

WHAT ON EARTH IS THE HAWLEY KILN???

The kiln was built in 1870 by a man named Albert Dyer. Mr. Dyer was building the kiln for a man named William O. Bassett, who in 1870 was Hawley's most successful farmer. I don't think at the time that Mr. Dyer thought he was building the most historical site in the Hawley State Forest. The kiln is also the oldest known flagstone charcoal kiln in New England.

The question is "Why was it called the Charcoal Kiln?" The word "kiln" is related to the word kitchen and is, in fact, a large heated chamber or oven made of brick or stone. The purpose of a kiln is to bake or dry wood. This process is called charring. What then is charcoal? Written like char-coal, we understand that wood has been charred to resemble coal. We see this in a fireplace when the wood is not completely burned. Charring takes place when air, particularly oxygen necessary for combustion, is excluded.

The kiln has three dimensions that are easy to remember, 25' high, 25' in diameter, and holds 25 cords of wood. Wood was carried in through the lower door and stacked as high as a man could reach. Loading was completed through a second higher door located on an embankment at the back of the kiln. After the fire was lit, iron doors sealed the openings. Burning was controlled by means of draft holes around the base, which were plugged with bricks. Enough oxygen was allowed to keep a low burning fire that would remove the moisture and combustible gases, but not to burn the wood completely. The color of the smoke would indicate if the fire was the right temperature. Yellow smoke meant that the fire was about to burst into flames and needed to be damped down. The fire had to be watched every few hours, day and night, for the two days that it took for the wood to burn.

A tar like substance called creosote, obtained by the distillation of wood tar, blackens the inside walls of the kiln. At the end of two days, the charcoal is so brittle it can easily be broken into small pieces and shoveled out of the kiln. It may then be used in a fireplace, by the blacksmith for his forge or used for smelting or like copper. Charcoal burns with a slow, intense heat so a farmer like Mr. Bassett, who may have had several fireplaces in his house, would like to heat with charcoal instead of wood.

Coal and oil became more available by the end of the century so the life of this kiln as a charcoal producer was a short one, only thirty years. The kiln then became home to pigs and other livestock. In 1957 it was bought by the DEM and was restored to its original condition.

Throughout the years with the help of nature and vandals, the kiln was in desperate need of repair. Funding by the DEM at the urging of the Hawley Historical Commission and the Sons and Daughters of Hawley, work to restore the kiln got underway. Mr. Steve Striebel, a contractor, handled the work. Sonam Lama, a Tibetan stone mason, and Tenzin Norbu, helped with the newly restored kiln in 1993.

Information on the kiln provided by: Tom McCrumm

1999 WMAC SNOWSHOE SERIES AGE GROUP WINNER & RUNNER UP

01 – 19	Naomi LaCasse	Lanseboro, MA	88 pts
	Sarah Pandiscio	Simsbury, CT	46 pts
	Bryan Dragon	Cheshire, MA	48 pts**
	Tristan Syrett	Hampden, MA	22 pts**
20 – 29	Rebecca Taylor	Clinton, NY	44 pts**
	Erin Worsham	Woodstock, CT	42 pts
	Leigh Schmitt	S. Deerfield, MA	147 pts
	Dave Hannon	Johnston, RI	120 pts
30 – 39	Sweep Voll	Pittsfield, MA	107 pts
	Claudine Preite	N Adams, MA	35 pts
	Ken Clark	Somers, CT	161 pts
	Steve Cangemi	Red Hook, NY	129 pts
40 – 49	Beth Herder	Pittsfield, MA	132 pts
	Kathleen Aubin	Manchester, NH	62 pts**
	Jim Campiformio	Ashford, CT	139 pts
	Wayne Stocker	Hampden, MA	124 pts
50 – 59	Laura Clark	Saratoga, NY	71 pts
	Ellen Mach	Adams, MA	3 pts
	Bob Worsham	Woodstock, CT	144 pts
	David Boles	New Paultz, NY	109 pts
60 – 69	Richard Busa	Marlboro, MA	55 pts
	Art Gulliver	Leominster, MA	42 pts

** Participants must have completed two of the three events to be eligible for an award!!

Congratulations to our 1999 Overall Champions: Beth Herder and Kenny Clark !!

When we started organizing snowshoe events a few years ago, it was thought that if we could draw a dozen people to a race then it would be a success. It has been very surprising and rewarding to see so many of you participating this season. Thank You.

The top point producer in each division is the recipient of a pair of CONVERSE Trailrunning shoes. John Foti from Converse was responsible for lining up this opportunity. Our hopes are for a continued relationship with Converse Athletic.

The top female and male finisher at each individual event of the series was awarded a bottle of HammerGel from Hammer Nutrition. Several other bottles were awarded during the raffles. This is the 2nd consecutive year that HammerGel has been involved with our snowshoe series. Thanks to Shaw for providing us with this fine supplement.

Finally, Jeremy Quinn at Sherpa Snowshoe Co again provided us with loaner snowshoes for the entire series. The number of participants over the last two years who had the opportunity to try this activity because of Sherpa's involvement is wonderful.

THE (NOT SO) FRIGID (NOT SO) FIGURE-EIGHT (NOT SO) SNOWSHOE RACE

THE OLD GOAT REPORT'eth - Bummer's the word. Mother Nature was vacationing in Tahiti and forgot to leave snow in Union, CT before she left. [But you can't fight Mother Nature]. Old Man Winter must have died because I haven't seen him years. [At least not in CT]. EW shows up with a boy friend (whom I hope appreciates her). [Damn]. The wonderful figure-8 shaped 5K course I had planned for the snowshoe race was a sheet of ice covered with dead leaves. [#!&@%]. I may be a curmudgeon, but I'm not a sadist. I didn't want any runners to get hurt on the treacherous side hills or their upcoming summer running season might be in jeopardy. By changing the course to a "docile, out-and-back", I would help ensure that no one would get hurt. [SURE].

Organizer Ed started us off on this 5K non-snowshoe'd snowshoe race and 26 runners (most of whom need 5 K just to warm up) charged out of the gates. Finding myself in 4th place after a couple of minutes, I knew something was wrong with this picture. After 1966 feet (...yes, 1966 feet!) at the stream crossing, I saw Dave and Andy cross the stream with Kenny close behind. Kenny went right. Right! Dave and Andy (feeling a bit adventurous... just call them Lewis and Clark, circa. 1804; no, not Kenny Clark, remember, he went right!) went left. Wrong! I stopped and started yelling for the dynamic duo to come back... and felt the breeze of Bob and Wayne and they blew by me. Figuring the wayward wanderers would eventually catch me anyway, I got it back in gear and started up the hill only to be passed by Bruce the Moose, Campy and a myriad of other runners (...It's a real confidence booster to know that a drunk snail could pass you going up a hill...). Got to the turnaround and headed back. I was within about 10 seconds of 3 members of GIGGLE (Girls In Garments Grinding Leg Energy) [...ah !, I've caught Worshamosis!...] at the top of the double hill and was ready for a patented hell-bent-for-leather charge down the hill to pass them, when my whole world was turned upside-down. Let's do the twist like we did last summer was done in spades. This is not good, I thought. With a half-mile to go, I realized I was running on one size "11" and one size "large grapefruit". Finished in a hobble, actually worrying about my time and place [ignorance shows up at the most inopportune times, you know...].

Upon finishing, Timer John immediately went to get some ice to relieve my swelling. Since he is also "recovering" from injuries and thus, like me, also a member of SLOW (Snowshoe'ers Lamenting Over Wounds), he knew from where I came (or hobbled, or fell, etc.) - thanks. Nurse Sweep came over to where I was sitting and bandaged me up - thanks; [Bob'o, don't even go there!]. Everyone came over to see how the ankle was. It's great to know that the bunch of people you do something with for fun - when the fun kinda goes away, and it gets serious - that they'll be there for you. This hasn't happen in too many other activities / sports that I've been involved in. Thanks to all.

A point worthy of mentioning: After only 5 official NETRC snowshoe races (over the past 2 years), there is only 1 person who has finished all of them! Talk about attrition! There's definitely something to be said about consistency, persistence and durability. I would have been the second person to this exclusive club but some damn woods gremlin got me in an ankle hold and wouldn't let go. Hail Konrad!! Koenig Karolczuk rules!!

The Old Goat

1999 FRIGID FIGURE EIGHT 5KM (LACK OF SNOW) SHOE RACE

01. Dave Hannon*	27	22:00	26 pts
02. Ken Clark*	36	22:30	25 pts
03. Andy Illidge	32	24:07	24 pts
04. Bob Worsham*	53	24:40	23 pts
05. B. Marvonek*	45	24:46	22 pts
06. J. Campiformio	49	24:47	21 pts
07. Wayne Stocker	44	24:57	20 pts
08. Dave Fleming	32	26:19	19 pts
09. Naomi LaCasse*	19	26:20	18 pts
10. Sweep Voll*	38	26:24	17 pts
11. Erin Worsham*	21	26:43	16 pts
12. M. Kryzanski	28	26:49	15 pts
13. Karl Molitoris	42	28:36	14 pts
14. Rob Whalen	44	28:49	13 pts
15. Ken Fairman	55	28:56	12 pts
16. Ed Alibozek Jr	59	29:14	11 pts
17. Chris Dunne	39	29:15	10 pts
18. Dave Durand	20	30:45	09 pts
19. Art Gulliver*	60	36:00	08 pts
20. Sarah Pandiscio	08	37:20	07 pts
21. Curt Pandiscio	37	37:21	06 pts
22. Meg Dunne	38	49:05	05 pts
23. Beth Herder*	40	49:07	04 pts
24. Dave LaPiere	31	1:00:00	03 pts
25. Fritz Zingler	68	1:12:30	02 pts
26. K. Karolczuk	46	1:12:31	01 pts

** Denotes age group winner!!*

LOOKING TO EXTEND THE SEASON?

PREVIEW!!

**The MGSR 5km Snowshoe Course
March 14, 1999 10:30 A.M.**

**Greylock Glen Adams, MA
Mount Greylock State Reservation**

Come try the course designed by Paul Hartwig this season, so you'll have a "leg up" on the competition next year...

This is a fun run / walk. If there is a lack of snow, we may have a trail run on the course or change the location entirely. Please contact Paul Hartwig at 413-743-0722 for snow conditions close to the run - or additional information. Optional phone number is Edward Alibozek @ 860-668-7484. There will be hot chocolate and tea available after the run.

SURVIVING AN UPHILL CHALLENGE

They dubbed it the Uphill Snowshoe Challenge 5K and described it as "a 5K loop through moderate and difficult terrain on Mad River Glen's Stark Mt using both on and off trail routes". Piece of cake. Although a senior citizen snowshoe racer, I live and train on the slopes of Ragged Mt in the Lakes Region of NH, so I could handle an uphill event.

Arriving at the ski area, it looked like all the others - parking lot full of SUV's with ski racks and people in funny suits and boots clomping to registration buildings. Snowshoe registration was outdoors and the start was located on the upslope of a ski trail that converged with others at the base area. Warming up, I found many of my friends from the Waitsfield 8K event 2-weeks before had also chosen this race, passing up a major event in Plattsburgh, NY. About 35 entrants lined up at the start, a mix of veteran and novice racers. The snow was hard packed, well groomed skiing snow so I had hopes we would see more like that along the way.

Bang, off we went, many of us walking immediately to take the first steep hill. Then it leveled off onto a narrow, winding, well packed trail with little opportunity to pass. Another quarter mile we broke out onto a closed ski trail headed nowhere but up. still, it did not seem too bad. Using snowshoe poles for the first time, and wearing my old Sherpa racers with triple claws, I felt confident it would be a good day. But the trail grew steeper. Ice began to show through the light cover of snow. Then it struck me the ski area had closed this route to down hill skiers because it was too dangerous to ski! (but OK for snowshoes?).

The trail was twisty, and humpy and bumpy. Soon we found ourselves stopping to study the approach. I could look up ahead and see other racers creeping up the tricky slope. I was wishing for crampons and an ice axe. Maybe the management should rig one of those piton and rope arrangements like they use for the "tourist" climbers on Mt Everest.

Despite the obstacles I made steady progress and was somewhere in the middle of the pack when I reached the turnaround, manned by a sympathetic senior. Stopped for water, shoe adjustments, and a check of my wrist altimeter we had climbed 2450 feet in elevation in 1.5 miles! Off down the slope. How the hell does anyone ski down this? More stops to decide on the route. Younger runners passed me as they managed to dig their claws in, maintain good balance, and pitter patter down the icy slopes at an acceptable pace. These rubbery old legs began to falter.

Suddenly I was on my back hurtling down the slopes for about 40 meters (passed 2 people) before I dragged my shoes and poles to a halt. I lost time and a little pride. Slowly I continued down, finally reaching a moderate slope that would allow some cautious running. Then the winding trail came into view, and soon I was galloping through the finish. Estimated time on the course - 58 minutes!! (I had done 32 on a hilly, groomed 5K course at Stowe several weeks before). Would I attempt it again next year? Yeah, I'll be back - great bragging rights for another year.

Wayne Nicoll

AMBASSADOR FROM HELL

When I tell the average person I'm a runner they usually say, "You guys are nuts - running for hours in all kinds of weather - you guys are nuts." When I tell the average runner I'm a trail runner they usually say, "You guys are nuts - running up mountains, through rivers and in the mud - you guys are nuts." But I wasn't sure what to expect from the Frigid Figure 8 non-snowshoe snowshoe race. Of course, knowing the Breakneck course, I figured that, as a trail race, it would present some tricky footing and, as a speedy 5K, it would be even trickier. But as it turned out, I was my own biggest obstacle in the race.

I had taken the lead as I am sometimes known to when we hit the only major obstacle, a stream crossing. It was well-marked but somehow I mistakenly followed the trail up the stream. I guess I was more concerned with keeping my feet dry than watching the markers, because before I knew it I heard people shouting to come back on course, et cetera et cetera.

Now this kind of shouting is nothing new to me. I've been lost plenty of times in races and have actually led huge herds of people off the race course. I usually view it as a unique quip to the sport I love. But this time I had a lone victim. Poor Andy Illidge has only been here in the U.S. a few short weeks from his homeland in England and unfortunately I was not the best ambassador to welcome him. I basically led him off the course and by the time we returned to the course we had to pass the great majority of runners on this tricky, single track course at a 5K pace. And to top it all off, the minute we got off-track, his shoe lace came untied. Andy said most of the off-road races he had done in England were up grassy hills rather than winding through forest trails so he hadn't had much experience with this type of thing - having to barrel through a whole race of people to make up for my mistake.

I, on the other hand, am quite used to this experience and have developed a sort of bastardized politeness to it. I try to be as polite as possible as I crash and thrash my way back to the front of the race to make up for my own mistake. True to his heritage, Andy had a little trouble being such a pain in the butt to the other racers while I made like John Riggins plowing for a first down.

Well, all's well that ends well and I think judging from our post-race conversation, Andy had a good time and will be a runner to keep an eye on this year out on the trails. He'd already found this wonderful web site to keep him posted on the races and talked to the great majority of folks there at the race to get some information. His eyes lit up like a child's on Christmas morning when we described the Seven Sisters course to him. Gotta like the attitude. Of course, if you see him out there, be extra nice to him and hopefully he won't think the whole country's as mindless as I.

The race itself was a great way to spend a Saturday in February. Kudos to Ed Alibozek and Karl Molitoris for their work in organizing the race despite some fairly high obstacles (no snow, icy trails, cold weather, etc.). Of course, I'm guessing from the size of his swollen ankle, Karl probably rues the day he ever got involved in this thing. But if I were a betting man, I'd bet we'll see Karl with the "Big Shoes" on next weekend out a Hawley. Hope to see you there, too.

Dave Hannon

THE FRIGID FIGURE EIGHT BECOMES SIZZLING FIGURE STRAIGHT

Can you imagine? No snow in Union, Connecticut's Bigelow Hollow State Park on February 13th, 1999. Therefore, the planned 3.1 mile snowshoe race turned into the 3.1 mile winter trail race. The figure eight course planned around the lake's edge was switched to running the Breakneck course out for 1.55 miles, then turn around and come back. Our race director didn't want anyone slipping sideways into the lake on those little sheets of ice.

By starting time the temperature was mild enough that most runners did not need hats or gloves. The last thing I wanted to worry about was cold ears. I vacillated, then started with my hat, but tossed it off after about a quarter of a mile.

I know some might have been disappointed that we had no snow, but it was fine with me that it turned out to be a trail race. It was like three miles of interval speed training in the middle of winter. After about three quarters of a mile out I settled into fourth place behind Dave Hannon, Ken Clark, and Andy Illidge; however, they were not in view as they were too far ahead of me. Kenny runs a lot faster when he doesn't have snowshoes on. This is the second race Dave has won in two weeks in spite of claiming to be out of shape.

On the way back in after turning around I saw that my daughter, Erin, was the first woman. However, she had two other women hot on her heels, or two other hot women on her heels; either statement would be correct. Directly behind Erin was Sweep Voll, and right behind Sweep was Naomi LaCasse (aka "Blondie"). In celebration of Valentine's Day Sweep was sporting a pair of red ruffled thong underwear right out of the mail from Victoria's Secret (over her running pants). After running a mile and a half in them they were riding up so violently that they appeared to be sawing her in half. I was tempted to fall into that line of feminine pulchritude right behind the flapping ruffles, but slapped myself back into the reality of the race.

I had Bruce Marvonek and Wayne Stocker on my tail for the sprint back in. I jumped a log and slightly turned my ankle; I didn't injure it though, as I caught it while it was happening. Shortly after that, on an uphill, both passed me and put about 40 yards between them and me. After the uphill ended and we got to the ridge flat I started slowly gaining on them. I met Beth Herder as she was going out and she told me that I was 6th, and that I'd better get my ass in gear and catch those two guys in front of me. Beth was just having fun while recovering from a foot injury. With Beth's "threats" of encouragement, I kept gaining, and when we hit that downhill that leads to the stream crossing I was able to get right up on their buttocks. After the stream crossing it was an 800 meter sprint for the finish! We all took off.

Marvonek Man passed Stocker and I went with him. He was going pretty fast, and I was beginning to wonder if I could catch him. We hit that last steep but short uphill, and Bruce slightly slowed down on it. I knew if I didn't pass him then I wouldn't be able to on the other side, but I wasn't sure if it would kill me. Then I said "What the heck, go for it! The worst that can happen is that I could die!" I nipped Bruce on the hill, but as we crested

I could hear him right with me. I didn't slow down at all and just kept going for the finish. Little did I know there was another race for the finish going on behind me. Sneaky Jim Campiformio had snuck up behind us all and was making a run on Bruce. He fell only one second short of catching him. I think we four must have had the most exciting finish of the day.

I started walking back into the trail to see how the three lead women were doing. However, it was mostly to see how the ruffles were flapping, and perhaps shout a little encouragement from behind.

I encountered them very quickly. Blondie had taken the lead, with the ruffled one about four seconds back, and Erin about 40 yards behind Sweep. By this time the thongs had ridden up so much that they had actually made Sweep's legs longer, allowing for a longer stride. All three women had chewed up and spit out Karl Molitoris, who had vowed he wasn't letting any wimpy women beat him. It's rumored that one of Naomi's footprints was on the back of Karl's shirt; I think they just pushed him down and all ran over him.

An up and coming presence on the circuit is eight year-old Sarah Pandiscio, who beat her father Curt in a sprint for the finish. Curt is training her for the 2008 olympics. I overheard Sarah say, "Daddy, do I really have to do the Nipmuck marathon?"

After the race I discovered that my car had been decorated with Valentine cards and little chocolate candies with wrappers saying You're Great, Be Mine, and Love First Class. My answers to those little phrases are, respectively, "Yes, I am," "Yes, I will," and "Yes, it is!" Thank you trail running honeys for such a thoughtful gesture for Valentine's Day. I only hope I can live up to your expectations.

Thanks to Eddie Alibozek for another fun event, and to those who helped him out (Karl - course design; John Scalise - timing; Konrad and Fritz - marking and unmarking the course), especially his mom Judy who served up soup, muffins, hot chocolate, and yogurt with a big smile.

Bob the WorSham

1999 WMAC SNOWSHOE SERIES

When we started organizing snowshoe events a few years ago, it was thought that if we could draw a dozen people to a race then it would be a success.

It has been very surprising and rewarding to see so many of you participating this season.

Thank You.

AN ADVENTURE IN FLORIDA WITH TWO TEMPORARILY TRANSPORTED NEW YORKERS

Whenever Steve Mitchell asks what sounds like a serious question, it's time to be suspicious. But he outdid himself one Saturday at our Saratoga Stryders weekly run when he announced, "I'm going to Florida for a snowshoe race, anybody want to come along?" ** (This is not a curse, it's a footnote, look below to find the matching **). After slipping and sliding all morning on the glacier formations that passed for roads, this sounded like a wacky, but solidly good, idea. When he elaborated further and mentioned that he would be going up and back in a day, he began to stretch the outward boundaries of credibility. But this time, he wasn't kidding. He was referring to the four-mile snowshoe race held in Florida, *Massachusetts*.

So once again, Steve has found himself on the cutting edge of change, uniquely positioned in the forefront of a new and exciting sport. Already suffering withdrawal pains from fall trail ultras and nursing a sore hamstring, this sport seemed to fit the bill -- a taxing, low-impact workout away from icy roads and out-of-control cars. Nursing a similar butt pain (Is this a prerequisite?), I was the only one who jumped at the opportunity to possibly get injured in an as yet unknown area of my anatomy. Since neither of us had actually worn snowshoes, let alone raced in them, we thought some preparation was in order. So we spent the next few Saturdays running around the golf course and lifting our feet really high. Occasionally, a few refugees from the icy roads joined us, but not for too long. The only person who didn't think we were totally insane was Steve's loner dog, Luna (when kids grow up they may leave home, but somehow their pets stick around), who was happy to be with anyone running anywhere. And these people were all our friends who supposedly think running is a normal activity!

Florida took a lot longer to reach than we had figured on. While residents of Southern Florida don't have to contend with road slush, we discovered that driving to the northern version would have been easier with both wiper fluid and wipers that served more than a cosmetic purpose. But, hey, this was supposed to be an adventure, right?

Anyway, Steve managed to get in a great upper body workout throwing snowballs at his dirty windshield. But our luck held out. We arrived in time to grab the last two pairs of snowshoes and do our warm-up on the way to the start. Which worked out just fine since I am too much of a novice to have developed any elaborate pre-race rituals.

Since we had no clue what we were supposed to be doing other than, hopefully, going forward, we decided to start at the back of the pack. This was a mistake since half the participants had no clue either. So if we wanted to get to the hot lunch before it was all gone, we'd have to do some passing. Initially, this sounded like a lot more fun than being passed. Wrong again! I soon discovered that passing meant that you had to take a monster step off the trail into knee-deep, ice-crusting snow, then struggle to overtake someone who was running on a semi-cleared trail, and finally take another giant leap back onto the trail. This was not easy. In fact, it was extremely difficult, and several times I found myself sprawled in the snow watching people I had recently overtaken glide past me yet again. I

finally figured out that it was more effective, but definitely not easier, to overtake someone while going uphill on a fairly straight stretch.

Eventually, I got to where I probably belonged, which I figured out by the fact that there were always people ahead of me that I could never seem to catch up with and people behind me that could never seem to catch up with me. Somewhere in all this flopping around, I lost Steve. This surprised me since he is a much faster runner than I am. Later on, I learned that after his snowshoes had come off for the fifth time, he decided to relax and trotted along taking scenic pictures to show fellow Stryders what they had missed.

Once I more or less reached my level of incompetence, I learned quickly. Passing uphill in waist-deep snow had taken its toll. I was forced to (gasp) act like a real trail runner, speed-walking the uphills and working the downhills. But this was OK since I discovered that digging in the backs of my heels gave me enough stability to fly down the trail. And I didn't have to worry about slippery leaves or protruding rocks. I also learned that it is impossible to get lost, unless you count the temporary disorientation that occurs when you fall head-first into rock-hard snow. Unless you're in the lead pack and have to watch out for trail markers, it's OK to relax and look where your feet are going. Sort of like that famous slogan "...and leave the driving to us." Stepping into a body of water, however, is not a good idea. Although wetness is never comfortable, frozen laces and socks are definitely not fun.

After one race, Steve and I have become extremely vocal converts. So watch out! We hope to have a whole van full of Stryders to go with us next time, especially since lacing up your shoes in a nice, warm van sure beats the cold outdoors!

**Footnote: The world's 5K record for snowshoeing is 23:14. It was set by Tom Sobol at the Extreme Heat Snowshoe Race held at the Great Sand Dunes National Monument. This race was run in the desert, on the sand.

Laura Clark

Coming next month...

Mt Goat Snowshoe Festival

1999 Complete Standings

More Race Results

Y2K Ideas

Snowshoeing for Dummies

Blue Mtn

Barnyard Awards 1999

ME, THE SNOW, THE HEMLOCKS, AND OF COURSE THE BLUE SURVEYOR'S RIBBON

On February 20, the WMAC Snowshoe Series concluded with the Hawley Kiln Klassic 7 mile race in Hawley, Massachusetts. With the extraordinarily warm weather since the middle of January, the only times I've gotten to snowshoe is when I've traveled to races. I realize now why I was so excited about South Pond in January. With the snow we had, I was regularly snowshoeing, and was better trained than I had ever been for a snowshoe race. Trained or not, it's great to have the opportunity to be back on snowshoes. While the rest of the region has effectively gone bare, there is a small chunk of Western Massachusetts around the Savoy and Hawley areas that gets and keeps a large amount of snow.

Finding the Hawley Firehouse, where the race started, was for me quite a challenge. I got to the firehouse just as runners were lining up. I parked, put on my snowshoes, and lined up.

After getting to a race late and not warming up, it is especially important to begin the race gently. In a race as long as the Kiln, there is plenty of time to make up for a slow start. So this is what I do, right? Um, not exactly. Whenever I get to a race late, the surging of hormones defeats reason. I go blasting out as if the race will be decided in the first 800 meters or so. Seeing the names of the first few finishers, I don't know what possessed me to think I should be near them at the start.

This first 800 meters is run on snowmobile road. Then the course turns into the woods for some single track running. Leigh Schmidt, Dave Dunham and Dave Hannon are already out of sight, when Adam Weisman and Andy Illidge miss this turn. They realize the mistake, so I don't need to call out to them. I offer them the trail, but they are content to stay behind for a while, possibly thinking I know where I am going. I don't wear my glasses when I run, but this section is slow and challenging. At this speed I usually can see where I need to go.

I look down at my pants. In my pre-race haste, I forgot to remove my outer pants. Even in single digit cold, I don't race in this much clothing. I don't find it too restrictive; the snowshoes already slow me down. I am getting very warm though. It's not just my legs that are overdressed, my fleece top is too warm as well. The temperature has made its way into the mid to upper twenties. This is only the second time I have snowshoe raced in such warm temperatures. I overdressed the other time as well. By now, Andy Illidge has passed me. Andy has recently come to New England from Old England. While I'm dressed for sitting in a deer blind, he's running in shorts. I cringe at the sight of his pinkening legs.

This trail lets out onto another snowmobile road. As we climb up a steep hill, I address my clothing situation. I pull my Sporthill outer pants up over my knees, remove my fleece top, and tie it around my waist. I have been better dressed in both a practical and esthetic sense, but at least I am more comfortable than I had been. While I'm doing all this fiddling around, Adam Weisman passes me, as does Ken Clark, who seems to have gone out at a more sensible pace than I did.

By the top of this hill, Ken and Adam have left me. In the next single-track section, I realized I was alone. I couldn't sense runners in either direction. It was just me, the snow, the

hemlocks, and of course the blue surveyor's ribbon. I wasn't running very hard. It's not that I had forsaken competition, for more spiritual pursuits. I just had no game today. Though the pace is glacial, I'm running as fast as I can. This isn't such a bad thing. It's nice to be out here on the beautiful, snowy trails, even if my leisurely pace is enforced by premature rigor mortis.

There are several stream crossings on the course. Even in this chilly portion of Massachusetts, they are not frozen. Some require all my leaping ability to successfully cross. These hops are made more difficult, because my left foot has gone numb. I'm not concerned about frostbite, funky foot, or anything like that. No doubt I tightened my shoe too tightly as I was racing to the starting line.

Before long, I become aware of runners behind me. I hear what sounds like two sets of snowshoes. When the gap is closed, I see it's only Beth Herder, complete with snowshoes and ski poles. I've never snowshoed with poles. I fear it would be a walking and chewing gum thing with me. We exchanged some pleasant thoughts about the course, as Beth seemed to be enjoying the run mightily. Towards the bottom of a long downhill, she got tangled up in some bushes. By the next uphill was back ahead of me. She left me as if I wasn't moving.

Even with snowshoes, 7-miles is not that long a run, but this is a challenging course. I'm guessing I'm running slower than 10 minutes per mile, and these minutes are not ticking by quite quickly enough. After a while, I become aware of two more runners behind me. I see Bob Worsham's orange hat, followed by Bruce Marvonek. They are closing the gap, but it is an extremely slow process. Some continents drift faster than others. On this return trip, we pass some people who started early, and are walking the course. They all seem so happy, and positive. I feel a little jealous, until I realize there is nothing to prevent me from stopping and walking in with them if I really wanted to. I guess I don't really want to.

Through all the climbs, twists, dips, turns, I finally get back to the snowmobile road where this all began. I realize that if I can muster an early kick, and hold on, the race is over. I have no kick. I stride nicely on this easy portion of trail, but even in the world of snowshoeing, this is no kick. Bruce and Bob have no kick either. We finish comfortably in places eight through ten. Leigh Schmidt won with a time of 57:55, with Dave Dunham just ten seconds behind. That must have been something to see.

By now I've run a variety of snowshoe events, and the Kiln may be the best all around course I've run. The snowmobile sections give the runners an opportunity to spread out, pass and race. The trail sections add challenge and fun to the event.

The race was followed by a cookout, and the wonderful Alibozek hospitality we'll never take for granted. We had a good time exchanging stories, and discussing upcoming races. Andy told us about Fell Running in his native England. We told him about trail running as it's done here in the rocky northeast. Dave Boles told us about a snowshoe race the Mountain Goat bike shop in Williamstown was holding on February 28.

Steven Cangemi

SNOWSHOE HEAVEN AT HAWLEY

On February 20th, 1999, 49 snowshoers converged on the tiny Hawley Fire Dept parking lot in cold Western Massachusetts for the Hawley Kiln Klassic (HKK) seven-mile snowshoe race. Race director "Farmer" Ed Alibozek had obtained a number of pairs of Sherpa racing snowshoes to rent at a nominal fee so that people could learn what this sport is all about. It turns out that winter snowshoeing is a great sport for trailrunners who want something to do in the winter.

The HKK is the third in the trilogy of snowshoe races this season in Massachusetts and Connecticut put on by the Farmer. The first was the South Pond Shuffle, and the second was the Frigid Figure Eight (a "no snow"). HKK, to me, was the best of the three in terms of distance, trail conditions, and beauty of the forest. We have Tom McCrumm to thank for the design of this course. Tom is a mountain biker, and was actually out in the forest riding his bike the day before the race! He ran in the race also, and placed 29th.

I wish I had had more time to just pause and look at the beauty of this forest. The course can be described as "rolling, rolling, rolling." It has plenty of curves (I just love curves!), single-track trail, wider track trail, and some forest road trails. So for some time over an hour you are gently going up and down, up and down, up and down, while lost in the fantasy and ecstasy of the wilderness, and hearing nothing but your own heavy breathing.

I loved the way the field strung out over 7-miles and the fact that there were plenty of opportunities to pass if you had the energy. I also think I started a new pre-race ritual of doing my stretching inside the kiln. The kiln is a structure about 20 feet tall made out of fieldstones and shaped like a big beehive. It has a small entrance door and was a perfect place to get out of the cold to stretch.

We all had to do a "false start" so Steve Roulier, Springfield's channel 22 sportscaster, could get us on video for the evening news. After the real start I began punishing the insides of my ankles by consistently hitting them with the inside edges of my snowshoes. I figured out that I had to run using a gait about six inches further apart than normal to avoid this pain. It was fatiguing and strenuous, but it was only for seven miles.

After about a half mile I found myself pacing behind Beth Herder who was using ski poles; she passed me with a tilt of her head and a perky little smile. Bruce Marvonek was running behind me, and the three of us had placed some distance between the runners behind us. The runners in front of us had left us behind. On the first steep uphill Bruce passed me, and Beth took off and made herself disappear over the other side of the hill. On a long downhill on a wide trail about three miles into the race, Beth had left us in the dust, and Bruce was going so fast that he was about 50 yards ahead of me. The problem was he missed the left turn into the trail clearly marked by an arrow. I made the turn, then called him back before he had gotten all the way to Adams.

Regaining his composure, he quickly passed me again, but I managed to stay with him through the killer of an uphill and through the trails and road back to the first water stop. He stopped for water and I didn't, so I regained the lead from him.

At this point I actually started concentrating on catching the runner in front of me, who turned out to be Steve Cangemi from New York. I'd slowly gain, then he'd slowly pull away. Then I'd slowly gain, and he'd slowly pull away again. At this point I thought Bruce had completely faded and was out of the picture. After about three runs on Cangemi we came out of the curvy trail and hit the open road. Cangemi took off while I began kicking my ankles again. I looked around to discover that the Marvonek man had come back to life and was making a run on me. When he hit the road he had the speed that day and I didn't. The good news was that there was no one close behind us at that point, so the worst I could lose was one position.

So I didn't catch Cangemi and the Marvonek man caught me; this was a two-position turnaround! You two just wait until next year. I'm getting Sherpa Bolt Racers, I'm going to stop kicking my ankles, and I'm going to stop saving racers who go off trail then come back to beat me! (not really) You're welcome Bruce.

While I was coughing, retching, and gagging, Beth, in her perkier voice and smiley face, said, "Let's run back out to meet Sweep." I put on my best Spartan expression and took off with her, wondering if there was anything left of my ankles.

On our way out again we encountered Jim Campiformio, Steve Jensen, David Boles, Wayne Stocker, and Naomi LaCasse, 2nd woman finisher, running strong and swinging her Blondie pony tail back and forth. If Naomi competes on the trail-racing scene this season, she'll be a new force.

Sweep showed up with a big smile and lots of jangly stuff clanking around. It turns out she had gotten thirsty and gone over to Moody Springs for a drink, then came back fast enough to finish 22nd.

Youngest participant was Sarah Pandiscio, daughter of the famous former football tight end, Curt; she is said to be highly competitive at a tender age of 8. The oldest was the famous trail racer Richard Busa, 69. Sarah edged out her father, with both nipping Konrad Karolczuk. I always enjoy encountering Ellen Mach out on these snowshoe courses cheering everyone on and giving them one of her beautiful smiles as they go by.

Some of the after-race happenings included several naked (not completely) men streaking through the parking lot, levitating hot chocolate under the control of the Hawley Kiln poltergeist, Curly Voll serving up great hamburgers and hot dogs, and Donnalee's special "Tiger" chili. No actual recipe exists for this chili, and it cannot be made in any other kitchen in the world. So forget it! You can't make it in your own home! I'm going to Donnalee's house to watch her make it, take notes, then sell the recipe at future sporting events.

I think these snowshoe events are so great that maybe the series can be expanded next year by one or two events, huh, Eddie? In closing I only have one thing to say. The first is, "Show me the way to the next whiskey bar, and don't ask me why." The second is, "I finally ate the chocolate lips."

Chocolate Bob the WorSham

2nd ANNUAL HAWLEY KILN KLASSIC 7 MILE SNOW SHOE RACE**HAWLEY / DUBUQUE STATE FOREST**

01. Leigh Schmitt*	26	57:55	98 pts
02. Dave Dunham*	34	58:05	96 pts
03. Dave Hannon	27	1:02:40	94 pts
04. Andy Illidge	32	1:11:05	92 pts
05. Ken Clark	36	1:11:25	90 pts
06. Adam Weisman	35	1:13:00	88 pts
07. Beth Herder*	40	1:14:00	86 pts
08. Steve Cangemi	37	1:16:55	84 pts
09. B. Marvonek*	45	1:17:10	82 pts
10. Bob Worsham*	53	1:17:35	80 pts
11. J. Campiformio	49	1:19:05	78 pts
12. Steve Jensen	37	1:19:47	76 pts
13. David Boles	52	1:21:08	74 pts
14. Wayne Stocker	44	1:21:30	72 pts
15. Naomi LaCasse*	19	1:22:15	70 pts
16. Jim Preite	35	1:24:40	68 pts
17. Ken Gulliver	34	1:25:05	66 pts
18. Steve Roulier	34	1:25:48	64 pts
19. Kathleen Aubin	43	1:28:25	62 pts
20. Doug Fuller	36	1:29:30	60 pts
21. Steve Mitchell	57	1:30:45	58 pts
22. Sweep Voll*	38	1:30:55	56 pts
23. Gotha Swann	49	1:33:40	54 pts
24. Chris Dunne	39	1:34:24	52 pts
25. Tony Manganu	52	1:35:20	50 pts
26. Laura Clark*	51	1:36:00	48 pts
27. Bob Wurtele	55	1:39:10	46 pts
28. Rebecca Taylor*	24	1:40:20	44 pts
29. Tom McCrumm	53	1:40:40	42 pts
30. Jerry Gill	58	1:41:15	40 pts
31. Ken Fairman	55	1:45:05	38 pts
32. Richard Busa*	69	1:47:50	36 pts
33. Art Gulliver	60	1:48:05	34 pts
34. Pat McGrath	34	1:56:40	32 pts
35. Sarah Pandiscio	08	2:09:00	30 pts
36. Curt Pandiscio	38	2:09:02	28 pts
37. K. Karolczuk	46	2:21:11	26 pts
38. Mark Syrett	50	2:22:30	24 pts
39. Tristan Syrett*	14	2:27:05	22 pts
40. Matt Rauch	16	2:27:06	20 pts
41. Claudine Preite	32	2:29:30	18 pts
42. Pam Murphy	45	2:29:30	16 pts
43. Meg Dunne	39	2:36:00	14 pts
44. Poncho Mach	56	2:49:00	12 pts

4 Mile Klassic

45. Mia Dambrosio	35	1:38:00	10 pts
46. Shelly Odowd	29	1:38:00	08 pts
47. Paul Hartwig	42	1:49:00	06 pts
48. Judy Hartwig	43	1:49:00	04 pts
49. Ellen Mach	56	2:20:00	02 pts

Denotes Age Group Winner!!*HAWLEY, MA****FEBRUARY 20, 1999**

H.K.K. RACE DIRECTOR REPORT - I don't believe we could have had a better day or location for a snowshoe race than February 20th, 1999 at Dubuque State Forest in Hawley, Massachusetts. Despite no apparent snow anywhere in southern New England and hard steady rain all day on Thursday prior to the Saturday event, it managed to snow for the 2nd annual Hawley Kiln Klassic. An additional 4"- 6" of fresh cover was added to a firm hard packed base of a good foot and a half late Thursday. While a few of us realize that this area annually holds snow from early December to mid April, I imagine that there were more than a few doubters judging by the number of phone calls in the days prior to the event. When we organized the 1999 snowshoe series, we felt as though the Connecticut event would be a 50/50 possibility, but we were fairly sure that South Pond and the Kiln would be fine. Not only were they fine, but very interesting too! . Steve Roulier was present from TV 22 NBC Springfield to film the event for the evening news, so if there are still any doubters as to snow conditions we have documented proof!

Temperatures were cold but with the sun out it wasn't too bad, and the breeze coming down from the Hawley Bog wasn't stiff enough to blow out our stove fires or anyone's spirit.

Dave Dunham seemed to enjoy the challenge and activity of snowshoeing and vowed to be back next year as well. It is wonderful to hear participants say that they would come back for future events.

Over a dozen participants remarked after the race how much they loved the course. The most extreme case being Dave Boles, who ventured back to Hawley from New Paltz, NY the following day to snowshoe with his lady in the forest. This is a most outstanding complement to the course designer Tom McCrumm.

The help and participation at this event was again fantastic. Greg Cox of the Hawley Fire Department opened up their building for all to change clothes in. Steve Roulier covered the event for TV 22 Springfield, MA. Tom McCrumm took care of the water drops, took down much of the ribbon and signs, and was available for emergency needs. Konrad Karolczuk marked the course the day prior. Donnalee prepared a ton of food and kept the fire burning. Patrick McGrath donated the farm raised beef. Eric Perez designed both of our tee shirts. Beth Herder donated all the warm ups for raffle prizes. Sweep Voll made and donated the stained glass piece won by Sarah Pandiscio in the drawing. Finally "Curly", Beth and Sweeps dad, who helped set everything up, kept us entertained with stories during the wait for finishers and did all the cooking on the grill... you were the true hero of Hawley Kiln '99!!

Finally, Thank you to each and every participant. You make the whole day worth it.

Farmer Ed

IF THE SHOE FITS (ITS PROBABLY NOT ON TIGHT ENOUGH)

I knew I was in for some trouble when I first got the information pack on the Hawley Kiln 7 mile snowshoe race. I went right to my map and looked up Hawley, but I couldn't find Kiln. I thought "boy that must be one small town". Much to my chagrin, the Kiln was a gigantic kiln near the start of the race!

I've always enjoyed trail running, but never done any in the winter. About 4 years ago I won a pair of racing snowshoes at the Cranmore (NH) hill climb. Since that time I had been getting the Snowshoer magazine, but I had yet to toe the line. Going into the race my only experience in snowshoes had been to direct a couple of snowshoe orienteering races (map & compass). This was going to be my first race as a novice in many many years.

The race director was extraordinarily helpful. I e-mailed him for information and he mailed it right out. I e-mailed about snow conditions (and except for calling me a "gulliver") he was very forthcoming about the excellent conditions on the course. I found it hard to believe, as I was running on the dry ground of the Merrimack river trail course, that snow was relatively close by. He also checked out my shoes for me before the race. I was nervous that I'd put them on wrong!

I went out on my own for a bit of a warmup on the roads. Once I got back I scouted the crowd. I wasn't looking for competition, I was curious to find out what others were wearing. The range was amazing! One English bloke raced in shorts, others wore "Polar expedition gear" and boots. I tried to find a middle ground. I went with gaiters (I had learned about the benefit of gaiters from my orienteering), tights, racing flats, poly-pro shirt and a long sleeve t-shirt. A mile more of warmup in snowshoes and I was pretty sure that I was ready.

The 50+ runners gathered at the start where we did a "practice" start for the TV camera (yes, local TV station 22 came to check out the race). I noticed a tall guy with racing shoes, and Dave Hannon (the trail troll). I figured "that's probably the competition". The race featured an initial 2m stretch, followed by a 3m loop, and ended retracing the 2m portion. Off we went in a swirl of snow, it is amazing how much snow you kick up when wearing snowshoes. The person who invents some kind of "butt cover" that'll keep snowshoers dry will make a fortune. I tucked in behind the "big guy" figuring that I'd wait and see what snowshoe racing is all about. Alas it wasn't to be! We made our way off of the snowmobile trail at 3/4m and entered into the real trail portion. The amazingly well marked trail featured sharp turns and was quite narrow. I ran right out of my left shoe!!! I couldn't believe it. I ran back to my shoe, loosened the bindings, put it back on, tightened all the bindings, then took off. In the time it took me to do this Hannon blasted by. I looked back and no one was in sight. Off I went, trying not to make it all up at once. I caught Dave around the 2m mark, MAN 16 minutes for 2m! I wouldn't have thought 8 minute miles could be so aerobic (except maybe mountain racing). Did I mention the race had 1100' of climb/descent? Add that to your oxygen debt.

I hung on behind Dave until we started a long ascent. About halfway up I went by, then it happened again. I threw a shoe. It did give me the opportunity to catch my breath. Dave ambled on without me. I tightened up as best I could and took off in (cold or hot) pursuit. As I closed the gap off came the shoe again. I tightened until it hurt and tried to make up some ground.

I found snowshoeing, except for the stops, to be excellent. The trail was incredible, lots of twists and turns, lots of short steep climbs and fast descents. I also found that I'm pretty good at downhill in the snow. I'm notorious for being one of the worst downhill TRAIL runners around. I have no fear of a twisted ankle with snow cushioning my every footfall. I lost the shoe a third time. I also stopped a couple of times to quickly tighten the bindings. I figured that a couple of seconds spent tightening would pay off by not losing a shoe.

Around 3.5 miles I caught and passed Dave on a long downhill. Running alone and unable to see the leader I settled into a rhythm. I realized with delight that I had forgotten that I had snowshoes on. It just seemed natural just running along. All of a sudden around 4.5 miles I caught sight of Leigh Schmitt. The race was on! I was slowly gaining ground on him. At 5 miles I was within a couple of seconds. I stopped for the final time to tighten up. I was feeling pretty confident that I could make up whatever distance he gained. It seemed like a smart move at the time, I figured a lost shoe in the last 2m would cost me the race.

The course really twists and turns from 5 to 6. I'd be looking ahead and not see anyone, then catch a glimpse of Leigh heading down the path almost directly to my LEFT! We hit the final stretch on the snowmobile trail and started kicking. I had closed it back up, but Leigh turned on his kick and looked very strong finishing ten seconds up. Later while chatting I realized he had run an excellent time last year at 7 Sisters (a brutal trail race).

I went out to warm down and cheer on the other finishers. On my way back I chatted a bit with the Ladies champ. She was moving very fast, and using ski poles! I couldn't imagine doing that, my arms just are not built for strength (picture T-rex). After warming down I joined in the excellent post race barbeque. A very nice setup. I had almost forgotten how nice the trail racing scene can be, much more relaxed and enjoyable. I'd highly recommend the race to anyone who wants to try something a little different. The RD rents out snowshoes at a nominal cost so lack of shoes is no excuse.

Dave Dunham

Congratulations to our 1999 Overall Champions:

Beth Herder

and

Kenny Clark

THE FIXTURES CALENDAR

For those of you who have not met me at one of the last 2 snowshoe races, I moved over to the US from England about a month ago to work in Windsor, CT. One of the most important things for me before I decided whether to take the job was to find out whether there was good trail running in the area, so I checked out the fixtures calendar on the New England Trail Runner web site. It looked like there were going to be lots of good races, but the snowshoe series particularly intrigued me. I had never seen a pair of snowshoes in real life, but had seen people using the old type shoes on TV. I couldn't imagine how anyone could attempt to run with two huge tennis rackets strapped to their feet. There were clearly as many madmen (and women) over here as there are on the English fell running scene. This was very reassuring. I decided to take the job.

As soon as I got here I contacted Ed Alibozek and got details of the upcoming races. The Bigelow Hollow race sounded like the perfect introduction to snowshoeing. 5K was an ideal distance, especially considering my training had been restricted to short sessions on the hotel treadmill since arriving in the country. I was both disappointed and relieved when I found out that due to the mild weather, it would be a trail rather than a snowshoe race. Making a fool of myself by attempting to run in snowshoes could wait for another week.

My New England trail running career didn't get off to the most auspicious of starts though. I set off in the front group with Dave Hannon and Ken Clark, but after only half a mile, just after crossing the stream, decided to turn left instead of right. By the time Dave and I had been called back, we had lost several places. To add to my annoyance, I noticed that my shoelace was undone.

The next few miles were spent trying to frantically pull back some of the lost places on the narrow track (apologies if I pushed anyone while I was trying to get past) and to my surprise I was back to third place at the halfway point. Dave and Ken had a big lead by this point though and the lack of training was beginning to tell on the back half, so I was happy to hang on to third at the finish. I really enjoyed my first trail race. The terrain is very different from the English "fells" which have a lot more open countryside than forest tracks, but I think it is equally as challenging.

The weather forecast for the Hawley race the next weekend sounded much more promising. Ed was sending reports of perfect conditions with 3-4 inches of fresh snow and an 18 inch base of fairly packed snow in the woods. It was hard to believe, considering the mild weather in Connecticut. Even on the drive up, there was no snow until we got close to the start. When we arrived though, it became obvious that Hawley had its own micro climate. The temperature dropped several degrees and there was a good covering of snow.

Before the race, I tried the snowshoes on. They were a lot thinner and lighter than I had imagined and were even reasonably easy to run in. As ever, the big dilemma before the race was what to wear. It was cold at the start, but you soon get warm when you start running. I decided to be brave and go for the shorts, thermal top and T shirt. When I looked around at the start and saw what everyone else was wearing, I

wondered if I had made a big mistake, but it was too late to change now.

Channel 22 filmed the start. It was great to get on TV after only 4 weeks in the country, even if it was only for a fraction of a second. It was more than I had managed in 31 years in England.

I set off at a reasonable pace, but I was already noticing the extra effort needed to lift the weight of the snowshoes. The 3 leaders quickly opened up a big gap, and I settled into fifth place. After about half a mile, we turned off the main trail and started picking our way through the trees on a narrow track. This was harder work than the main trail, but much more interesting. You had to pay attention though, as I found to my cost, taking my one and only tumble after catching the front of the snowshoe on some ice. At least it was a soft landing.

When the track widened a bit, I managed to get through into fourth place, just before the first major climb. I was beginning to get the hang of this, but was finding it difficult to run with my legs far enough apart so that I didn't catch the snowshoe on the side of the other leg. The insides of my calves were already cut to pieces. Maybe that was why no-one else was wearing shorts.

After the climb, there was a flat section, followed by a long downhill. This was great fun. The cleats on the bottoms of the snowshoe really dug into the snow, and you could build up a lot of speed. Towards the bottom of the descent though, I noticed that I wasn't getting as good a grip on one foot. When I looked round, I realized that the snowshoe had come off about 20 meters back. By the time I had retrieved it and put it on again, the 2 runners behind had caught me up.

I was starting to get tired now and had to walk for a bit. The flat sections seemed like you were running uphill and the second climb was tough. I was relieved when I finally got back to the trail we had run out on. Leigh Schmitt passed me coming the other way and told me it was all downhill from here. He had finished over 10 minutes ago and was just going for a cool down run. It was good to see the finish and I managed to hold off Ken Clark by 20 seconds for 4th place.

As at Bigelow Hollow, the course was excellently marked (even though I still nearly managed to go the wrong way) and there was a huge spread of food. Thank you to everyone involved.

Finding friendly people to go trail running with has definitely helped me to settle into the area. And it's a great way of seeing some of the more beautiful parts of New England. I'm looking forward to the next race.

Andy Illidge

THREE ROUNDS WITH BETH

On Saturday, January 23rd of this year Scott Bradley, Sweep Voll and I were snowshoeing Mt. Greylock in preparation for the Moby Dick Marathon in a week. During the week we had a warm/rainy spell that melted a lot of the snow on the access road thus not much snow cover was left on the first couple miles. What was left had hardened and turned into ice over night when the temperatures went below freezing. Since the snowshoes have a claw on the bottom of the shoe it did not have any snow to dig into. We were walking/running on top of a **very hard** surface. CLOMP, CLOMP, POUND, POUND, SHOCK, SHOCK!

From Jones' Nose to the access road coming in from New Ashford (Ashford and the spring) it was a ¼ inch sheet of ice. Again, we ran that section like we had platform shoes on because the claw had nothing to sink into. CLOMP, CLOMP, POUND, POUND, SHOCK, SHOCK!

The way down turned into a nightmare for me. The constant shock through my right foot/ankle had produced such a pain on the outside of my foot; I was fighting back the tears! BUT being the "tough-guy" and competitive person I am, I did not want to let the others know that the pain was excruciating. I used my ski poles to take the pressure off my foot as best as I could. When Scott and Sweep walked I thanked my lucky stars because the pain would subside. I still did not want to alert them that I was hurting; "don't let the competition know your weakness," I thought! CLOMP, CLOMP, CLOMP, POUND, POUND, POUND, SHOCK, SHOCK, SHOCK, HOLD BACK THOSE TEARS, BETH, YOU ARE BEING A WIMP!

More thoughts...what about Moby Dick next week? What about Sweep's birthday celebration (x-country skiing and snowshoeing Greylock)? What about the snowshoe race in Bigelow? Hawley Kiln? What about my training for the Boston Marathon? A lot of negative thoughts in between the CLOMP, CLOMP, CLOMP, POUND, POUND, POUND, SHOCK, SHOCK, SHOCK, OUCH, OUCH, OUCH!

After three hours of this we were back at the visitor center. Only when we were driving away did I let Sweep know that I was hurt. I had won this round.

Round Two started upon waking up Sunday morning and not being able to stand on my foot. Again, the pain was incredible! But I kept telling myself that it really wasn't that bad and I could still snowshoe that day. With the use of my ski poles I could take the pressure of my foot and get in my workout!

We were meeting Ed and Ed (of "the lost boys on Mt. Prospect Legend"), Konrad (who was coming with the younger Ed), The Bradley's (Scott, of yesterday's run, and his better half, Karin), John T. ("let me thwap you with this pine tree branch"), Stan "the man", Swanee, and Paul "camp counselor" Hartwig. The meeting point was the Greylock Glen pavilion where we would be taken on a 5k snowshoe loop designed by Paul. As we waited for the troops to arrive, the rain came down so hard most of us opted to go to the local diner and have breakfast before trying out the course. In that span of one hour, I must have come to my senses and realized

that my foot was more important than going out and hammering it again!

Round Three...is coming to a close. It has been one month since I was diagnosed with a stress fracture in my calcaneus along with a complete fracture on the bottom of my foot. I didn't get to run Moby Dick. I didn't get to celebrate Sweep's birthday like we planned. I am not going to run the Boston. I limped for two weeks before starting to walk on the treadmill an easy 1.5 miles.

BUT, I did get to walk Bigelow. I walked even though I wanted desperately to run. I walked with Meg Dunne. I watched her struggle and wish the run was over. I talked to her to ease her mind. I asked questions of her and told her she need not answer me; we could talk at the end. She probably thought I was a terrible person for staying behind her and pestering her, like a gnat she probably wanted to swat me. Maybe I made her go a little faster than what she wanted to go. But when it was over, I had made a new friend!

Thanks, Meg for helping me!

Beth Herder

SAVE THE DATE! February 6, 2000, for the Saratoga Winterfest 5Km Snowshoe Race -- Here's your opportunity to drive to yet another section of the Northeast in your quest for the endless winter! Come to the Saratoga Springs Spa State Park on Sunday, February 6, '00 at high noon for a 5K snowshoe race on the x-country course made famous by the Saratoga Streaks (girl's high school x-c champions for about a zillion years in a row). This course features formidable uphill and, naturally, an unequal number of downhill. For all of you who complained about not being able to pass on narrow trails, there are many wide sections. No more excuses here! You can even pass going uphill if you dare. Overachievers can opt to do the course again for a 10K workout. Or, if you get lost the first time, you get a chance to do it right the second time.

Feeling guilty about leaving the family behind for yet another weekend? Just bring them along! This race is part of the Saratoga Winterfest, which features x-c skiing, ice-skating, dog sled rides, snowperson building contests, sledding, comedy and magic shows, and a crafts fair. If you decide to make a weekend of it, on Saturday there will be a Special Olympics x-c ski competition and also a chowderfest. You get to go to all the downtown restaurants, sample their chowder and then vote for your favorite. A great pre-race carb-loading activity! Lake George Village will also be having their Winterfest, which includes the four mile Polar Cap Run on February 5th. I'm hoping for lots of snow right before the race so I can do it on snowshoes and compare times with the regular runners.

If you need more information, just give me a call at (518) 581-1278. This is being rather optimistic since at this point, I don't know a whole lot either. But I like to talk, so that's OK, too.

Laura Clark

SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND SNOWSHOE SERIES
 93 BRANDYWINE LANE
 SUFFIELD, CT 06078

THANK YOU ALL FOR PARTICIPATING AND SUPPORTING THE SNOWSHOE SERIES!!

EMAIL ADDRESS : *EDTRNEWS@AOL.COM*

1998 SNESS AGE GROUP WINNERS

01 - 19	Sara Pandiscio	07	1
	Bryan Dragon	14	43
20 - 29	Erin Worsham	20	11
	Brian Blanchard	27	34
30 - 39	Tracy McGrath	30	8
	John Tremblay	36	31
40 - 49	Laurel Rollins	41	13
	Karl Molitoris	42	39
50 - 59	Ellen Mach	50	3
	Bob Worsham	52	29
60 - 69	Phil Quemette	64	5
70 - 79	Leon Beverly	71	16

1999 SNESS AGE GROUP WINNERS

01 - 19	Naomi LaCasse	19	88
	Bryan Dragon	15	48
20 - 29	Erin Worsham	21	42
	Leigh Schmitt	26	147
30 - 39	Sweep Voll	38	107
	Ken Clark	36	161
40 - 49	Beth Herder	40	132
	Jim Campiformio	45	139
50 - 59	Laura Clark	51	71
	Bob Worsham	53	144
60 - 69	Richard Busa	69	55
70 - 79	Leon Beverly	72	21