

WMAC SNO-NEWS

EMPIRE STATE GAMES FUTURE

The New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation announced that funding for the Empire State Games has been eliminated from Governor Paterson's proposed 2009-2010 budget. The press release can be found at:

<http://www.nysparks.state.ny.us/news/press/view.asp?pressID=719>



The removal of the annual \$3 million line item, including funds from the state as well as the New York lottery system will create the first-ever pay-to-play for this year's summer Empire State Games as well as the suspension of the masters and open divisions.

Beginning at this year's summer games held in the Hudson Valley Region, a \$285 fee was to be assessed for all scholastic-level athletes to cover the cost of room, board and local transportation for the four-day event July 22 through 26. Unfortunately, the sponsor's of this year's summer games have pulled out and the event is not likely to happen.

Three scholastic events, boxing, fencing and shooting were suspended for the 2009 summer games with softball being moved from an open classification to a scholastic event. During this year's winter games in Lake Placid, the bobsled, skeleton and luge events were pulled under the disguise of World Championship's at Mt. Van Hoevenberg.

Also being suspended will be the annual Senior Games. The changes by the department are part of a 10 percent reduction ordered to help reduce the state's \$15.4 billion deficit.

The Empire State Games, created in 1978 by Governor Hugh Carey, has annually invited more than 7,000 athletes to various venues throughout the state to participate in a celebration of sport. Currently 40 states have created their own version of the state games. The annual events also bring an estimated economic impact of \$8 to \$12 million to each local venue, with some estimates as high as \$15 million. So, an investment of less than \$3 million can generate somewhere of \$8 - \$15 million, isn't that considered a stimulus package?

All Photos other than labeled were taken by Beth and Brad Herder, www.Berskshiresports.org

While attending this year's opening ceremony on February 20th, I couldn't help but notice a number of things. First, this year there was no Clergy as part of the ceremony. Secondly, it could perhaps be considered an insult to the crowd in attendance to hear Carol Ash, Commissioner of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. She went on and on about next year's winter games and restoring the bobsled, luge and skeleton. Even showed foils on the large screens about the 2010 games. Dennis Ryan, who has been the master of ceremonies in every winter games since 1978 and it is believed has worn the same sweater at each, even did his best to sell next year. However, the overall sentiment was this might be the last one. Another observation, typically after the opening ceremony, there are many local business who setup displays of their products. I ran into a guy that had the indoor rock climbing wall at previous ceremonies. I asked him why he wasn't there and he responded "no one asked me, I normally donated the wall and the time for free." The NY Lottery pulled out of this year's games. Their press release can be found at the link below. Funny - I didn't explicitly see anything in that about pulling funding for the ESGs.

http://www.nylottery.org/ny/nyStore/cgi-bin/ProdDetEv_Cat_333662_NavRoot_304_ProdID_1461594.htm

My family has absolutely enjoyed our experiences at the Empire State Winter Games. My daughter's have achieved great success. In an interview that the Albany Times Union did on them, each was asked what the games have meant to them. Their responses were similar, it has taught each that if you work hard you can achieve your goals. Additionally, they feel it has brought our family closer together. That is really the gold medal. A petition to save the games can be found at:

<http://www.petitiononline.com/SavESG09/>

Regards,
Gary W. Stenburn
Stenburn@aol.com



First photo, Samantha carrying the banner in, Amara on her left. Above Photo, Samantha 100M gold, Amara 100M silver.

SPARKS WILL FLY AT THE PITTSFIELD (VT) SNOWSHOE MARATHON

Pittsfield was a multiple choice competition with participants selecting a combination of 6.5 mile loops. Some had enough fun after the initial go around, others targeted the half and 38 overachievers, 5 women and 33 men, achieved full marathon status. This was no small feat as the loop boasts approximately 1,800' of elevation change tempered by an uncountable number of switchbacks. Basically you are going up and down a scenic mountain trail but not really enjoying any of the scenery.

The Borden family were camped out at the top of the mountain after making ten trips hauling supplies up and down. They were probably the only ones who had time to scout out the view. The rest of us were exhausted from the tough climb and concentrating on consuming their wonderful chicken soup. It was rather funny. The kids had stacked giant cans of Campbell's chicken noodle soup, Andy Warhol-style, in a colorful pyramid. As the day wore on, the pyramid got smaller and smaller, a perfect example of functional art!

Once the summit was achieved, we were treated to a baby roller coaster ride through a Black Forest section and then a twisty free-for-all to the bottom. This is where the sparks literally did fly. On the first go-around, I had a blast skiing down the shoot, arms out wide for balance. The snow, though deep, was nice and soft. We displaced so much of it that later loops unearthed an extraordinary number of rolling stones. Charles Petraske reported that while he was following close on the heels of his friend Edward Habeck he witnessed sparks shoot off Edward's crampons as he made contact with errant rocks. Thanks to this team of intrepid mountaineers we have verified yet another useful backwoods survival tip: when lost in the woods on a wintery trail it is possible to make a lifesaving fire with only a snowshoe and a rock for company. I wonder if Bob Dion could perfect this trick for a new marketing campaign?

As the day wore on, the sparks, not nearly as electric, became a nagging part of the wallpaper. I'm referring to those mental charges that fire synapses. According to *Wikipedia*, that semi-reliable free computer encyclopedia that no one admits to using, "...synapses are junctions through which neurons signal to each other and as such are crucial to the biological computations that underlie perception and thought." After a few circuits on the trail, there is not much thought going on except the whining kind.

At times, my sparks definitely misfired, aiming at someone else's synapses. As the loops accumulated, I became impatient with the "easy" pace of the first few uphill miles and craved the seemingly vertical rise near the top. Either I just wanted to hurry up and get down to business or I was looking forward to the type of killer ascent where running is simply out of the question and stumbling forward is considered good form.

This is the third year for the Peaks Snowshoe and each year Jason Hayden tweaks the course slightly both to keep us from getting too complacent and also to give all the opportunity for a new PR. After the first year he eliminated the road section as well as the energetic farmers who thought to give us a break by plowing the roads. This year he built a wonderful trestle bridge complete with resident trolls and switched the uphill and downhill sections. I was eternally grateful that I did not have to

go down last year's section. This year the down was eminently runnable, leaving the up portion the stuff of which nightmares are made. Still, once you reached the top, it was reassuring to know that the remaining miles would rush by in a blur.

Sheryl Wheeler reported that the third loop was the most difficult for her, but for me it was the second. I was still running pretty strong but as I approached base camp I was filled with self-doubt. Did I have enough energy in my 62 year-old body to make it over the hill for two more loops? I did not want to get caught in the no-man's land of the third tour lacking the force to make it through the fourth. No one has yet to invent a ¾'s marathon distance and I did at least want to make it onto the results page and into Googleland history.

I knew I had to retie my sneaker, so I decided I would sit down on our supply tub, drink some pepsi and see how I felt. Fortunately, Dave Boles spotted me and gave me a much-needed pep talk. "All you have to do," he said, "is to walk the baby loop and then get into gear." What I really needed at that point was someone to throw a concerned suggestion my way, so I obeyed orders. As I approached the bridge that leads up the mountain, I greeted others coming back. This was heartening, and most importantly I took in one key fact: I was not last!

This is pretty much the way it went from there. I know I will never run a 100 miler because I could never stay awake that long and I would never make the cutoffs anyway. But on this day, I truly did undergo what I imagine to be the core of the 100 miler experience in that all my friends were there for me. Karen, Rob, Barb and Charles were all hanging out in the cold waiting for me to complete my third circuit. Karen helped me add some warmer clothes and walked the baby loop with me while the rest helped Jeff locate some dry clothes so he could accompany me on my final ascent.

Without Jeff to push me up the hill, listen to my whining and utter encouraging words, I never would have made it. Plus, as the shadows lengthened, I noticed moose droppings. Perhaps I had never spotted them at my earlier "breakneck" pace, but I think not—they appeared pretty fresh. The last thing I needed was a solo argument with a 1,000 pound crazed moose over the right of way. At least Jeff and I could totem pole on top of one another to appear more formidable.

When we reached the top, the Bordens had left but Jeff was there to fetch hot chicken soup. Only later did I learn that he had completed his half wearing his after-race corduroy pants and LL Bean rubber boots! Along the way he shattered all previous carbo-loading theories, having fortified himself with a lunch consisting of half a bottle of wine and taco chips.

Our friends were there at the end too, with Karen driving us back to the Swiss Farm B&B in Jeff's car while Rob followed in hers. When we arrived home and unpacked, we realized that their concern extended even further as we uncovered not two, but four hand-carved Husky finisher's award hammers. Everyone was worried that we would be too tired to claim our prize so they made sure we were well-supplied. Think of all the sparks we can make fly next year!

laura clark

PITTSFIELD VERMONT SNOWSHOE MARATHON, 1/2 MARATHON AND 6 MILE**MARCH 7, 2009****PITTSFIELD, VERMONT****HALF MARATHON FINISHERS**

1. Kagey, M	30-39	2:34:40
2. Huckins, J	20-29	2:35:34
3. Habeck Iii, E	30-39	2:37:18
4. Petraske, C	30-39	2:37:54
5. Smith, B	30-39	2:39:03
6. Kingstone, B	12-19	2:43:35
7. Desrosiers, J	30-39	2:44:43
8. Legnard, S	30-39	2:44:54
9. Guertin, C	30-39	2:45:48
10. Parent, T	30-39	2:48:02
11. Sanders-Fleming	20-29	2:49:21
12. Jacobs, E	20-29	2:49:32
<u>13. Wilkerson, N</u>	<u>30-39</u>	<u>2:49:40</u>
14. Nelson, N	20-29	2:49:45
15. Wilkerson, K	40-49	2:52:04
16. Osberg, E	30-39	2:53:45
17. Michel, S	30-39	3:01:10
18. Emanuele, M	30-39	3:03:00
19. Perkins, C	40-49	3:03:49
20. Soroka, M	30-39	3:06:07
21. Hammel, D M	30-39	3:07:22
22. Graf, B	40-49	3:08:32
23. Morris, M	30-39	3:09:02
24. Regan, M	20-29	3:11:30
<u>25. Malherbe, S</u>	<u>30-39</u>	<u>3:13:34</u>
26. Compagnola, J	30-39	3:13:50
27. Zucker, Z	60-69	3:21:07
<u>28. Hayden, A</u>	<u>30-39</u>	<u>3:22:42</u>
29. Do Rego, S	30-39	3:27:51
<u>30. Buonagurio, C</u>	<u>40-49</u>	<u>3:29:06</u>
31. Roberts, B	40-49	3:29:42
32. Cottrill, Y	30-39	3:31:35
<u>33. Krebs, M</u>	<u>20-29</u>	<u>3:35:54</u>
<u>34. Gill, K</u>	<u>20-29</u>	<u>3:36:00</u>
<u>35. Robson, E</u>	<u>20-29</u>	<u>3:36:00</u>
36. Normandin, S	20-29	3:36:25
37. Waters, M	20-29	3:39:37
38. Guertin, C	30-39	3:44:08
39. Konopack, J	30-39	3:45:06
40. Callahan, K	20-29	3:49:55
41. Dougherty, M	20-29	3:50:40
42. Longcor, J	20-29	3:50:43
<u>43. Smiarosky, S</u>	<u>20-29</u>	<u>3:51:41</u>
<u>44. Hill, R</u>	<u>30-39</u>	<u>3:52:17</u>
45. Antunes, N	20-29	3:52:46
<u>46. Morgan, L</u>	<u>30-39</u>	<u>3:53:46</u>
47. Levine, E	20-29	3:55:06
48. Moore, C	20-29	3:55:10
49. O'grady, T	40-49	3:56:21
<u>50. Sorrell, B</u>	<u>50-59</u>	<u>4:04:50</u>
51. Roland, P	60-69	4:07:08
<u>52. Sukiennicki, T</u>	<u>0-49</u>	<u>4:08:49</u>
53. Krivanek, J	30-39	4:10:29
<u>54. Zerillo, A</u>	<u>30-39</u>	<u>4:11:19</u>
55. Hartwell, G	20-29	4:11:54
56. Zerillo, J	30-39	4:13:54
57. Kingsbury, T	30-39	4:14:52

HALF MARATHON FINISHERS

<u>58. Pangborn, D</u>	<u>40-49</u>	<u>4:18:52</u>
<u>59. Menzies, A</u>	<u>30-39</u>	<u>4:22:01</u>
<u>60. Beckett, L</u>	<u>20-29</u>	<u>4:22:08</u>
61. Beckett, T	30-39	4:22:19
<u>62. Eshelman, A</u>	<u>40-49</u>	<u>4:43:25</u>
<u>63. Chamales, C</u>	<u>40-49</u>	<u>4:47:59</u>
64. Cuttler, J	20-29	5:05:05
65. Cuttler, Z	20-29	5:05:15
66. Riedl, B	20-29	5:05:23
67. Callahan, M	40-49	5:43:48
<u>68. Stuma, A</u>	<u>20-29</u>	<u>6:10:37</u>
<u>69. Wan, B</u>	<u>12-19</u>	<u>6:10:41</u>

MARATHON FINISHERS

1. Schmitt, L	30-39	4:36:52
2. Nephew, B	20-29	4:48:30
3. Rusiecki, B	30-39	4:49:58
4. Johnson, R	20-29	5:27:30
5. Worthington, T	20-29	5:33:59
6. Shultis, J	40-49	5:46:17
<u>7. Wheeler, S</u>	<u>40-49</u>	<u>5:53:07</u>
8. Quell, C	40-49	6:01:37
9. Hathaway, T	20-29	6:16:43
10. Valdo, D	20-29	6:26:53
<u>11. Cullen, A</u>	<u>20-29</u>	<u>6:29:09</u>
12. Ferreira, D	20-29	6:29:10
13. Moody-Roberts, S	20-29	6:31:02
14. Durgin, K	20-29	6:34:01
15. Martinez, R	30-39	6:51:28
16. Losey, B	30-39	7:08:40
17. Dube, G	40-49	7:10:07
<u>18. Badershall, J</u>	<u>30-39</u>	<u>7:17:16</u>
19. Kurtz, W	40-49	7:18:49
20. Fatkulin, R	20-29	7:28:27
21. Lacharite, M	50-59	7:39:27
22. Laporte, A	40-49	7:40:49
23. Delibac, D	50-59	7:52:00
24. Lis, D	30-39	8:03:52
25. Sautter, J	30-39	8:06:45
26. Myers, D	50-59	8:06:48
27. Engel, B	50-59	8:11:05
28. Wilcox, A	20-29	8:24:15
29. Zirblis, R	50-59	8:42:58
30. Robert, J	20-29	8:44:13
31. Lacroix, S	20-29	8:44:17
<u>32. Clark, L</u>	<u>60-69</u>	<u>8:52:33</u>
33. Branham, T	20-29	9:01:44
34. Asker, C	40-49	9:01:52
35. Cleary, J	60-69	9:06:12
36. Horsford, D	40-49	9:09:02
37. Spyrou, P	20-29	10:00:00
38. Hirsch, S	20-29	10:00:00

6 MILE FUN RUN WMAC GANG

11 th Dave Boles, 1:37:46	22 nd Maureen Roberts, 1:49:04
32 nd Karen McWhirt, 2:07:59	33 rd Jeff Clark, 2:08:04
39 th Don Lacharite, 2:37:01	40 th Betty Lacharite, 2:37:06

A WEEKEND ON THE WEST COAST – '09 USSSA SNOWSHOE NATIONALS

I woke up this morning to find a somewhat rare dusting of snow on the ground in Portland OR. Mt Hood got a fair amount of snow overnight. We headed out leaving ample time for the drive as the mountain road is popular with skiers and it would have a decent coating of snow. We hit the parking lot just as the junior race was heading out.

The weather was much nicer than yesterday, with the winds much milder and the snow not flying. The sun was even peeking out. The area looked totally different than when we struggled through the flying snow. You could see most of the first 1/2 mile of course climbing up the valley.

We headed for registration to pick up packets as they were not ready yesterday. The race management was sloppy at best and downright uncaring about the athletes at worst. Registration (I had pre-registered) was very slow and I was told "You'll be getting a large shirt, that is all we have". I thought about mentioning that I had ordered a medium when I had registered over a month ago, but just let it go. Rich had mentioned that the race management had a laid back style. Laid back was a nice way of putting it. I would call them unprofessional. I was mocked when I asked if they had an entrants list. So much for this being a "national championship".

We headed back to the car and to prepare for a warm-up. The ladies race took off on schedule at 11:00, with us soon to follow at 11:45. The course was a 2-loop 5km with 1,100' of climb (550' per loop). Unfortunately the timing of the events would mean that a lot of the women would get lapped out on the course. The described course from the website was not quite what was being run on. Rather than a mix of single-track and wide trail it was 100% single-track. Not a big deal, but it could be difficult for passing.

We did a 2 mile warm-up by doing many loops around the parking lot, there was nowhere else to run. After that a quick switch to racing gear and we headed off to do another few minutes on snowshoes. I threw in 4 or 5 pick-ups and it was time to go. I had seen Brandy Erholtz (US mountain team member) storm through the first loop under 30 minutes so it looked like the race was going to be (relatively) quick.

After a few words from USSSA sports director Mark Elmore we were off in a flurry of snow. My goal was a top 15 finish, I'd be disappointed with anything over 20th (based on past results and my current form). Within 100m of the start I was in a line of runners and I counted off 14 in front of me. Perfect. Soon the line began to slow a bit and I jumped into the powder and went by 3 guys. Around 1/2 mile into the race we got to the steepest pitch. I felt very good and asked two guys to let me pass. They willingly let me as they were walking. After cresting the top I reeled in a few other guys and by the mile I found myself in 5th place. This was a major surprise.

I pushed, but not too hard, figuring I wanted to have something for the second lap. I was just over 14 minutes at the top. The downhill was steady and had few sharp turns, which is great for me. The snow was packed well and the running was easy. I felt bad asking some of the women to step aside (yelling "track" as I approached). It really wasn't fair to them to give way but Mark

had mentioned at the start that slower runners should yield the trail. I hit the 2nd loop in 24 minutes (10:35 for the downhill), and started the second climb. According to the time stamps on the pics Kelli took the leader was 1:49 up on me at the end of lap one. He had a seven second lead. 3rd and 4th were 50 and 55 seconds in front of me.

This was the first time since early in the race that I could see the leaders. Peter Fain and Kelly Mortenson were well up but seemed to be locked in a great duel. I saw Charlie Wertheim as he caught Andrew Kless in the steep bowl. They were at least a minute up on me. When I hit the top of the bowl I looked back and figured I had a good minute on the next guy. I started thinking I might be able to hold 5th and make the US snowshoe team. I tried to push hard to the top, knowing that my downhill running is not the best.

I hit the top 13 minutes since passing the start line, which was a little better than lap one but we had not done a little section (100m) down near the start. I really tried to hammer the downhill. About half-way down I passed Rich Busa who offered some encouragement, he looked to be moving steadily and I yelled "give 'em hell Rich" as I went by. I felt a bit beat up on the downhill, my back and my bum ankle was giving me a lot of grief. I checked my watch twice knowing that the down would only be 10 minutes. I looked at 5 minutes and again at 8 minutes. I was also running out of steam. Maybe the altitude was getting to me (4,600' at the top) or maybe I was just tired. Whatever. With about a minute to go I heard footsteps and heavy breathing. I ramped it up as much as I could, but with about 25 meters to go he sprinted by and I had no answer. I crossed the line beat, but pleased with a 6th place finish. The guy who beat me was also in the 45-49 age group as was the 3rd place finisher. So I got 6th overall and was 3rd in the 45-49, yikes! From the times on the pictures, the guy who beat me came from way back. He ran conservatively on the first loop and I was 1:41 ahead of him after 5km!

Rich came in a couple of minutes later, running well despite his knee woes that have severely curtailed his training. We quickly changed into dry clothes and did another 2 miles in the parking lot. Results were somewhat posted but confusing as they had times listed from when the first race of the day started (example: Peter Fain 2:08:59 - he won the race in about 45 minutes). We didn't wait around for them to get results as it didn't seem like that would be happening anytime soon. After chatting with some of the Dungeon Rock folks and the Dion's we hit the road.

All in all it was a good day. The course was fantastic and I'm sure on a clear day the views would be spectacular. I won't let poor race management spoil my day! On to the East coast where racing is taken seriously. :-)

Dave Dunham

THE BARNYARD AWARDS!

<http://www.runwmac.com/snowshoes/Results/The%20Barnyard%20Awards.pdf>

And send to: Laura at

lclark@SALS.EDU

9th ANNUAL U.S.S.A. NATIONAL 10KM SNOWSHOE CHAMPIONSHIP**White River Sno Park on the slopes of Mt Hood****Portland, OR****March 8th, 2009**

<u>PL</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>SEX</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>ST</u>	<u>TIME</u>
01.	Peter Fain	M	35-39	CA	44:30
02.	Kelly Mortenson	M	35-39	MN	45:01
03.	Charlie Werheim	M	45-49	CO	46:11
04.	DJ Snyder	M	20-24	ID	46:34
05.	Robert Bolton	M	45-49	SD	47:48
06.	Dave Dunham	M	45-49	MA	47:54
07.	Aaron Robertson	M	30-34	NY	49:01
08.	Mark McManus	M	35-39	CA	49:13
09.	Daren Brungardt	M	25-29	CO	49:42
10.	Sylvester Coons	M	35-39	NV	50:18
11.	Trever Coolidge	M	25-29	OR	50:33
12.	Richard Bolt	M	35-39	OR	50:54
13.	Kevin Guiberson	M	40-44	WA	51:23
14.	Jeremy Drowne	M	30-34	NY	51:27
15.	Matt Westerland	M	35-39	NY	51:54
16.	Brandy Ereholtz	F	30-34	CO	51:58
17.	Nathan Huckle	M	30-34	NY	52:10
18.	Jason Bond	M	30-34	MN	52:26
19.	Mark Robins	M	35-39	OR	52:37
20.	Andrew Kless	M	20-24	NY	53:41
21.	Kevin Cooper	M	35-39	OR	53:54
22.	Charlie Andrews	M	50-54	NY	54:04
23.	David Delmore	M	20-24	OR	54:33
24.	Frank Mungeam	M	45-49	OR	55:06
25.	Barry Klettke	M	50-54	WA	55:49
26.	Bob Cooper	M	60-64	CO	55:57
27.	Robert Lang	M	50-54	BC	56:00
28.	Kenny Brown	M	40-44	CA	56:33
29.	Ben Volk	M	40-44	WA	56:50
30.	John Kann	M	55-59	WI	58:05
31.	Greg Crego	M	40-44	NY	58:26
32.	Sonja Wieck	F	30-34	CO	58:37
33.	Casey Shea	F	20-24	CO	58:39
34.	Mark Rickman	M	45-49	CO	58:51
35.	Christy Runde	F	40-44	WA	58:57
36.	Wayne Cottrell	M	45-49	CA	59:39
37.	Gregory Luna	M	40-44	PA	1:00:12
38.	Jay Curry	M	35-39	MA	1:00:17
39.	Robert Dion	M	50-54	VT	1:00:20
40.	Judd Johnston	M	55-59	MI	1:00:20
41.	Jim McDonell	M	55-59	MN	1:00:21
42.	Steven Heil	M	40-44	WI	1:00:28
43.	Johnathan Beck	M	25-29	OR	1:00:29
44.	Cheryl Paulson	F	45-49	CO	1:00:58
45.	Patrick Smith	M	45-49	MA	1:01:21
46.	Myra Klettke	F	45-49	OR	1:01:36
47.	Adam Chase	M	40-44	CO	1:01:37
48.	Michael Cobb	M	35-39	OR	1:03:14
49.	Laurie Lambert	F	45-49	TX	1:03:41
50.	Rent Weigeer	M	60-64	WY	1:03:46
51.	Aable Cook	M	45-49	OR	1:03:51
52.	Steven Rivers	M	45-49	NY	1:04:00
53.	Pete Peter	M	50-54	MN	1:04:05
54.	Jim Graupner	M	65-69	MN	1:04:40
55.	Bill Morse	M	55-59	MA	1:05:00

<u>PL</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>SEX</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>ST</u>	<u>TIME</u>
56.	Paty Strudevant	F	40-44	OR	1:05:15
57.	Lynanne Lorenz	F	30-34	NY	1:05:17
58.	Burke Duncan	F	25-29	OR	1:05:18
59.	Lucas Will	M	25-29	OR	1:06:01
60.	Cecilia Walker	F	45-49	FL	1:07:04
61.	Kimberleigh Field	F	35-39	NV	1:07:15
62.	Emily Flagg	F	35-39	NY	1:07:19
63.	Tim Ratowski	M	35-39	NY	1:07:47
64.	Michael Burke	M	25-29	OR	1:08:11
65.	Sherry Hecker	F	35-39	NY	1:09:21
66.	Daniel Cooper	M	35-39	MA	1:09:43
67.	Mort Nace	M	40-44	NY	1:09:47
68.	Kaitlyn Sennett	F	20-24	NY	1:09:50
69.	Robert Creer	M	60-64	UT	1:09:59
70.	Casey Gatz	M	25-29	OR	1:10:01
71.	Richard Lovett	M	55-59	OR	1:10:04
72.	Ken Schaible	M	45-49	NY	1:10:07
73.	John Del Toro	M	45-49	MN	1:10:17
74.	Roger De Groot	M	65-69	IA	1:10:52
75.	John Pelton	M	70-74	VT	1:12:08
76.	M. Ross Mortenson	F	40-44	MN	1:12:35
77.	Cindy Cain	F	50-54	MA	1:13:04
78.	Erika Kikuchi	F	30-34	CA	1:13:25
79.	Mike Most	M	55-59	WI	1:13:37
80.	David Agar	M	45-49	ON	1:13:58
81.	JoAnn Ellero	F	40-44	NV	1:15:25
82.	Jamie Laird	M	35-39	OR	1:15:52
83.	Micki Kinner	F	25-29	CO	1:15:57
84.	Keith Johnson	M	60-64	WA	1:16:40
85.	A. Kinzey-Wheeler	F	45-49	CO	1:17:20
86.	Jim Meskimen	M	65-69	CA	1:18:06
87.	Christopheer Kinner	M	30-34	MN	1:18:08
88.	Tyler Hoskins	M	20-24	OR	1:19:22
89.	Kristi Speer	F	25-29	MI	1:20:53
90.	Georgia Nothdurft	F	60-64	MN	1:21:25
91.	Denise Dion	F	50-54	VT	1:23:34
92.	Stephanie Cooper	F	40-44	MA	1:24:20
93.	Dale Davis	F	25-29	OR	1:24:34
94.	Page Kinnner	F	30-34	MN	1:24:43
95.	Chary Griffin	F	60-64	NY	1:25:00
96.	Amelia Forney	F	20-24	CA	1:25:42
97.	Diane Gray	F	45-49	NY	1:26:09
98.	Jolene Wright	F	50-54	MN	1:30:07
99.	Bob Durband	M	65-69	MN	1:30:24
00.	Jennifer Finley	F	30-34	OR	1:31:19
01.	Mary Rivers	F	45-49	NY	1:36:09
02.	Karen Meskimen	F	55-59	CA	1:40:17
03.	Renee Laird	F	30-34	OR	1:41:10
04.	Jacqueline Nunes	F	45-49	CO	1:53:17
05.	Richard Busa	M	80-84	MA	2:04:18

** There were separate Women and Men Races this season at Nationals. I combined the two results into one. If you wish to see the results separated, please check the USSSA Website at: www.snowshoeracing.com

RUNNING WITH ONE SNOWSHOE

They say history repeats itself, well this year history did again repeat itself, however in a much different way. Last year I closed out the snowshoe racing season with the Hawley Kiln Classic snowshoe race and this year was no different. I normally wouldn't close out the season so early, due to the fact races are still tentatively being scheduled for later in March at Northfield and Catamount, but because we will be moving to Cape Cod in two weeks for my new job, I had to settle with the Hawley Kiln being my closer. If I have to say so myself, Hawley Kiln is a great race to close out the season with. Why? Where else can you pay a low cost entry fee, only 15 dollars, race through a wonderfully scenic state forest, socialize with amazing people, and eat an all-star breakfast at the South Face Sugar Shack. To me, that is one heck of a great way to close the season out, especially after having what happened during the race. What happened? The worst case scenario is what happened during that 4.6 mile snowshoe run. I came out of the forest alive, all my limbs were intact, I had no extra openings in my body, and as far as I knew I still had the normal blood levels moving around my body. So what happened? Here is my story.

After arriving, we started seeing all the usual suspects standing in line to register at Ed's van. Konrad and Kenny were doing the registration and for this 15 dollar entry fee you didn't just get to race you got a free admission ticket to eat breakfast, or would it be brunch by that time, at Tom McCrum's South Face Farm Sugar House! I must say, being at a race in the winter you would normally think you'd register inside, but at a snowshoe race, we register in a van down by the field! What better a place if you ask me? Another reason why the WMAC/DION Series is so unique, it carries no frills but people love it and keep coming back. I mean you would think only diehards would stand in line in a windy field to register in a van, but others show up too.



Glen Tryson and Eric Wight on Thunderbolt.

So after we registered, we started to make our way into the east entrance of the forest. Which reminds me, who is Kenneth Dubuque? And why is the forest named after him?? As we entered the east gate we saw a sign concerning the tree damage from the Dec 11th Ice Storm. In short, it basically said, "We need your help and if you can help, email this person to let them know and we'll be doing organized spring clean ups of the trail system." As we ventured out into the woods for the warm-up I could see all the damage. A lot had already been cleaned up to clear the main trails but I could see so much more damage and I saw so many widow-makers hanging in the tops of the trees, possibly very dangerous on a windy day. There will be many hours of work to be done with the clean up just from what little I saw. However, the ice storm is a way mother-nature cleans up her forest, it just makes us have to work a bit harder to enjoy it.

After our short 10 minute warm-up, we ran back to the car to physically warm-up, prep a little and wait for the 10 minute reverie call from Ed. I put on my gaiters, gloves and lastly the snowshoes to get ready for my finale of the season, which would be race #51 in WMAC series and race #53 for snowshoe races lifetime.

Now thinking about it, what is the lifespan of a pair of racing shoes? 300 miles, 400 miles, for some, 500 miles? What about snowshoes? How long should they last? That thought had never crossed my mind. I am on my second pair of snowshoes since I started racing. The first pair is still good, I just upgraded at the end of year three, 2006 season, to a lighter and smaller pair, the Dion 121's. That upgrade has made quite a difference and helped my times get better. In the first 3 years, I did bust a few cleats while running but luckily Dion Snowshoes have interchangeable parts and I was able to get new cleats without getting new snowshoes, a great system if you ask me. Once I got the new Dion 121 snowshoes, I tried the new 1/16th of an inch stainless steel cleats and those days of breaking cleats were done. I finally found something that worked excellent for me and I was sticking with it. After racing in them for approximately 30 races, something was bound to happen. So why am I talking about snowshoes and how long they'll last? That's because about 2 miles after this race started I was about to go through a snowshoe racers worst nightmare!

As everyone neared the starting line, or the imaginary starting line, since we never really actually have a physical line, it appeared that about 70 snow bunnies wanted to take advantage of the beautiful blue sky on this final day of February. It wasn't until this point that I finally saw my mother and my father. I knew my father would be around somewhere but my mother had never been to this place before, so I was worried she might have gotten lost. The last time I talked to her she had said all these races are out in the middle of no-where. Well of course they are I said, the middle of no-where is where you would want to be to have a snowshoe race, not at some fancy resort or golf course in the middle of a city. This is snowshoe racing!

As we gathered by the start line, I saw that my mom was all smiles as she just purchased a brand new pair of snowshoes. She had previously been using my first pair of older snowshoes and they were on their last leg. I then asked Sheila if she saw

RUNNING WITH ONE SNOWSHOE

my father because I didn't see him and she pointed him right out to me. She said, "There he is in his green camouflage wicking shirt, that's why you didn't see him, he's blending in with the woods."

We then gathered in a group and Ed gave us the instructions for the course. He said that the snowmobile trails would be fast and that they were packed. He then said the opposite for the single track. He said that they had been gone through a couple times and were packed but if you went off to the sides of the trail you would sink in about to your knees. Also that the guys in the front might also break through the single track as there was still about 2 feet of snow below. He also informed us that he had placed mile markers every half mile, something that with the advent of GPS has been a great bonus on our courses. Now at least you now know how far you have gone! As with the half marathon the previous weekend, it has become very beneficial! So after his short course description speech, he yelled the famous words, "On your Mark, get Set, Go!"

The first $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile was indeed fast! I felt great and settled into a nice position. I was right behind Steve Wolfe and Peter LaGoy and I was neck and neck with Ken Clark and Larry Dragon. At this point I figured we would be having a dual the entire race and wanted to get into a nice strategic position on the single track since it would be hard to pass. Having raced here many times before I knew that the single track was very curvy and had a lot of switchbacks and zig-zags, and that would allow me to see the people in front of and behind me. After passing Beth, Rich B., Rich G., and Ed Jr. who were at the trail junction directing racers and taking pictures, it was onto the single track we went. This is where it went downhill quick.

I am not a heavy guy. I fluctuate between 150 and 155 pounds, but once I hit the single track I felt like I was 200 pounds. Every third or fourth step I was post-holing through the snow. This caused my balance to tilt to one side and my rhythm was totally thrown off. I would have thought weighing what I do, that I wasn't heavy enough to break through the trail. The more of these races I do I am becoming a very strong believer that everyone runs differently and their running style and posture play an important role in how they run through the snow. I was getting really upset trying to run through this snow. This potholing was really irritating me. I felt great aerobically but these snow conditions were taking their toll on my legs. Maybe I could blame last week's half marathon and say I wasn't completely recovered but I ran about 25 miles during the week and felt fine. Whatever it was I knew I was going to have trouble on this single track. Within minutes I was stepping aside to let people pass me. I believe four people passed me in about the first 5 minutes on the single track. I also knew there was a lot of single track left so instead of trying to keep up with the people who passed me I just slowed down and hoped I wouldn't break through since by going slower I would be putting less force on the snow.

Next thing I know I saw Kenny ahead of me on the trail and he was stopped. I asked him if everything was ok and he said that his snowshoe had come off. I thought to myself "that must stink", not knowing I would soon be facing something very similar. Shortly after I passed him, he went blazing by me, I

guess his snowshoe was still intact. I did notice that the people who passed me were breaking through but I was feeling more physical strain on my muscles and just couldn't recover like they were. Soon after Ken passed me, Erik W. came up on me. I let Erik pass and planned on trying to stay close to him. However, I still kept potholing. I just knew I wouldn't be able to avoid this so I accepted it.

Just before you reach the 1st road crossing there are some short downhill sections. I figured I would try to make up some time there since I enjoy letting myself go out of control on them. This could be where I made a fatal error in judgment, but no one will really know. With Erik not that far ahead of me I let the snow fly and started to make a push for him. About half way down the short hill I post-holed with my left foot and let out a yell. I don't think I let out any profanities but I did let out some kind of shout. Before I could stop myself I was doing a summersault in mid air and landed spread eagle on the right hand side of the trail. I do remember while in mid-air thinking, thank God there is a lot of snow for a soft landing. That slowed me down but I got back up and continued trudging along. Right after that occurred I could feel something was wrong with my left snowshoe. It felt like the left cleat was balled up with snow. I didn't actually look since I have felt that kind of thing happen before so I disregarded it and continued running. I had thought about trying to break it loose but I figured if it was happening now it would keep happening. I was a little further back behind Erik but kept on going. I shortly passed the 1st road crossing and knew the next mile or so would be tough, especially if I kept post-holing.



Brian Northan and Steve Wolfe early at the Kiln.

RUNNING WITH ONE SNOWSHOE (CONTINUED)

Now that I was on a single track section I was hoping for better footing. I didn't get it. I had just passed two miles when Bob D. was in sight behind me. I knew at this rate I would not be able to keep up with him with my current problem. So I let him pass as we briefly chatted. Right after he passed me I again post-holed with my left foot and did another summersault. I was becoming really discouraged and watched him slowly pull away. Well just when I thought it couldn't get any worse I started noticing that my left foot didn't seem snug in the binding. I ran like this for maybe a ¼ mile and finally looked down at my left snowshoe. It appeared fine but something wasn't right. The balling up effect on the snowshoe was still there and after running with it for a half mile like that, I decided to look at it. Much to my surprise the snow wasn't balling up at all on the cleat. Quite the opposite, somewhere on the course, possibly when I did my first summersault, I had bent the stainless steel cleat to a 90 degree angle. So the balling effect I thought I was feeling was the cleat at a new angle. This problem only complicated my current dilemma. Since the cleat was now bent, it was positioned at a new angle and was cutting the leather binding. The binding was only attached by a few threads before it would be completely torn and hence I would be unable to keep my foot attached to the snowshoe.

As I was examining it I saw Peter M, Jay C, and Chelynn approaching fast. I started running again but within 50' the straps broke. I wouldn't be able keep the snowshoe on. I quickly tried to think of some MacGyverism to fix it but nothing came to mind. Those three passed me and I felt if I continued I would be cheating so I yelled out and asked them if they cared if I continued with one snowshoe one. They said they didn't care, so I picked up my left snowshoe and continued down the trail. I thought I was post-holing it bad with two snowshoes, now it was worse. Having just a snowshoe on my right foot I had the surface area to maintain float, however, with just a racing flat on my left foot and now a much smaller surface area I was post-holing it with every step. I even tried walking but it wasn't doing any good. Luckily for me I wasn't too far away from exiting the single track and joining the snowmobile trail. I did the final single track section with a combined effort of both running and walking.

It was a little awkward running with one snowshoe and one sneaker but it was doable. On the next snowmobile section I did pass Chelynn, Jay and Peter. Each one I showed my broken snowshoe to. I did feel weird passing them with only one snowshoe but they didn't seem to mind because in the world of stuff happening, stuff happens! So after picking up some ground on them I took a right back off the snowmobile trail and onto some single track. This single track would be a much shorter section than the prior two and we would rejoin the main snowmobile trail where Beth and the guys were originally standing and taking pictures. That section was tough for me and I was post-holing it almost every other step, but when I reached Beth and Rich Busa at the end of the single track, I knew it would be smooth sailing the rest of the way.

I was not able to catch anyone and no one passed me for the remainder of the race. As I was running towards the finish, a few racers who had already finished and were doing a cool down saw me carrying one snowshoe and commented how that

sucks. I showed everyone my snowshoe, including Bob Dion who was especially interested in it since I wear his snowshoes. When Bob saw the cleat bent 90 degrees he said, "you bent a 1/16th of an inch stainless steel cleat and you're the first person to do it". The big question is though, how?? It's not like I stepped on a rock and bent it. We had over 2 feet of snow we were running on and the thing bent. However, it happened and I think it happened when I did the first summersault. I don't know how but it did. Unfortunately for me that made my binding also break and hence made for an interesting race.

After showing everyone the snowshoe, I went out to reel in my mother, and then Sheila and my father. As I walked out to where Beth was photographing people, I saw my mother and cheered her on. In her first serious year of snowshoeing she has taken a liking to it and I am sure we'll be seeing her for years to come. After cheering her on, I reached Beth and Richard's position and told them about my snowshoe breaking and after chatting with them I saw my wife and father. They were coming down the final single track trail. They were all smiles and I then joined them for their remainder of the race. My father was complaining as usual on how his mind says he needs and wants to go faster but his body won't let him. Sheila commented on how it was nice going slow and enjoying the surroundings, something that doesn't happen when you race fast. They both said they enjoyed each other's company and I was happy they were together. Once they crossed the finish line my father was interested in looking at my snowshoe and Sheila and I went back out on the course to reel in Milky. When we got to Milky we told him that a wonderful breakfast awaited him inside a nice heated maple sugaring facility. I think that motivated him to move a tad faster and when he crossed the line he commented, like many others do, how every course is so different and each brings its own challenges. Since Milky was the final racer for the day all the people that were hanging around decided that now was the time to head to the South Face Farm for breakfast!

Once we arrived at the Farm, the warmth and smell inside told me that even through all of today's miseries there was a light at the end of the tunnel. That was home cooking country food! Even though what happened today basically stunk, it was fun and enjoyable. It wasn't like I was racing to win a bunch of money! No, snowshoe racing isn't about that, it's about the fun and memories!! You don't need all the hype, fluff, and hoop-la to have fun and enjoy a race. The WMAC/DION Series does it with the simplest of things, the fun loving people that come to the races and give everyone memories to last a lifetime. I say big isn't always better and this series proves it! So in closing, I will say **"great job to all the race directors, volunteers, and most of all the racers for making this year's series the best one yet."** And in wrapping up the year's series, I am going to borrow a quote from Pete Lipka, so I hope he doesn't mind. As we were leaving South Face, people were still eating breakfast. At this point it was mostly non-racers who were just enjoying a nice breakfast. Pete yells out as he walks across the restaurant, "As the Lone Ranger Says to Tonto, till we meet again!" And with that said, see you next season!!!

JEDI TURTLE'S SEASON OF THE SNŌSHŪ 2009 - RACE #12

Saturday, February 28, 2009 - Hawley Kiln Klassic 4.7 Mile Snowshoe Race. What a great day for a snowshoe race! Blue skies, warm sunshine, and beautiful trails through the woods of the eastern Kenneth Dubuque Memorial State Forest. Before the race Konrad pointed out that there were eight guys at the 1st Hawley Kiln Klassic... and very impressively, six of them were there today! The course has gone through numerous iterations - one of the more interesting features of snowshoe racing is that you have to run where the snow takes you, and that means the same course won't always work from year to year. This year's course was complicated by the mid-December ice storm, and a lot of man hours were spent clearing snowmobile trails and the singletrack we ran on today - special thanks to Tom McCrumm, Marty Glendon, and Bill Glendon for all their hard work! (I also noticed a sign at the trailhead calling for volunteers to help clear trails this spring once the weather gets a bit better... I'm glad to see the forest managers in MA showing the good sense to enlist the aid of the folks who have some of the greatest interest in seeing the trails cleared, the trail, users themselves!)

After a few words about the course (snowmobile trails and single-track) we all got set and then - it was time to run! There was a decent amount of uphill along the 1st stretch of snowmobile trail, with a short side loop to run past the Hawley Kiln, an old beehive style stone charcoal kiln - very cool! After about 3/4 of a mile we reached the top of the hill and headed off onto rolling single-track twisting and winding its way through the woods... up hills, down hills, along level stretches, through hardwood forests and evergreen groves, past all sorts of neat glacial erratics... wonderful!

I found the single-track very tough going in spots, because many of the races this year have been on much wider trails and, well, I'm a wider runner! Ended up whacking my calves and ankles with the edges of my snowshoes a few times - I'm glad I was wearing the smaller pair - and worked up a good sweat running, walking, hiking, and plodding through the woods. One gal passed me about a mile in, with a comment that she was going pretty slowly and if I wanted to pass her I should let her know... given that she'd caught me and passed me, I wasn't surprised that she gradually disappeared off into the distance and I never saw her again!

The second stretch of snowmobile trail in theory was a chance to run hard for a bit, except it was mostly uphill. All too quickly it was back to single-track, this time for a climb back to where we had originally turned off the snowmobile path on the way in. Rich and Beth were at the top being very encouraging... I didn't have a prayer of breaking an hour, but I thought I might beat 1:10, so I hustled down the path as fast as I could - even started to get a stitch in my side near the end (though that's probably more a comment on what shape I'm in rather than how fast I was running.) Made it to the finish in 1 hr 9 minutes... a pretty good time for me, given the challenges of negotiating almost 3 miles of single-track.

After that I spent a while getting my breath back while wandering back up the course to get some pictures of the kiln, the woods, and, as it turned out, Bill and Konrad running their final stretch. Chatted a bit with Walter Kolodzinski about his injuries (he runs with two full knee braces on... I remember my

days of running with knee braces, though I was lucky to never need the type he's using) and then changed into some dry clothes so I could head over to brunch.

It's hard to believe that two months have gone by since the start of the 2009 snowshoe series... and we only have two races (at most) left! I'm going to miss seeing our happy (OK, crazy) crew each weekend... fortunately a lot of them also run the trail races in the warm weather.

Part 2 - Brunch at the South Face Farm Sugarhouse Restaurant. I've always heard that one of the big pluses to the Hawley Kiln race is going to brunch at the South Face Farm Sugarhouse Restaurant after the race. South Face Farm is a family owned and run farm that is known both for making maple syrup and for their small restaurant which is open for six weeks each spring (the maple sugaring season.)

The restaurant was packed with folks from the race - quite a difference from the typical race, where only a small number of people stick around afterwards. I ended up ordering a sampler (pancake, waffle, french toast, and corn fritter) along with some eggs, along with (of course) fresh maple syrup to top it off, and I found out very quickly why this is considered one of the best races of the season - the food is incredible! Easily the best brunch I've ever had, and well worth the trip to get there. I can't recommend it enough!

Unfortunately, I had a long drive ahead of me (and I wanted to get to Portland in time to pick up my race packet) so once I'd finished the oh-so-delicious food, it was time to hit the road again. Or maybe it was fortunate, since if I'd had more time I probably would have ordered a second meal!

JMH



Jan Rancatti at Hawley Kiln.

WMAC

2009 DION Snowshoe Racing Series

WMAC

3RD ANNUAL MASSACHUSETTS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP**NORTHFIELD MOUNTAIN 4.0-MILE SNOWSHOE RACE****March 14, 2009****Northfield Mountain Visitor Center****Northfield, MA**

PI	Name	Age	Time	PTS
01.	Leigh Schmitt	36	0:27:03	100.00
02.	Ethan Nedeau	36	0:27:21	97.83
03.	Brian Rusiecki	30	0:27:58	95.65
04.	Tim Van Orden	40	0:27:59	93.48
05.	Ian Lutz	16	0:31:14	91.30
06.	Ben Keefe	28	0:31:40	89.13
07.	Ken Clark	46	0:32:00	86.96
08.	David Loutzenheiser	42	0:32:15	84.78
09.	Erik Wight	49	0:32:30	82.61
10.	Edward Alibozek	46	0:32:40	80.43
11.	Eddie Habeck III	31	0:32:45	78.26
12.	Larry Dragon	48	0:32:59	76.09
13.	Rick Pacheco	48	0:33:19	73.91
14.	Allan Bates	60	0:34:08	71.74
15.	Peter Malinowski	54	0:34:25	69.57
16.	Bob Dion	53	0:35:09	67.39
17.	David Holt	50	0:35:17	65.22
18.	Phil Bricker	55	0:36:40	63.04
19.	Chelynn Tetrault	33	0:37:01	60.87
20.	Bill Morse	57	0:37:25	58.70
<u>21.</u>	<u>Amy Lane</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>0:37:35</u>	<u>56.52</u>
22.	Paul Hartwig	52	0:38:20	54.35
23.	Pat McGrath	43	0:38:57	52.17
24.	Mike Lahey	57	0:39:32	50.00
<u>25.</u>	<u>Pam Dooley</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>0:40:29</u>	<u>47.83</u>
26.	Howard Bassett	48	0:40:30	45.65
<u>27.</u>	<u>Holly Atkinson</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>0:41:12</u>	<u>43.48</u>
28.	Ed Alibozek Jr	69	0:42:16	41.30
<u>29.</u>	<u>Darleen Buttrick</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>0:43:22</u>	<u>39.13</u>
30.	Jeff Hattem	57	0:43:41	36.96
31.	Wally Lempart	63	0:43:41	34.78
32.	Frank Gaval	62	0:43:49	32.61
<u>33.</u>	<u>Kathy Furlani</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>0:44:30</u>	<u>30.43</u>
34.	Ernie Alleva	57	0:45:05	28.26
35.	Bob Massaro	65	0:45:27	26.09
36.	Dave Boles	62	0:46:03	23.91
37.	London Niles	11	0:46:57	21.74
<u>38.</u>	<u>Jodie Lahey</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>0:47:08</u>	<u>19.57</u>
<u>39.</u>	<u>Laurel Shortell</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>0:47:40</u>	<u>17.39</u>
40.	Denise Dion	50	0:48:43	15.22
41.	Ray Boutotte	63	0:50:33	13.04
42.	Doug McBournie	50	0:51:44	10.87
43.	Jamie Howard	43	0:55:12	8.70
<u>44.</u>	<u>Mary Lou White</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>0:56:19</u>	<u>6.52</u>
45.	Konrad Karolczuk	56	0:57:10	4.35
46.	Art Gulliver	70	1:01:58	2.17



Thanks to Dave Dunham, Race Organizer / Director! Photos – 2009 Massachusetts State Champions Leigh Schmitt and Chelynn Tetrault, courtesy of Gary Bridgeman and Beth Herder.

JEDI TURTLE'S SEASON OF THE SNŌSHŪ 2009 - RACE #14

Saturday, March 14, 2009 – MA State Championship 4.1 Mile Snowshoe Race. What a great day for a snowshoe race! I considered skipping this week's race at Northfield Mountain... it's a longish drive there, and I'd run there once already this season, plus this weekend is the start of my two-week spring break and I want to get out to Rochester to spend some time with Ann. But in the end the chance to do another snowshoe race won out, and the pre-dawn hours this morning found me racing to Northfield, MA, in time to register and change into my running gear.

Crowd was a little smaller than many of the races this winter, but lots of familiar faces. Chatted with a couple of folks before hand, then Dave D. gave us a few instructions about the course (mainly that some of the downhill stretches were icy) and off we went.

Today's run was different from the race a little over a month ago in that we ran almost exclusively on the groomed ski trails, which are wide enough that in most spots you could easily drive a truck down them, and while we did a lot of climbing we didn't go all the way to the reservoir at the top of the mountain. As with many of the WMAC races, we started with a long climb, followed by a nice gentle downhill... unfortunately, that just meant we had even more climbing to do before reaching the highest point on the course.

One effect of the small race field - not too many of us at the back of the pack. There was one fellow who I saw ahead of me on most of the climbs, and three runners not too far behind me, but for much of the 4 miles I was effectively alone on the trails. After hitting the top of the last climb, it was a pretty consistent downhill the rest of the way, some of it fairly steep. As Dave warned there were some very icy spots, but I had my ice cleats on and took my time, so no problems there (the gal who came in a minute after me apparently took a tumble and ended up with a good scrape on her knee.) There were a couple of bare spots, but none too large.

Running downhill was tough for me, between my knees and the fact that the snow was packed hard enough that it didn't provide much cushioning, but the 2nd half of the run positively flew by (especially after the long hike to the top!) and before I knew it I was rounding the last curve and being greeted by Rich Busa, who was providing moral support today instead of running. Finished in 55:12, not a bad time with all the initial climbing. And then all that was left was to change clothes, briefly shoot the breeze with some of my friends, and hit the road back to Albany...

So in the end, despite the driving, I'm glad I came out for the race today. It was a gorgeous day for a run, and I got to see some parts of Northfield that I hadn't before, which has me even more determined to head over that way sometime this summer.

On a totally unrelated note, as I was getting ready to leave Farmer Ed mentioned the Northern Nipmuck course, which I'm planning to run in about a month... he was wondering if I'd GPS'd it yet, because he used to do a fun run along that trail and remembered it being 18 miles rather than the 16 miles the race is listed at. So now I'm both curious and a bit intimidated... that

course was a tough run both times I did it previously, so it would be reassuring if it was actually longer than I thought - but the idea of running 16 miles over rugged hiking trails a month from now is daunting enough!

JMH



*Holly Atkinson leading Norm Sheppard on Thunderbolt
Dave Boles ready to finish the Kiln.*

ORIGINS PART II: WMAC SNOWSHOE SERIES VOW OF CHASTITY

Over the last month I have been regularly asked to re-print our Vow of Chastity, which was originally initiated after the 2001 WMAC Snowshoe Season. The purpose of the Vow was to allow more places to potentially host snowshoe events – not to be restricting in any way. It was also to act as a guide so that we kept a clear head regarding what we wanted to accomplish, and hopefully would keep us from losing our way. We started way back in the winter of '95 – '96, so we need reminders too as we age!

We felt that as the sport of snowshoeing continued to grow and gain popularity, more events would pop up at resort areas and other more comfortable surroundings. Big time “championship” events will become more prevalent and will need to have lodges and other amenities available for the comfort of the large number of participants. We just want to make sure that the root we started our events from maintains a following, and perhaps allows others to add similar events to their schedule. **We do not feel that this type of snowshoe event is “better”**, but we do feel that attention must be drawn to the more Spartan events as to not lose them entirely with the popularity of snowshoeing taking off as it has. As a matter of fact, **we believe this Vow of Chastity actually increases potential snowshoe venues** rather than restricts it.

- Event must be held in State Forest or on Private Land. Event can also be held in a State Park if the area has not been overdeveloped to the point of being commercialized. Event cannot be held at ski resorts or golf courses.
- At least 25% of the course must be on single-track trail, winding through the woods if at all possible. This section must be left un-groomed by snowmobile or other motorized grooming mechanism if at all possible (mistakes happen).
- Course must average a minimum of 50' of climb and descent per mile.
- If course is over 6 miles, a shorter distance option must also be held for those participants who do not wish to attempt 6 miles or more.
- Event must be named after a natural or historic landmark in the area, and the course must travel within sight of it.
- No professional timing allowed.
- No trophies or awards ceremony. The day belongs to all participants. Overall and age group winners will be recognized in the results, which will be available to each participant.
- Each participant is a link in the chain. Everyone is important, first to last.
- Do your best and remember to have fun. This is supposed to be recreational.

- Free entry for participants 65 years old (and over), and also for those 18 years of age (and under)
- Never try to make a 10 mile race fit in a 4-acre forest. Don't ever think of a distance and try to make the racecourse fit it. Find a route that flows, decide it is your course, and then whatever it is, let it be. The odder the distance, the better.
- Just be Giant. Once upon a time, Andre the Giant was asked “Wouldn't you like to be the World Wide Wrestling Federation Champion?” Andre replied, “...don't want to be champion, just want to be Giant.” Let each event be as fantastic and unique as possible, and don't compete against other races. You and the race will be happier this way.
- Attempt to make the majority of entry fees \$5 to \$10 if at all possible (Fugazi Style).
- Just break even. If you make money, give it away immediately and think about charging less in the future. Paul Hartwig and I have organized over 60 events together over the last 14 years and we haven't even had a disagreement or argument. We chalk this up to **“No money - no trouble”**. RRCA laughed at this belief, but they also told us that most club difficulties tend to begin over finances and bank accounts.
- Don't talk about it, Just Do It. Henry Rollins says Nike stole this slogan from Punk Rock. You wouldn't believe how many non-believers there were regarding snowshoe racing in the mid-nineties. Don't let anyone discourage you. Don't let what's not available limit you. If you are thinking about having an event, just go ahead and organize with what you have. Lots of room for nighttime romps, rail to trail areas, etc.
- Don't get discouraged. Attendance is a funny thing. Some really awesome events draw almost no-one. Sometimes it is better to have a dozen people think they are at the greatest event on earth rather than a hundred going through the motions.



Mary Lou White and Her Dog.