing more visitors to the annual Nenana street fair. The Shields hosted a well-organized 5.5-mile run on a new, less risky route. Unfortunately, the short notice along with competing sports activities in Fairbanks contributed to a small turnout. Nevertheless, on August 17, 2003, eleven hardy Terminator entrants listened intently as Christine Shields gave race instructions that were both clear and humorous. The course is 3 miles up followed by 2.5 miles down, and should be "tuff enuf" for anyone that is looking for a challenging trail run. As I ran up the winding wooded trail my hamstrings screamed "d  ja vu" at the intersection where the Terminator rejoined the Annihilator's perpendicular route to the top. There was no race t-shirt this time, but the first water stop included a new washcloth (wet or dry, your preference), a spritzing of mosquito repellent, and a helping of jelly beans for that much needed energy lift. Upon reaching the top of the hill, a friendly volunteer offered to let me jettison my recently acquired souvenir but I declined and kept the yellow cloth tightly in my grasp, securely wrapped around my jellybeans. My uphill pace included at least one 13-minute mile, while I managed one or more 8-minute miles on the

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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 [fntam@uaf.edu](mailto:fntam@uaf.edu).

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**Terminator**

(Continued from page 1)

downhill. (Don't snicker--your training pace may become your race pace sooner than you think!)

And now, you're probably wondering about my race strategy. Well, only three of the "Terminators" were women. That's great, except that they were ALL in my age group. One was a walker and the other

was Lorey Yates, the Assistant Cross Country Coach at Nenana High School. Coach Yates knew the trail like the back of her hands (plus, she had helped clear the trail the previous week). Her red shirt beckoned and teased as I tried in vain to catch her throughout the race. She won handily and all my clever plans to nab 1<sup>st</sup> place were dashed to pieces. But this disappointment held the victory of my first-ever

ribbon for second woman overall. Who needs age-group awards anyway?

The Shields and their volunteers are great hosts. If you are looking for a fun run with a true Alaska flavor, the challenge of the Terminator awaits you next August in Nenana. And I'll be in an older age group than the coach, so all you 60-something ladies just stay home please!

**RCN calendar meeting and elections slated for October 22**

The annual RCN calendar meeting and board elections will take place at 6:30 p.m. on October 22 at Keith Pollock's home (834 Goldfinch). The slate of candidates is: Steve Bainbridge, President; Susan Kramer, Secretary; Bev Weis, Treasurer; Jane Lanford, Membership Coordinator; Gary Pohl, Calendar Liaison; Jennifer Mahlen, Insurance/Williams Cup Liaison; Keith Pollock, Member-At-Large; Mara Bacsujlaky, Member-At-Large; Larry Hallstrom, Member-At-Large; Tracey Martinson, Media Liaison. Nominations will also be taken from the floor for any of these positions, but the nominee must be present to win. We're sorry, but we can't allow you to nominate your running buddy for RCN President as payback for sleeping in on the morning of that last 20-miler. On the other hand, we can probably help you find a race in need of a director... heck, we could even CREATE a race just for your buddy.

Aside from elections, the real business of the meeting is to set the event calendar for 2004. Gary Pohl is already busy collating information and will have a draft calendar ready for us to peruse, modify if necessary, and approve. So, if you have any concerns regarding the scheduling of training runs and races, or would like to contribute your two cents' worth, show up at Keith's on October 22. For those of you who like to Darn Fahrenheit but want to go to the meeting, maybe we can change our venue and run from Ballaine Lake to Keith's, starting at about 5:30 p.m. For other Fahrenheit-Be-Darners who don't want to go to the meeting, I'll find someone to be in charge of cookies and hot drinks that night—you won't be left out in the cold (if it ever comes)!

**Running safely this winter... from our President**

By Steve Bainbridge

Now that summer is drawing to a close and the days are getting shorter (although not that much colder for the moment), I would like to mention a few things that we should all keep in mind as we dig out the winter running clothes. First, be seen. Wear a reflective vest or some other reflective garment, and run facing traffic. Second, when vehicles ap-

proach, run single file on the edge of the road. It is not always easy for drivers to swing out in the other lane to go around you. And finally, take the time to find those Ice Joggers or put a few strategically placed screws in the soles of your shoes. These will ensure that you have traction on the icy roads that are bound to be part of our lives in the months ahead. Think safety... and keep on running!



Runners head up Miller Hill during the George Bloom Midday Sun Fun Run on Dec. 14, 2002.

Photo by Jo Cowee

## RCN social at Birch Hill Cross-Country Ski Center

The RCN social and Williams Cup awards ceremony will be held Saturday October 18, 2003 at the Birch Hill Cross-Country Ski Center, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Please note that this is not the location given on the RCN calendar (it says University Community Presbyterian Church).

The social is a potluck, so bring a dish according to your last name (A-J: desert/bread; K-R: main dish; S-Z: salads). Drinks will be provided, but you are welcome to bring your own beverage of choice as long as you don't get too rowdy.

The social is a time to

hang out with your running friends, eat some tasty food, and pat each other on the back for another good season.

And for those among us who had a REALLY good season, it's time to collect that coveted "jacket with your name on it", identifying you as one of the top five runners of your gender for 2003. In addition, medals are given to the top three runners in each age group, and special t-shirts are bestowed upon those hardy souls who completed all seven races in the series. So if you know somebody who kicked your butt in every race and is going to get a medal, encourage

them to come to the awards ceremony.

The social is also the place where the recipients of the three RCN special awards are announced. The three awards, Most Inspirational, Volunteer of the Year, and Race Director of the Year, were established in 1999. RCN members were asked to submit their nominations for these awards to Bev Weis by September 30th. Bev manages to keep the recipients top-secret until the social.

And, if there is enough snow on the ground for skiing, bring your skis for a little pre- or post-social cross-training. See you there!

## Get your costumes out for the Halloween Run



It's that time of year again... the time when you really ought to try to come up with a cool costume to wear for the Halloween Run. And yes, I did put "wear costume" and "run" in the same sentence. If I can run 10 miles along Goldhill Rd. to the Parks Highway and back wearing a bunch of purple balloons in an effort to be "grapes", then all you potential witches and goblins and devils out there can certainly give it a try. If anything, you either get a lot of friendly waves and

honks, or a lot of double-takes and downright staring. Either way it's fun, and hey, at least the drivers are paying attention to you. They gave me a wide berth, let me tell you.

Past costumes have included a pair of Grim Reapers, a rectal thermometer, a bride and groom, and an assortment of cats, cows, jailbirds, and men disguised as ladies. Only some of these contestants actually RAN in their costumes, but don't let that stop you from participating to the full extent allowed by the law

and RCN's insurance carrier.

Race Director Jane LeBlond would like to encourage kids to come out and do the 2-mile fun run. Rumor has it she is busy gathering prizes and that runners in costume are eligible for a random drawing. The run is slated for Saturday, October 25th at UAF Patty Center. It's free and dog-friendly. And it even starts at noon, so you have plenty of time to linger over your morning coffee AND get into your costume.



## New Year's Eve Run

Finish off 2003 the right way: with a run! Paul Reynolds is hosting the 2003 New Year's Eve run on Wednesday, December 31. The run begins at The Diner, 244 Illinois St. at 11 p.m. The run will be a 3 mile out-and-back, running up 1st Ave. For more information, contact Paul Reynolds at 452-1142. Please note, the run will not be held if the temperature is -20 °F or colder.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Fahrenheit-Be-Darned runs will feature both long and short options! "Long" routes cover 6-8 miles, and "short" routes cover 3-5 miles. So now you have no excuse. Come on out and run, Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. from UAF Patty Center. Cookies and hot drinks provided after the run. Runs started October 1st and continue through March. Beginners and runners new to the area are especially welcome.

### Running Away from Home

#### Helsinki City Marathon,

Helsinki, Finland,

August 2, 2003

Bill McDonnell 2:55:16

Heini McDonnell 4:57:21

#### Detroit Free Press

#### International Marathon,

Detroit, Michigan

October 5, 2003

Dietrich Hildebrandt 3:59:29

Bob Hildebrandt 5:39:20

## Top 10 things heard during the Equinox Marathon

10. I have to run up THAT? (Mile 0)
9. I have to run DOWN that? (Mile 17.2, a.k.a. The Chute)
8. Look! There's Denali (Mile 13.4)
7. Yeah, whatever, man... (response from someone at Mile 16 to someone at Mile 13.4)
6. Where did all these roots come from? (Mile 5-5.5)
5. \$%#@& (Mile 17.4, or ~3/4 of the way down the Chute)
4. Ahhh.... (Mile 17.5, or the "slingshot" turn onto the Alder Trail at the bottom of the Chute)
3. Would someone please remind me why I am doing this? (repeated often between Miles 19-24)
2. Why do we have to go back UP into the ski trails? What's wrong with taking Sheep Creek Road? (Mile 24.8)
1. Are we there yet? (Mile 12)

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TIME

70



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## T-shirt swap-and-sell

Do you have race shirts from the 60's, 70's, 80's, or even the 90's? How many years does your collection of shirts from the Chena River Run, Midnight Sun Run, Water Run, Santa Claus Half-Marathon, Law Days, and/or Equinox Marathon cover? Do *you* have them all? Ya gotta keep up with the Jones', you know.

Maybe you've got some that have been through the wash so many times they don't leave any lint in the dryer screen (in fact, you suspect lint from other clothes migrates to these shirts, they're that threadbare). Or perhaps a non-running partner used your first Equinox Marathon shirt to wash the car, or lined the dog's house with your favorite Chena

River Run shirt because they felt sorry for the dog. Would you like a chance to fill in that missing piece of history?

On the other hand, maybe you've had enough. You're the kind who has started saying "Uh, no thanks" to the folks handing out shirts at bib pickups (well, unless it's a shirt from a *new* race or one that is of a particularly novel color or design). Or maybe you rather like t-shirts but your family is demanding that the closet crammed with 15 years of accumulated running shirts (plus the assorted worn-out running shoes) be restored to its former empty glory. And while you suspect that they just want to fill it with their own stuff, the pressure is on for you to get

your ~~junk~~ shirts out of there.

Never fear—a solution is here. We would like to propose a Race Shirt Swap-and-Sell. For those of you looking to complete or restore your prized collection, it's your chance to find just what you need to attain Race T-shirt Nirvana. For those of you threatened with eviction, it's an easy way to do the right thing (which might be to make room for the next generation of race t-shirts, but what your family doesn't know won't hurt them). Proceeds, if any, would go to RCN to help support fun runs.

If you are even remotely interested, please email Tracey at [ftntam@uaf.edu](mailto:ftntam@uaf.edu) or Monte at [mjresource@gci.net](mailto:mjresource@gci.net).