

W.M.A.C. SNOSHU-NEWS

CHASING DUNHAM

The day after Brave the Blizzard 2008, all the snow melted. Barely twenty-four hours after we held the event, I drove past the site of the race and returned the Frosty the Snowman Costume still amazed with how lucky we were to have had snow this year. In the following weeks, no major storms hit the area. As the week of the Saratoga Winterfest approached, several Albany Running Exchange members were excited about participating in another local snowshoe race but were well aware of the dearth of snow. With much surprise, the post on the WMAC website on 2/2/08 indicated that a snowshoe race would be held. With excitement, we quickly spread the word that race was on – with snow!

My first “real” snowshoe race was the Greylock Glen back in January of 2005. Two weeks earlier I had gotten snowshoes and entered a local Empire State Games qualifier. Figuring that they all had 5Ks, I was a bit shocked to be placed on the line of a 100m race with the state champion next to me. Heats of *two*. Needless to say that hurt. He finished before I hit halfway.

Going into 2008, I hadn't run a snowshoe race since January of 2006. We'd tried staging our own for three years, but each year it got warmer with no snow in sight. At Brave the Blizzard this year, we were finally able to put together a real snowshoe event, and it was a great feeling!

A day or two before our race, Dave Dunham emailed me offering to help us with pre-race needs. Like all ARE races, our main intention is to simply have fun, so it was a very validating feeling to know that he would be coming to the race. I had never met him before, but I certainly knew his name, and I told a buddy that I'd be happy to finish within a minute of him.

He had mentioned at some point his quest to run in every town in Massachusetts, but it wasn't until I read in *SnowNews* that I realized how much he runs **before** (and after) each race.

While I certainly had advantages at Brave the Blizzard, including making the race nearly a mile longer than originally advertised (whatever it takes, you know?), going into North Pond, I was excited about the prospect of racing him again. Running with my teammate, Andrew McCarthy, our game plan was to get out and sit on the lead pack. The goal was to make our move when Dunham made his.

As would be expected, Dunham took the lead from the gun, and Andrew and I tucked on the tail of the pack running in fifth and sixth. It was Andrew's first snowshoe race, and it was a great feeling to be racing with a training partner. We took quick note when Dunham started to pull away, but there was nothing we could do. By the time there was room to move up, Dunham was out of sight. With running form that would frighten small children, I flailed in a fruitless attempt to make-up ground. Truth be told, my surge was nearly completely erased by the time we hit the finish. It was amusing to speak with Tim Van Orden afterwards about Dave's dominance.

There really isn't anyone at my work who runs or knows much about running, so when they see that I'm getting my butt kicked

by a guy who could vote when I was born, they simply lower their heads and point to their bottom-of-the-totem-pole colleague requesting that I get my butt in gear. There is something amusing about being chastised by someone who sometimes opts not to do her once a week walk on the treadmill in the basement during the winter because the basement is too cold that night.

With Winterfest on the horizon, I was excited! I saw that Dunham kept winning races – in fact, about 40% of them – and I figured it was time to have some fun. Six days out I had a twinge in my Achilles, and not wanting to miss out on the opportunity to race Dave again, I took two days off to ensure I'd be ready for the weekend.

People run for different reasons. While I often enjoy my daily runs, there are days when it is not fun and the only driving force behind getting out the door is because I love racing. It is unfortunate that such a small percentage of the population ever knows what it's like to feel like you can't take another step, or that burn in your quads that comes when you're running up a mountain, or running on such a hot day that even IV fluids wouldn't be of assistance. From the fastest runners to the slowest, we **all know what it's like**.

My sophomore year of HS, I found myself on the starting line of the indoor mile qualifier for the state meet. I had never broken 4:46, only the top two would go, and there were about a half dozen guys who could run 4:20s. While my coach told me that men will give birth before I'd make the state meet for track (quickly affirmed by the nodding of my teammates' heads), he also told me to “have some fun and make it interesting.” In the spirit of a true Kamikaze, I took the race out in 60 flat, with the pack on my heels. It was a surreal feeling – I was basically running all out, well aware that when my body would implode, it would be ugly. Coming through the 800 in 2:10, I could feel the earthquake about to come, and by the kilometer mark, four guys had passed me and my legs were mush. I barely hung on to break five minutes. Upon stepping off the line, my coach smiled at me and said, “At least it was fun to watch.” I smirked and then fell.



CHASING DUNHAM (cont)

The night before Winterfest, while parading around town in our new club van with a dozen others, I implored Andrew (McCarthy) to come to the snowshoe race the next day. While a bit reluctant, he eventually budged, conceding that it was his home course in high school and just thirty miles away. Knowing that the course would barely be covered in snow, we reveled in knowing that we wouldn't be dealing with a foot of fresh powder, which can reduce one to barely moving even on flat sections. I told him that our game plan would be to go out right behind Dunham, not simply hang on the lead pack. If we weren't going to beat Dunham, at the very least we could distract him with some attempts at humor and bizarre conversation. Perhaps he would start laughing which would throw off his breathing – whatever it would take.

With just a few minutes to spare before the start, I looked around frantically, desperate to catch a glance of Dunham. Our entire race plan was built around him. Heck, if he ended up just jogging it with a friend, we would've kept our plan of sitting on his heels, waiting for the opportune moment to out-kick him for that coveted forty-fifth position. Dave, we needed you!

Realizing that the first kilometer was around a field and our race-plan no longer was viable, Andrew I went out towards the back of the lead pack, eventually moving up about a quarter-mile in. We ran together for a while, although when I took a slight lead about a mile in, I got nervous as Andrew started calling out the turns for me. I had done that at Brave the Blizzard, and here was Andrew, running a course that he'd done more times than his age while I eagerly awaited each new flag and red arrow.

As we rounded the pool, my snowshoe got caught on something and I fell headfirst into a tasty treat of icy snow. I felt pretty foolish as Andrew got to watch it all happen – and I'd already fallen once before when trying to run away from him. My lead was little more than a slinky that my own lack of coordination was controlling and mocking me with.

With two-hundred meters to go, I passed Brian Teague taking pictures and saw the finish not too far away. While I had been hoping to do battle with the thousand-and-one race man, I was very thankful for my health and ability to run at all. Coming into the finish line, I remembered my ankle surgery in the summer of 2006 and how it took two months just to walk again. Mobility and independence is the greatest gift that anyone can have, the rest is just icing on the cake. As I turned around and jogged back to cheer on my fellow ARE teammates and others that I knew, I smiled in anticipation of my next snowshoe race – hopefully Dave will be there too!

Josh Merlis

Photos accompanying Josh's article are:

Page 1 – Dave Dunham winning North Pond 2008.

Page 2 –

Top - Ethan Nedeau, Tim Mahoney and Tim Van Orden.

Bottom – Andrew McCarthy

REMAINING WMAC SCHEDULE 2008

Saturday, February 16, 2008 CAMP SARATOGA	Wilton, NY 8.25 KM
Sunday, February 17, 2008 MOODY SPRING	West Hawley, MA 10 KM
Saturday, February 23, 2008 HOXIE THUNDERBOLT	Adams, MA 3.5 Miles
Saturday, February 23, 2008 COVERED BRIDGE	Adams, MA 8.0 Miles
Sunday, February 24, 2008 HALLOCKVILLE POND	West Hawley, MA 5KM
Saturday, March 01, 2008 HAWLEY KILN	Hawley, MA 7.0 Miles
Sunday, March 02, 2008 HAWLEY NOTCH	Hawley, MA 5.0 Miles
Saturday, March 15, 2008 2ND MASS CHAMPIONSHIP	Northfield, MA 5KM or Greater



WMAC

NORTHFIELD MOUNTAIN 3.8 MILE SNOWSHOE RACE

WMAC

February 2nd, 2008 Northfield Mountain Visitors Center Northfield, MA

#	Name	Age	Time	Points
01.	Dave Dunham	43	0:34:52	100.00
02.	Ethan Nedean	34	0:35:43	97.56
03.	Tim Mahoney	28	0:36:02	95.12
04.	Rob Smith	40	0:36:27	92.68
05.	Steve Peterson	41	0:36:53	90.24
06.	Jay Kolodzinski	28	0:38:37	87.80
07.	Bob Dion	52	0:38:45	85.37
08.	Dave Hannon	36	0:38:58	82.93
09.	Edward Alibozek	45	0:39:23	80.49
10.	Mike Townsley	39	0:39:39	78.05
11.	Jack Casey	54	0:39:58	75.61
12.	Peter Malinowski	53	0:40:07	73.17
13.	Patrick Smith	45	0:40:13	70.73
14.	Ken Clark	45	0:40:39	68.29
15.	Scott Graham	49	0:42:40	65.85
16.	Bill Morse	56	0:43:17	63.41
17.	Dan Cooper	35	0:43:32	60.98
18.	Mike Lahey	56	0:43:37	58.54
19.	Nick Jobok	51	0:43:52	56.10
20.	Jason Collins	33	0:43:55	53.66
21.	Chelynn Tetrault	32	0:44:58	51.22
22.	Norm Sheppard	50	0:45:38	48.78
23.	Phil Bricker	54	0:46:39	46.34
24.	Barry Braun	49	0:47:12	43.90
25.	Barry Auskern	47	0:47:24	41.46
26.	Howard Bassett	47	0:47:26	39.02
27.	Richard Godin	52	0:47:42	36.59
28.	Ed Alibozek Jr.	68	0:49:28	34.15
29.	Laurel Shortell	41	0:53:17	31.71
30.	Jeff Hattem	56	0:53:28	29.27
31.	Martin Glendon	61	0:54:07	26.83
32.	Denise Dion	47	0:56:07	24.39
33.	Bob Massaro	64	0:56:12	21.95
34.	Michael Lacharite	50	0:56:44	19.51
35.	Walter Kolodzinski	65	0:58:43	17.07
36.	Denise Murphy	43	0:59:38	14.63
37.	Richard Busa	78	1:04:57	12.20
38.	Ernie Alleva	56	1:05:19	9.76
39.	Jamie Howard	42	1:12:35	7.32
40.	William Glendon	61	1:20:43	4.88
41.	Konrad Karolczuk	55	1:20:45	2.44



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Northfield runners Norm Sheppard, Jeff Hattem and Bill Morse.

NORTHFIELD COMES THROUGH! (DESPITE RAIN EVERYWHERE ELSE!)

As this is the 11th year of the WMAC snowshoe racing circuit, we have all come to know and trust our race directors! For those of you that are new this year, or if you don't pay much attention to the email updates and web page postings, those who simply read the sno-news for your leisurely enjoyment and finally the ones who don't have too much faith in weather or race directors, let me give you a little history on why you should trust our race directors. Our race directors do all in their human powers to put races on! Snowshoe racing has a brief two month season, maybe three months if we are lucky, to have as many races as possible. With that being said, Old man winter, and I guess now his mother, Mother Earth, can and will throw some curve balls at us throughout the winter racing season.

We, the addicted to snowshoeing, have and take great faith in the ones that put these races on; to be assured that if a race can be snowshoed, it will be. We have all come to learn that when it's not snowing in Albany or Springfield or Eastern MA, that it's snowing in Savoy or Hawley. It's simply just the way it is. For example, in the case of the latest winter rainstorm, all over Western MA and everywhere else for that matter, it was heavy downpours. Yet, Northfield Mountain, like Savoy and Hawley, somehow received 3 inches of snow before the rain came in.

On Thursday evening a message was put out via email and the WMAC web page, that Northfield would still be a go and that there was enough snow for a snowshoe race. There would however have to be a change in the course, which is nothing new in snowshoe racing, and that this change would shorten the distance of the race but not the difficulty. I mean the race director of Northfield is Dave Dunham, did you really think he would make it easy just because he had to shorten it? Of course not!

So with my faith in our race director, I watched as all the snow melted away here at my home in the Connecticut River Valley town of Florence. However, knowing from previous years of races being held despite obviously bad conditions elsewhere, I knew I would be racing in a winter wonderland of snow at Northfield.

Was I disappointed? Of course not! Like so many times in the past, Dave Dunham and race directors alike pulled out a stellar event. I, like the 41 other racers, was probably shocked and amazed at the conditions at Northfield. More than enough snow to go blazing down the mountain after reaching the summit platform. You couldn't have asked for better snow conditions! So I must tell all of you that were the slight bit hesitate or weary and stayed home (like my fathers two friends Bill Milkiwicz and Wally Lempart, who are both in their second year of snowshoe racing) take faith in and trust the words of the race directors! When they say we have snow for a race or a race will go on, believe them because I again was amazed. Just because what you see at your doorstep might not support snowshoeing, the conditions at the event site could be the best snowshoeing you may ever have experienced. So trust the race directors through good times and bad weather and always listen to their judgment. Forty-one racers at Northfield Mountain this year couldn't have been wrong!

The morning of Northfield arrived and the first thing I noticed when I woke up was the bare ground outside the window. With good faith in the race director, I knew that just because that's what was present outside my window, it wasn't what was present at Northfield. So with a quick change of my clothes that had been set out the night before to save precious morning minutes, I grabbed snowshoes and headed North. On the way North I had to make a minor detour to pick up my father. I had told him I would be picking him up at 7:30 and to be ready at 7:30! Well he must be on Polish standard time because when I pulled in the driveway I was 5 minutes early and he wasn't even near ready. When I went in the house the coffee pot had just been started and he had just started getting ready. I knew that meant at least 15 more minutes. This would put us ten minutes behind my scheduled departure time. I said to him, "I thought I told you to be ready for 7:30!" He then said, "Your early". Well after a 30 second love spat between a father and son, I decided it wasn't worth arguing any more because he is habitually late and will be till the end of time. So I just made some toast and waited! We ended up leaving 10 minutes later than I planned but I planned for him being late, so in actuality we weren't late at all. See after 20 years of going to races, I know how to plan ahead. I tell him an earlier time and than the actual time I want. So when he was finally ready he jumped in my vehicle and like always, since it's a Saturday morning, he took ownership of the radio and turned on the morning Polkas. He says it pumps him up for a race! What about me? How about my music to pump me up for race day? He then says, "your music is noise, how can that pump you up?" I wouldn't know because I can never listen to when we drive to a race! Unlike most races, I cherish the drive to Northfield because this is the closest drive to a race, being only 35 minutes.

Arriving with more than enough time to spare, I knew who would be racing by the vehicles I was spotting in the parking lot. You know you're pretty well addicted to a sport when you know the vehicles your fellow racers drive. Without naming names, I knew I was going to be in some good company. So as we made our way into the Recreation Center I gawked at all the snow on the ground. Northfield was saved from the rain! After arriving inside I got my number and looked at the course description that Dave had laid out. I knew this course fairly well. After having raced at Northfield in High School for the XC Championships 10 yrs ago, run the trail races in the summer, and also the prior snowshoe races held here, I had a pretty good idea of the course layout. All uphill for the 1st half and all downhill for the second half! I then put on my gear, which would be light today, as it was a milder day, and do a warm-up. I joined Bill Morse and Dan Cooper to get in a short warm-up. We snowshoed and chatted for about the first ½ mile, if we were lucky. We just wanted to get a feel for the conditions and stretch the legs. After doing the warm-up with them, I felt the conditions were awesome! You would have never guessed it rained only a few hours beforehand!

After finishing our warm-up, I had just enough time to get in a quick bathroom break and down some Gatorade, and then head over to the start line! We were given the pre-race instructions like so many races before... Dave told us that there were a few bear spots on the ground near some brook crossings but nothing

NORTHFIELD COMES THROUGH!

too serious. He also said he had placed mile marks at the approximate miles, and we would be following orange surveyor flags. Besides that it would be a simple up and down or out and back snowshoe race, but not repeating the same track.

Dave's wife Kathy gave the command to start the race, all 41 of us prepped our minds and prepared to snowshoe up and down Northfield Mnt. The race started out on approximately 40 yards of groomed trail before breaking onto single trail. The competitors went out in the usual fashion. Most of the racers at this event have raced before and it seems like everyone knows where they should be in the crowd when the race starts. I tucked in a nice group consisting of Bob Dion, Ed Alibozek, and Ken Clark. It seems like the 4 of us are fairly consistent and I would consider them good pacers for me. Well the climb up was tough. On the journey up I passed a few snowshoers who may have gone out a little too strong. I passed one guy who was wearing shorts and the backs of his legs were bright red. I later learned this was his first snowshoe race. The snow on the upward mission to the lookout platform was fairly well packed but it wasn't excellent. If you made good strides the snow definitely kicked up. After passing a few competitors in the first ¼ mile, I was running solo until just after the first mile mark. It was at that point where we came out of the woods and had to run up the groomed path/road to the upper reservoir. I stopped to walk briefly to regain my rhythm from the arduous uphill and Bob Dion who was right behind me said, "This is a race, don't stop" Well I did, and at that point he and Ed Alibozek came from behind me and gained a few feet of a lead. In my opinion this section was the worst for footing. The snow hadn't been broken and you really had to dig deep to move forward. Ed and Bob were really moving along. I then regained some energy and regained a lead on Bob. However, to do so, I had to go in totally unbroken snow. After passing Bob, I then stopped to walk again. Bob then said to me, "Well that was impressive", I chuckled knowing exactly what he met. After trucking along that path, we soon ran around the gate and turned right. It was at this point that we were now running along a nice packed trail. Ed, Bob and I were in small pack. I didn't know who was behind me, as I hadn't dared to look. I knew I would see their faces on the out and back section to the viewing platform.

So as we neared the summit I could see Dave Hannon in the distance. Realizing he was within my reach I made the goal in my mind to try and catch him. I also set another goal and that was to stay ahead of Bob and Ed. As we hit the turnaround platform I had opened up a short lead on Bob and Ed. It was here that I knew it was all downhill to the finish. I also had snowshoed this trail last year at the MA Snowshoe Championships and knew I could go all out. So I did. I went nuts. This downhill section was wide enough where I could give no regard if I stumbled and fell. So as I moved downhill, I didn't look back but just kept my head looking forward and where I was placing my feet.

As I descended the mountain I could see glimpses of Dave Hannon in front of me. I didn't hear any snowshoes behind me, but as in other races, I didn't have to look back to know that Bob and Ed were probably not too far off my heels. So after snowshoeing downhill in fast mode from the mile 2 mark to the mile 3 mark, I finally caught up to Dave at one of the few

NORTHFIELD COMES THROUGH!

unfrozen brook crossings, and took a short lead. I was able to hold onto that lead until we broke out of the woods and reached the groomed trail again. I knew from here that Dave and the guys behind me would be going all out to catch me. At the point I reached the groomed trail I was able to get a glimpse behind me and could see Bob barreling downhill in my snow prints. I knew this wouldn't be a jaunt to the finish but an all out kick. Well as we passed underneath the power lines I was letting the snow fly. I knew the remainder of the course and knew there was going to be a short and steep uphill climb before the home stretch. I continued to give it my all. As I rounded the last sharp curve and prepared to go up the last mini hill, I saw Bob and knew he was after me. I dug deep on that final short steep stretch and let it fly. When I reached the top I knew I had but only a hundred yards left and that if I didn't slow down I wouldn't have to dual to the finish. So I hung in there and finished strong in 6th place. Bob was only a mere 8 seconds behind me and Dave was right behind him. As I regained my energy at the finish Ed came running down the homestretch strong! I gave my competitors the good spirits handshake and pats on the back for their race and thanked them for the push. I then turned around to cheer in the rest of the snowshoe racers, as that is what we do in this sport! Support the players!

So Northfield was a great success! Only a few hours before race time it had poured and the fears of many were that there would be no race! Well that wasn't the case! Dave Dunham came through with Northfield Mnt. for all of us, so lets make sure that next time we see Dave or any of the other race directors, we tell them great job because if it wasn't for their dedication and devotion to this sport we wouldn't have any races to compete in! As for what does Northfield have to contribute to the Barnyard Ballot? I would have to say the most challenging uphill climb!

Jay Kolodzinski



Curly's Record Run Snowshoe start, January 2008.

If you didn't get enough of Pittsfield while snowshoeing, Beth and Brad Herder plan on a **Marathon** and **Half Marathon** trail race for September 7th 2008!

9th ANNUAL SARATOGA SPA WINTERFEST 5K SNOWSHOE RACE

February 3, 2008 Saratoga Spa State Park Saratoga Springs, NY

Pl	Name	Age	Time	Points
01.	Josh Merlis	26	0:21:51	100.00
02.	Andrew McCarthy	24	0:22:54	99.06
03.	Ken Clark	45	0:23:32	98.11
04.	Bob Dion	52	0:24:34	97.17
05.	Edward Alibozek	45	0:25:05	96.23
06.	Rich Gargano	30	0:25:29	95.28
07.	Brenan Tarrier	29	0:25:52	94.34
08.	Richard Clark	54	0:26:05	93.40
09.	Dave Shumpert	37	0:26:15	92.45
10.	Charles Petraske	30	0:26:27	91.51
11.	John Kinnicutt	45	0:26:33	90.57
12.	Eric Recene	37	0:27:10	89.62
13.	Nick Jubok	51	0:27:35	88.68
14.	Jessica Hageman	32	0:27:44	87.74
15.	Jeffrey Lutzker	56	0:27:52	86.79
16.	Sean Curtis	15	0:28:33	85.85
17.	Sara Brenner	27	0:29:14	84.91
18.	Madeleine Bonneville	26	0:29:31	83.96
19.	Tyronne Culpepper	44	0:29:35	83.02
20.	Steve McAlpine	47	0:29:37	82.08
21.	Vincent Kirby	51	0:29:48	81.13
22.	Dave Wilber	48	0:29:54	80.19
23.	Jacque Schiffer	43	0:30:05	79.25
24.	Eric Kimmelman	43	0:30:05	78.30
25.	Frank Paone	50	0:30:16	77.36
26.	Tom Mack	43	0:30:22	76.42
27.	Juergen Reher	58	0:30:27	75.47
28.	Ed (Sr.) Decker	53	0:30:39	74.53
29.	Keith Decker	45	0:30:52	73.58
30.	Ed (Jr.) Alibozek	68	0:31:20	72.64
31.	Mike Lahey	56	0:31:20	71.70
32.	Kirk Gendron	32	0:31:45	70.75
33.	Donna Ruppel	43	0:31:46	69.81
34.	C.J. Imperial	27	0:31:48	68.87
35.	Katherine Best	23	0:31:59	67.92
36.	Jim Carlson	60	0:32:08	66.98
37.	Kim E. Scott	39	0:32:16	66.04
38.	Rachel Razza	31	0:32:21	65.09
39.	Laney Lutzker	57	0:32:24	64.15
40.	Tom Wright	60	0:32:38	63.21
41.	Laurel Shortell	41	0:32:49	62.26
42.	John Pelton	68	0:32:50	61.32
43.	Diana Rodriguez	26	0:32:52	60.38
44.	David Zwald	46	0:33:26	59.43
45.	Joe Bouck	45	0:33:34	58.49
46.	J.J. Favat	63	0:33:44	57.55
47.	Maureen Roberts	50	0:35:11	56.60
48.	Joe Geiger	66	0:34:16	55.66
49.	Aurora Lamperetta	35	0:34:18	54.72
50.	Bob Massaro	64	0:34:19	53.77
51.	Doug Bartels	42	0:34:25	52.83
52.	Samantha Stenburn	17	0:34:35	51.89
53.	Steve Mitchell	66	0:34:47	50.94
54.	Jake Davis	26	0:34:52	50.00
55.	Denise Dion	49	0:35:08	49.06
56.	Mary Hannon	49	0:35:15	48.11
57.	Tony Mangano	61	0:35:20	47.17

Pl	Name	Age	Time	Points
58.	Lindsey Sabatka	27	0:35:31	46.23
59.	Michael Burby	41	0:35:52	45.28
60.	Jeanne Davis	30	0:36:04	44.34
61.	Chris Obstarczyk	32	0:36:08	43.40
62.	Michael Della Rocco	56	0:36:09	42.45
63.	Lee Sacco	15	0:36:10	41.51
64.	Laura Clark	60	0:36:24	40.57
65.	Susan Johnson	47	0:36:28	39.62
66.	Randy Goldberg	48	0:36:34	38.68
67.	Raymon, Jr. Lee	65	0:36:42	37.74
68.	James Razza	31	0:36:53	36.79
69.	Kathleen Goldberg	49	0:37:23	35.85
70.	Ellie George	52	0:37:32	34.91
71.	Sue Joyner	49	0:38:09	33.96
72.	Karen Anderson	41	0:38:33	33.02
73.	Jamie Howard	42	0:38:41	32.08
74.	Richard Busa	78	0:38:47	31.13
75.	Larry Peleggi	50	0:38:52	30.19
76.	Charles Brockett	62	0:39:03	29.25
77.	Phyllis Fox	55	0:39:46	28.30
78.	Konrad Karolczuk	55	0:39:46	27.36
79.	Suzanne Singer	34	0:40:59	26.42
80.	Eric Singer	35	0:40:59	25.47
81.	MaryJane Lewis	49	0:42:25	24.53
82.	Walt Kolodzinski	65	0:43:13	23.58
83.	Penny Sheedy	49	0:43:21	22.64
84.	Ann Miller	44	0:43:40	21.70
85.	Scott Nussbaumer	43	0:44:05	20.75
86.	Cathy Biss	60	0:44:06	19.81
87.	Sibyl Jacobson	65	0:45:37	18.87
88.	Jan Roth	58	0:45:43	17.92
89.	Christine McKnight	60	0:45:58	16.98
90.	Ann Marie Moskal	29	0:47:05	16.04
91.	Laura J Milak	51	0:48:09	15.09
92.	William E Milak	55	0:48:11	14.15
93.	Lisa Peters	37	0:48:43	13.21
94.	Corine Houey-King	40	0:50:17	12.26
95.	Al Schultz	62	0:51:38	11.32
96.	Katherine Karlson	55	0:52:35	10.38
97.	Natalia Hogan	39	0:53:31	9.43
98.	Marge Rajczewski	67	0:53:32	8.49
99.	Carol Gurney	42	0:53:34	7.55
100.	Joe Cavazos	36	0:55:09	6.60
101.	Beth Trapasso	46	0:57:05	5.66
102.	Karen Cunningham	53	0:57:15	4.72
103.	Hannah Murphy	11	1:02:28	3.77
104.	Susan Monica	60	1:02:50	2.83
105.	Erin Stevens	23	1:05:39	1.89
106.	Tim Stevens	53	1:05:39	0.94

Visit the WMAC Snowshoe Series at:

www.runwmac.com

click the snowflake "snowshoe" button!

A GROUNDHOG'S VIEW OF WINTERFEST

By Punxsutawney Phil, with underground promptings from Laura Clark

Winterfest Snowshoe Race was scheduled to launch on Sunday, Feb 3rd. Groundhog Day was Saturday, February 2nd. The big question on everyone's minds was weather or not Phil would pull through for legions of snowshoers and once again, grant us six more weeks of winter fun.

Eighty percent of the time Phil casts his ballot for an extended season, but this year it looked like he was far more interested in a summer ice cream cone than a winter snow cone. Despite the fact that we snowshoers are a hardy group, more than ready to dig in for the long haul, things were looking grim. Temperatures were on the rise, stirring up an unsatisfying wintery mix. The always-good-for-a-laugh www.weatherunderground.com predicted a bizarre Thursday night: "Overnight: Partly sunny with a slight chance of snow showers." Believe me, I could never make this up! As willing as I was to latch onto any forecast with the word "snow" in it, this one was simply beyond belief.

So I did what any liberated woman would do: I turned my back on Phil and consulted Phyllis. Phyllis is a beautiful heifer who was born in Farmer Ed Alibozek's barn on Saturday, February 2nd. She took one look around and noticed the shadow cast by Farmer Ed's state-of-the-art Dion snowshoes and promptly decided that the man who helped bring her into the world deserved six more weeks of winter, provided he continued to keep the barn toasty warm.

Thus reassured, but not willing to leave anything to chance, Jeff and I marked and remarked the course uncountable times, scouting groundhog escape tunnels for potential trouble spots. On Friday we rode out the winter mix as best we could, assembling gear and packing goodie bags to the accompaniment of the movie that pretty much summed up our topsy-turvy state of affairs—Jamie Curtis' *Freaky Friday*.

On Saturday we assembled a crew of very eager helpers; namely, Maureen Roberts, Charles Petraske and his pointer dog, Lola. Lola dashed madly back and forth pointing out exposed road crossings, leaving it to her people to shovel beaver-dam style bridges over the asphalt. I really don't know why we thought it would be a good idea to shovel rock-hard ice, but at least Lola had enough sense not to buy into the procedure. However, we had a secondary goal which might have had something to do with our thought processes or lack thereof: Chowderfest was a few short hours away and at \$1 a cup the price was right. We were on a definite 10 cup pace. Lola had already determined her choices: Sloppy Kisses Barker's Chowder and Impressions Doggie Chowder.

Like all survivors, we refused to admit to treacherous conditions or scantily clad trails. So when a Ferndell bypass was necessary we trudged literally straight up Quadbuster Hill and into a little known woody area. We were certain no one could possibly run up this hill, but of course, race day proved us wrong. As rookie Tyrone Culpepper discovered, much to his amazement, "Crampons really work." Crampons or not, Jeff had a rather scary experience trying to dogsled up with a pail of colored surveyor's sugar (an environmentally friendly, red dye #2

mixture viewed by raccoons and dogs alike as a likely dessert). Naturally, everyone enjoyed this potentially painful ascent and voted to forever detour the icy, often bone-dry Ferndell trail. Especially those wielding snow shovels. Best of all, I didn't have to inform Rich Busa that we would have to do two laps around the dreaded quad to make up the extra distance.

So Phyllis, and maybe even Phil, did grant us a silver lining of sorts, not to mention an extra bonus. Charles' GPS measured the new route at precisely 5K, or 3.1 miles, probably, to those of you still stuck in either the Imperial or USA measurement systems. Just try googling USA/Imperial/Metric. Unless you are Rob Higley (WMAC) or John Couch (Stryders) there is no way you want to go there. Suffice it to say that unbeknownst to all but a few inquiring individuals, the Winterfest 5K course has always been closer to three miles. But now, thanks to Phyllis and Phil we are truly validated and have gained .1m in length. So if you were wondering why Winterfest seemed longer this year you have several choices: (a) too much pre-super bowl partying, (b) stop kidding yourself, you're a year older, (c) metric is more complicated and therefore takes longer to navigate properly, or (d) all of the above and then some.

Prognosticating ahead to 2009, I figured that since Groundhog Day, not being part of a three-day weekend attempt, is always on February 2nd, next year it might actually fall on Winterfest Sunday. Think of the bypasses we could dig! Think of the stories I could write! But alas, this is a leap year and next year's February 2nd tunnels straight on through Sunday and out into Monday. Factually, I'm not really sure if leap year has anything to do with it, but I certainly wasn't going to risk waking up Phil to find out.



Old Farmer Ed with Laura Clark's lucky charm Phyllis, the third heifer born on the farm since Christmas morning.

Phyllis was born on Groundhog Day, and conditions immediately started looking up for the Winterfest Snowshoe Race in 2008!

WMAC

USSSA NATIONAL QUALIFIER

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SIDEHILLER 4-MILE SNOWSHOE RACE

February 9th, 2008

SANDWICH FAIR GROUNDS

CENTER SANDWICH, NH

#	Name	Age	Time	Points
01.	Kevin Tilton	26	33:17	100.00
02.	Dave Dunham	43	33:23	97.30
03.	Chris Dunn	39	37:11	94.59
04.	Bob Dion	52	38:00	91.89
05.	Jack Casey	54	38:23	89.19
06.	Pat Smith	45	39:05	86.49
07.	Max Thomas	16	39:46	83.78
08.	Peter Malinowski	53	40:37	81.08
09.	Paul Bazanchuk	53	41:09	78.38
10.	Jay Curry	36	42:14	75.68
11.	Bill Morse	56	42:55	72.97
12.	Harrison Muskat	18	43:32	70.27
13.	Steve Olafsen	50	43:38	67.57
14.	Dan Kusch	34	45:04	64.86
15.	Sarah Hudson	30	45:14	62.16
16.	Jonathan Kovar	38	45:22	59.46
17.	Peter Haine	14	46:55	56.76
18.	Dan Cooper	35	46:56	54.05
19.	Howard Bassett	47	49:29	51.35
20.	Joe Merriam	48	50:30	48.65
21.	Tracy Olafson	52	50:47	45.95
22.	Brian Gallagher	57	50:50	43.24
23.	Laurel Shortell	41	51:48	40.54
24.	Jeff Hattem	56	52:34	37.84
25.	Ellen Tidd	39	55:32	35.14
26.	Denise Dion	49	56:06	32.43
27.	Andrea Masters	42	56:21	29.73
28.	Jim Vanderhooven	36	56:33	27.03
29.	Stu Greeley	54	57:22	24.32
30.	Deidre McCarty	46	57:43	21.62
31.	Stephanie Cooper	40	58:01	18.92
32.	Don Yeaton	56	1:01:56	16.22
33.	Richard Busa	78	1:05:25	13.51
34.	Lauren Waerig	29	1:05:45	10.81
35.	Jude Waerig	32	1:14:06	8.11
36.	Everett McCarty	55	1:22:45	5.41
37.	Wendy Stewart	44	1:23:57	2.70



SIDEHILLER ... THAT SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN FEEL.

As I sit here at my computer and watch the snow continue to pile up in our latest storm, I continue to be amazed at the sheer volume of the white stuff we got this winter. We've never had a big storm, just a lot of 4, 6 and 8 inch storms, with almost no break in between.

Conditions for this year's edition of the Sidehiller 4 Miler could not have been any more perfect. OK, the snow started to get a little slow as the day wore on, but a gorgeous sunny 32 degree day with no wind sure is nice.

The town of Sandwich is a place of good memories for me. The first job I had and how I was able to relocate from the Philadelphia area to New England all took place in Center Sandwich. I got my first race directing and organizing experience when I used to help with the Sandwich Notch 60 Mile Sled Dog race. I also started my trail and mountain running career there when I went from speed hiking to running up small mountains when a friend convinced me to do the Mt. Washington Race.

Sandwich is a neat place- it's on the way to nowhere and unless you go to the Sandwich Fair or know someone in town, you probably would never even know it existed. That's one of the things that makes it so fun, the center of town looks like a snapshot taken out of New England history, with all white clapboard houses and antique shops and a bed and breakfast. For those of you who were fans of the Newhart show that took place in VT, the small town scene at the end of the opening credits was filmed in Center Sandwich. They show a car driving by this sign.

The Sidehiller very much fits in with that small New England town feel. The race starts on the Sandwich Fairgrounds on groomed ski trails and after you do a loop, you cross the road and do about a 3 mile loop through woods, old orchards, people's back yards and over stone walls, before coming back over to the fairgrounds to finish. Post-race food is provided by the Sandwich General Store, which has a fitting name for a place to go for food, as racer Dave Dunham pointed out.

The race is only possible because of the landowners who let us use their land, and the Sandwich Sidehillers Winter Trails club who sponsor the race along with my running club, the White Mountain Milers. The Sidehillers are a great bunch, a club that is a mixture of snowmobilers and cross country skiers, which gives the group a great mix of people whose common bond is the love of trails in the winter. For those of you ran the race, it was members of the Sidehillers who were shoveling snow on the road for you as you crossed from the Fairgrounds into the woods and back. I know they get a kick out of hosting this race too.

Race prep for me began two weeks before the race when I met Sidehillers Tony Leiper and Russ Johnson at the Fairgrounds so we could check out course conditions. We were amazed at how much snow was out there. In other years we've needed to shovel snow on the stone walls that the course goes over. This year Russ was able to drive his snow machine right over them as he groomed the course.

We lucked out race week, as we got close to a foot and half of fresh snow, leaving the woods looking like a winter wonderland with fresh snow covering every tree branch.

Come Race Day morning, I headed over the Fairgrounds at 7 AM, giving me plenty of time to set up registration, do a last minute check of course markings and get a chance to ski a couple of laps around the Fairgrounds' groomed trails. People began coming in around 9:30 and it was a chance for me to catch up with some fellow snowshoe enthusiasts I haven't seen in a while, like Jack Casey and Bill Morse. Bob Dion from Dion Snowshoes got there a few minutes later and the line began to start at his car as he and wife, Denise, gave out loaners to the people who needed them.

There was a nice mixture of locals, first time snowshoe racers and WMAC regulars who showed up, along with some members of the Milers too. Ages ranged from 14 year old Miler, Peter Haine, to 78 year old WMAC Veteran, Richard Busa.

The race started right at 11 and the racers were off. Conditions on the fairgrounds were a little slow in the first mile, due to the recent snow and the warming of the day. Kevin Tilton and Dave Dunham lead the pack, followed by first time snowshoer Max Thomas of Wolfeboro, along with Bob Dion and Acidotic Racing's Chris Dunn and the rest of the pack.

Kevin Tilton won the race in 33:17, beating Dunham by 6 seconds, whose late race surge wasn't enough to overtake Tilton. Dunham started the day with a very early morning run up to the Fire Tower atop Green Mountain in Effingham. Tilton was coming off a 21 Mile, 9 Hour backcountry ski trip the day before. It's a wonder both of them had any energy left at the finish.

Acidotic's Chris Dunn came in third in 37:11 followed by Bob Dion and Jack Casey. Chris was the race director for the 1st Annual Cobble Mountain Snowshoe Classic in Gilford, NH, which got rave reviews from the competitors. It's really great to see Chris' enthusiasm to promote the sport, as he has started a 3 race series this year.

The first woman of the day was Sarah Hudson of Brookline, MA, who finished her first snowshoe race in 45:14. She was followed by local Center Sandwich resident, Tracy Olafson and WMAC Iron Woman Laurel Shortell, who keeps her 70 plus consecutive WMAC race series streak alive for another weekend.

Among the teams who showed up, the first two spots were taken by the Central Mass Striders, Comprehensive Racing had three runners in the top 10, and WMAC/DION had a strong showing as well. Two White Mountain Milers ran their first snowshoe race- 16 year old Max Thomas, who finished 7th in a time of 39:46 and 14 year old Peter Haine who finished in 17th place. They joined Miler Andrea Masters who ran Sandwich for the second time. It was also great to see several members of the Rochester Runners Club come out. Club President Don Yeaton sent me an email saying he's hooked on the sport. Hopefully we'll see even more of them in Sandwich next year.

Thanks again to everyone who came out to the race. It was great to see some old friends and see a lot of first time racers too. I'll see some of you on the trails and the USATF-NE Mountain Circuit in just a few months- assuming winter actually ends at some point.

Paul Kirsch

FROSTY'S RACE FOR THE CURE 2.9 - MILE SNOWSHOE RACE February 10, 2008 Atkinson, NH

01. Patrick Ard	23	0:18:25	100.00
02. Todd Lagimonier	42	0:19:00	99.09
03. Dave Dunham	43	0:19:38	98.18
04. Dave Hannon	36	0:20:22	97.27
05. Ken Clark	45	0:20:54	96.36
06. Bob Dion	52	0:21:48	95.45
07. Janos Mako	47	0:21:56	94.55
08. Scott Graham	49	0:22:09	93.64
09. Scott Jenkins	44	0:22:23	92.73
10. Bob Wanamaker	49	0:22:38	91.82
11. Sarah Hudson	30	0:23:30	90.91
12. Bill Morse	56	0:23:57	90.00
13. Duane Skofield	49	0:25:49	89.09
14. Allan Beebe	58	0:26:18	88.18
15. Chris Sammartano	51	0:26:25	87.27
16. Rob Jowett	45	0:27:07	86.36
17. Linda Jowett	44	0:27:07	85.45
18. Gunner Ericsson	13	0:29:09	84.55
19. Thomas Johnston	11	0:29:12	83.64
20. Laurel Shortel	41	0:29:34	82.73
21. Kelly Hulshult	43	0:29:54	81.82
22. Susan Maclean	49	0:30:00	80.91
23. Bill Howard	59	0:30:18	80.00
24. Lanie Jowett	13	0:30:32	79.09
25. Griffin Holland	13	0:30:33	78.18
26. Jack Douglas	42	0:30:51	77.27
27. Terry Branchamp	36	0:31:03	76.36
28. Tim Creegan	30	0:31:04	75.45
29. Denise Dion	49	0:32:34	74.55
30. Alicia Hammond	30	0:32:51	73.64
31. Nancy Brome	45	0:32:56	72.73
32. Douglas Dutil	43	0:33:13	71.82
33. Jen Samiotes	37	0:33:29	70.91
34. Gayle Prokop	41	0:33:57	70.00
35. Lisa Dresden	26	0:34:08	69.09
36. Sam Fay	11	0:34:13	68.18
37. Don Hutchinson	44	0:34:28	67.27
38. Douglas Romano	44	0:35:28	66.36
39. Sheila Jenkins	45	0:36:11	65.45
40. Christer Ericsson	43	0:38:15	64.55
41. Konrad Karolczuk	55	0:39:24	63.64
42. George Tournas	56	0:39:26	62.73
43. Cory Varga	14	0:39:49	61.82
44. Cam Toohey	12	0:39:50	60.91
45. Nick Lambert	12	0:42:26	60.00
46. Lindsay Desharnais	17	0:42:30	59.09
47. Jackie Amante	17	0:42:30	58.18
48. Marlo Downer	35	0:42:38	57.27
49. Pamela Paraski	42	0:43:10	56.36
50. Isabel Parker	81	0:43:20	55.45
51. Kelly McNary	42	0:43:34	54.55
52. John Pomer	51	0:43:39	53.64
53. Sharon Skinner	45	0:43:43	52.73
54. Doris Chow	35	0:43:50	51.82

Finishers 55 through 110 were not timed.

NEW HAMPSHIRE WEEKEND RECAP

The New Hampshire snowshoe weekend kicked off with the first (?) USSSA qualifier ever held in NH. It was interesting watching the landscape change as I drove up Route 16. In Bradford there was little snow on the ground and it didn't change much until I was North of Rochester NH. As the sun began to rise the height of the snow banks along the road did the same. I arrived in Effingham at 8 AM, giving myself enough time to take a little side trip up Green Mountain. My goal was to run up and down and check out the views at yet another New Hampshire fire tower. I also wanted leave enough in the tank for the race later in the morning.

I slipped on my Dion's and headed up the trail at an easy jog. The nearly 900' of climb over 1.5 miles was a mix of long steady climbs with a couple of steep sections thrown in. There was easily two feet of snow on the ground, but luckily the trail appeared to be well used. It was packed down with another 4" of very light powder from the previous night covering that. It was great snow for running in! There were tracks all over the road from deer crossing and using the trail as their major highway. I had hoped to see some wildlife but was shut-out in that department.

I hit the summit in 26 minutes and then spent about 10 minutes carefully climbing the tower. I'm not great with heights and have lousy balance so it was especially precarious with the narrow steps that were completely covered with snow. It probably would have been quicker to remove my snowshoes but I chose not to. The run down was a blast, long strides and very little braking. I hit the bottom in 12 minutes. After a quick change of gear I drove the hour to Sandwich NH.

Race director Paul Kirsch greeted me and noted that it looked like a perfect day for racing. There was at least two feet of snow on the ground and the course would be fairly well packed down by snowmobile. I met up with CMS teammate Kevin Tilton, who was doing his first snowshoe race of the season, for an easy three miles on the scenic side roads near Center Sandwich. Kevin hadn't raced much this winter but was training heavily with an emphasis on skiing as he prepares for the Mt Washington "ski to the clouds". He had done a 21 mile nine hour ski with some ungodly amount of climb and descent the day before. I started thinking that I might be able to eat into the two minutes I predicted he'd beat me by. We changed into our race gear and headed out for another mile on snowshoes. Bob Dion joined us and we caught a group of WMACer's in what looked like a team strategy meeting.

Paul gave us a brief description of the course which was essentially the same as 2007. We had a loop around the fairground in a little less than a mile then we'd cross the road. Then we'd have a pretty steep but short climb, really the only HILL in the race. After climbing we'd have a rolling 2+ miles through the back yards and fields and over stone walls. That would bring us back to the hill which we'd zip down, cross the road, and do a shorter nearly direct run into the finish line.

NEW HAMPSHIRE WEEKEND RECAP (continued)

The field took off in a cloud of snow as Kevin went to the front. I pulled in behind him with Chris Dunn (acidotic racing) beside me. About ½-way around the field Kevin began to pull away and at the same time I began to gap Chris. The road crossing at Sidehiller is always interesting. There were about ½ dozen DPW guys and a police officer along with a cruiser and backhoe. They had spread out a good 6" of snow on the road in a 10' wide segment for us to run across. They tended the crossing throughout the race, smoothing it out and rebuilding it if any cars went by. It makes for quite a scene. Kevin and I thanked them when we went by on our warm-down and I also said thanks as I ran by during the race.

The hill was tough, but I noticed that Kevin "came back" during the climb. This renewed my hope of keeping him close. For the next mile his lead would be anything from 5 to 15 seconds but he never quite broke away. I pushed as hard as I could after glancing at my watch and seeing 20 minutes. Kevin had run 30 minutes last year and was hoping for the same. I figured we only had about 10 minutes to go so I upped the tempo as much as I could. He was slowly getting reeled in, but I never quite caught him. The entire race I felt like we had a big elastic band holding us together and he'd pull away and stretch it but I'd rebound and pull him back in. Just before the downhill I got to within about 2 seconds and he was very good about not looking back. "I didn't want you to think I was worried" was his reasoning when asked after the race. He did note "I could see you out of the corner of my eye on some of the turns, so I knew you were close". Kevin upped the pace just before the road crossing and except for a momentary hesitation when we got on the field he slowly widened the gap again. I kicked as hard as I could but had to settle for second place, six seconds back. I was very happy to be able to push Kevin, even if he came to the race a bit tired.

We didn't really get to see anyone else come in as I had to get back as quickly as possible to help with tax preparation (only 9 weeks to get your taxes done!). I did see Chris Dunn come in holding off Bob Dion by 49 seconds. Oddly enough that was the exact same top four finishers from last year in the same order. I noticed that 10 of the 15 finishers from 2007 returned to compete in 2008 and 9 of those 10 ran slower this year. Jeff Hattem was the only one with an improvement, taking 1:11 off of his 2007 despite losing 11 places. The average slow-down was 3:07, it did seem slower this year especially on the fairgrounds. The field size was a 247% increase over last year.

The second day of the NH weekend was the Frosty's dash in Atkinson. Last year the race was held as a XC run due to a lack of snow and the year before it was held DURING a fierce snowstorm. This year it looked like it would be a trail race again right up until Wednesday when Southern NH received snow showers that lingered for the better part of two days. There was just enough snow to run on. The course was going to be slightly different from two years ago due to construction, but the snowmobile had been out packing down the course and it looked like it would hold up well.

The fancy Atkinson country club was a bit intimidating to some of us who rarely come in from the woods, but it was very festive in the ballroom with people EVERYWHERE. I found out that

the course would be a little short of the 5K advertised distance and heard that we would do about 2.3 miles and then pass the finish and continue on the "kids loop" a 1K loop which the younger kids raced on earlier in the morning. I was a bit skeptical remembering the confusion last year when people chose not to do the second loop in the trail race and garbled the results. I went out with Bob Wannamaker for a warm-up; he was pretty excited as this was his first snowshoe race. After three miles on the road I switched into race gear and headed for the line. After double-checking with the race director I went out and did 10 minutes on snowshoes. I was cutting it close and actually got a little nervous when I turned around and realized it was pretty much all up hill back to the start and I only had a couple of minutes to spare.

I got to the line during final instructions and Ken Clark hollered for us to come over to the left of the starting "arch" so that we wouldn't get caught in the large pack of kids. Good call on Ken's part! We were off in a flash with the snowmobile leading the way and spewing some serious fumes. After about ½ mile Patrick Ard from Whirlaway RT pulled ahead and soon after Todd Lagimonier also passed me and began to pull away. Both were running in their first snowshoe race and both have some excellent road race times. I started to miss the fumes from the snowmobile as the leaders widened the gap. At around two miles we looped around an elevated green which made for a good opportunity to see how the rest of the field was doing. Dave Hannon was close behind and Ken Clark was also still in the hunt. I was shocked to see a woman running between Dave and Ken, and then I noticed she was not wearing snowshoes (huh? I thought this was a snowshoe race).

Patrick continued to pull away taking the victory running just over 6 minutes per mile. I felt flat the entire race, partly from the race the day before and partly from the speed that we were covering the rolling terrain. Todd finished about ½ way between Patrick and me. Dave Hannon and Ken rounded out the top five. The top ten was an "old" crowd with the average age being 43, with only two finishers under the age of 42. There was a problem with some of the field not completing the entire 2.9 miles and the results only listed times out to 54th place.

Six tough New Englanders completed the New Hampshire weekend of racing. I had the lowest combined time but Sarah Hudson had the best result, topping all women in both races.

Dave Dunham

NH WEEKEND FINAL STANDINGS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Sidehiller</u>	<u>Frosty's</u>
Dave Dunham	0:53:01	0:33:23	0:19:38
Bob Dion	0:59:48	0:38:00	0:21:48
Bill Morse	1:06:52	0:42:55	0:23:57
Sarah Hudson	1:08:44	0:45:14	0:23:30
Laurel Shortell	1:21:22	0:51:48	0:29:34
Denise Dion	1:28:40	0:56:06	0:32:34