

1998 WMAC SNOWSHOE SEASON

HOW TO ENJOY (SURVIVE) THE WINTER

Be prepared:

This may sound Boy Scout'ish, but Boy Scouts rescue more than they need rescuing. The idea of spending a night or two, possibly hurt, in the woods in the winter is uncomfortable at best, deadly at worst. Make sure that if something happens you can pull yourself through. Be responsible for yourself !

Have a goal but know your limits:

If you normally cover that day's intended distance in time X, it may easily take 2X or 3X to do the same distance in winter. Because of this, and the fact that in the winter the air is extremely dry and thus "sucks" the moisture out of you and your breath, plan to take 2X or 3X amount of water. Also if you normally don't need food for time X, realize that you're burning calories not only for maybe three times as long but also to keep yourself warm (read: carry food). If you end up needing it, you'll be REALLY glad you carried it.

What to carry:

Small first-aid kit. Matches (or lighter). Extra snowshoe binding or twine / rope (to make-shift a binding, if necessary). 2 liters of water (minimum). High-energy food. A quarter (for a pay phone if you get "lost" and find civilization miles from where you thought you'd find it). Bivy sack (if you have to spend a long time sitting in snow, you'll need to be waterproof). If you're not wearing them: Waterproof / windproof top and bottom. Hat (something warm that insulates). Mittens. Insulation layer. This may sound like a lot, but how fast are you really going to be going anyway...so what's a few more pounds.

Amount of Clothes:

Picture this scenario. A winter "novice" starts out on a run (or hike, or climb) warm and in about 10 minutes of exertion starts to sweat. They're feeling good and continue this way until they need to stop. Their clothes are soaked with sweat and they get cold REALLY fast. I could go on forever with horror stories regarding this, but I'd rather concentrate on what to do right. Start out being cold ! If you're comfortable as you take that first step, you're overdressed. Period. Wear as few clothes as possible; you'll warm up soon enough. I find that running at 70°F and running at 10°F is the same, in regards to clothing, except at 10°F you have to take in

Amount of Clothes (Continued):

consideration the wind (wear a windbreaker and hat) and carry extra clothing for when you stop.

Type of Clothes:

There's an old saying that refers to clothing for the winter. "Cotton Kills". Take it to heart. Cotton clothing may be really comfortable for summer wear (it's soft, it doesn't scratch, etc.) but it should be left in the closet starting around November. Cotton absorbs and holds moisture like a sponge. When you're physically active in the winter, you're going to sweat. You MUST get rid of the moisture by venting your clothing (which allows the moisture to escape) and wearing clothes that do not retain the sweat you've produced. Also if you fall in the snow / slush / a river, etc., your clothing had better be able to get dry quickly or you're in for a case of hypothermia. I'll never forget the first time I was ever exposed to such a situation. I, with 3 others, had just climbed Mt. Liberty in New Hampshire (January 1972). We were sweating bullets and broke above treeline to be greeted by 30mph wind with temperatures around 0°F. Realizing that if we wanted to survive the night up here, we would have to get rid of the moisture we picked up. There was only one thing to do. Take our clothes off. This may sound counterproductive in our quest to stay warm, but if we didn't get rid of the moisture-laden clothes off our backs, dry our skin off by letting the wind blow dry us, and put on dry clothes, we'd probably still be up there.

When it comes to winter clothing, everybody has their preferences but I use synthetics throughout. Synthetics will retain the warmth even when wet (as will wool, which is an alternative) and will retain much less moisture than will any natural fibers. Gore-Tex, polypropylene, and pile fabrics (Polarfleece, Capilene, and Thermax are just a few of the trade names) are my entire winter outdoor wardrobe. Being dry equals being warm.

Tell someone, who isn't going with you, where you're going and approximately when you'll be back.

This isn't wimpy, it's considerate and smart.

Karl E. Molitoris

SUNSHINE, SNOWFALL AND SOMETHING CALLED FROST

I am fairly sure that when organizer Peter Keeney scheduled the Robert Frost Trail Runs he wasn't expecting the course to be covered with snow, not 4"-8" of it anyway. While this kept many potential runners away, I was in my glory and welcomed the snow with open arms, wool garments and snowshoes!!

The peaceful start from Cranberry Pond in the Mt. Toby Reservation (Sunderland, MA) was even more tranquil as only Peter and I would be willing to attempt the journey. Off we shuffled in unbroken virgin snow huffing and puffing steadily up the side of the hill that would turn into Mt. Toby (1269'), a 900+ foot climb in the first two miles. Five minutes into the jog we both ripped off our outer jackets as the chore of the climb materialized plenty of warmth around us, despite temperatures in the 20's. Peter was kind, running slowly in front of me the whole way to keep me on course, as I am sure my snowshoes slowed us down plenty. I noticed plenty of uniform orange blazes on the trees throughout the course, so getting lost wouldn't seem to be a problem (right).

As the shuffling continued, I was able to remember plenty of trail that made up the 1995 Trail Championship put on here by Fred Pilon and Peter Gagarin. It really is amazing how memory works so selectively. The blast down hill from the firetower at Toby was a real treat as we kicked up snow propelling ourselves headlong off the mountain. As we chugged up and over Roaring Mountain a great big rise loomed directly in front of us, causing me to ask, "what is that?" It was Bull Hill (937'), which looked much bigger than it was but still contained about 500' of climb.

That's pretty much how it went for the Mt. Toby section of this run, up a mountain and back down only to do it all again. The snow was layered upon the tree limbs, sinking branches down towards earth, the numerous brooks were barely perceptible under the pure blanket of white, the air was clean and cool and crisp and there was nothing and no one but the two of us making our way through the forest. As the sun began to warm things up, a great blue sky opened and I was truly glad I was taking part in this event on a most magical day. Winter and its snow bring a whole new look to many of our forest, making them appear to be entirely different entities. The lonesome and secluded nature that arrives with the first snowfall is welcome as crowds disappear.

Along the way there are numerous road crossings which were a relief as Susan Simpson and Mark Donaldson

traveled around in a four wheel drive Dodge with food and drink and kind words of encouragement for the two of us. Thank you Susan and Mark, your efforts are appreciated.

The route sent us towards the wooded ledges of Pulpit Hill, past the scenic and slowly icing Puffers Pond, sharp steep rises to a wonderful bluff overlooking Cushman Brook and views under to rollicking cascades, all in all continuing to send a smile to my face. The majority of the trail is pleasant to the eye, forever changing terrain that keeps one taxed physically but relaxed mentally. Although I enjoyed the uninterrupted 7-mile section through the Mt. Toby Reservation most, the remaining sections I covered were wonderful also.

After cresting Mt. Boreas and reaching Atkins Reservoir (which I believe I have run past when I used to race roads in the DH Jones 10 miler) I knew my day was done. Peter told me the next aid station / bailout point was merely a half mile downhill, and after that was a four mile section that would take us over the backwoods of the Pelham Hills and the 957' Mt. Orient, complete with it's outstanding views from ledges. Simple decision for me as three hours for the first snowshoe run of the year was plenty (my mind said to go on, continue -- the legs were trashed though).

Peter continued and I rode the sag wagon to Amethyst Brook to pick him up, close to 20 miles of running in snow for Mr. Keeney. He looked very fresh at the end, no doubt due to the slow pace he kept to stick with me (thank you Peter, I appreciated the company). Although we tried to convince him to continue, nail the 33 miles, he was ready to relax too. That ended it up, both of us willing to wait until next year to tackle the 33 miles. The only trouble is the trail has been extended to 40 miles (a new northern section) and plans are to go south from the notch ten more to make it a 50 miler. Anyone interested?

Farmer Ed

ROBERT FROST TRAIL RUN NOVEMBER. 16, 1997 SUNDERLAND - AMHERST, MA 0 FINISHERS

Edward Alibozek	15 Miles	3:03:56
Peter Keeney	20 Miles	3:50:33

CHRISTMAS PARTY EXTENSION

The 2nd Annual Spruce Hill Climb was held on a spectacularly cold day at the North / South Pond Recreation Area in Savoy Mountain State Forest. This event is held the day after the WMAC Christmas party, and has been blessed with a good number of CT entrants but a surprisingly low number of area runners. I wonder if this has anything to do with a little too much celebrating at the prior nights bash ?

Peter, Vic, Paul and Kathy were back for a second try at the climb, Paul managing to record the events with his ever present camera. New attendees were John, Tom McCrumm, Peter Keeney, Poncho, Joe, Tom Buckley and Cynthia Kozak.

Anyhow, we had a better turnout than the last time, and we again managed to have enough snow to snowshoe. Park supervisor Tim Zelazo is doing a fantastic job of keeping the trails clear despite a season of much snowfall and heavy winds. I believe John Scalise and I almost had him convinced to join us this day, but that never ending trail of paper work bogged him down worse than the jaunt past Tower Swamp did us. Only Peter Keeney was almost lost as the snow and ice gave way under him and the mysterious swamp pulled him downward.

Speaking of Peter, he destroyed the prior time for the hill climb - taking over an hour off the old mark of Chip Tuthill's. Of course I doubt we will ever see conditions like those of last year ever again (2'-2 1/2' feet of wet heavy snow), but Peter looks to be a strong snowshoer who should only get faster.

One note worth bringing up is it looks like the DEM has partitioned off the steep ascent of Spruce Hill for the winter with bright orange flagging for individuals safety. By the time I made the summit Peter and John threw caution to the wind and had blasted down off the cliffs and it seemed that no-one else seemed to mind taking the difficult route either as Joe, Poncho and Vic followed the two prior explorers down the drop. When I resorted to dropping onto my butt to slide down the snow covered rocks off the ledge behind Mr. Vic I wondered "what is wrong with these people?" Nonetheless, everyone made it OK and unharmed.

The section of the Blackburnian Trail leading downhill from Spruce Hill (Busby Trail intersection) to "Lost Pond" and then Old Florida Road was a very quick very pleasurable section of trail that allowed for some fairly fast moving even on snowshoes. This wonderful section of trail has been nicely cleared and is very well marked (if Peter Keeney followed it without getting lost it must

be). Several nice rock formations, old cellar holes, side jaunts to other "Spruce Hills" and that swampy "Lost Pond" sitting between those ridges all revealed their beauty to us as the combination of fresh cold air and peacefulness surrounded all. Another fantastic time for friends to share nature and extend the celebration of the Holiday Season / Christmas Party, I am already looking forward to doing this one again.

Peter Palmer's traditional round "bear paws" didn't function as well as the more maneuverable "metal" snowshoes, and Tom McCrumm managed to destroy the binding system on one of his shoes (a pair of Atlas). The Tubbs model's worn by Keeney, Scalise and Alibozek held up this year (I blew out an anchor for the binding last year during this event), and I believe the Redfeathers of some of the other participants worked out fine too. Another interesting equipment test was the ski poles used by the teams of Kozak-Buckley and Schwager-Rabanold. These additions really looked to help during the five stream crossings, giving two added points of contact to the operators. While the rest of us wholly engaged in a "leap of faith", the smart ones had the security of four wheel drive. I might invest in a pair.

Thanks to the WMAC officers present for supporting this event and bringing some very tasty leftovers from the party, and thanks to Mother Nature for all the snow. For the second year in a row turnout has been good, so I would like to continue with the Spruce Hill Climb tradition. This is a free event and all are welcome, whether you want to snowshoes or go the sneakered route. This is a remarkable area of varied terrain that generously exposes it's beauty, come on out next time and enjoy it with the rest of us.

Farmer Ed

SPRUCE HILL CLIMB DECEMBER
7, 1997
SAVOY STATE FOREST FLORIDA /
SAVOY, MA

01.	Peter Keeney	Amherst, MA	1:55:00
02.	John Scalise	Agawam, MA	2:00:30
03.	Edward Alibozek	Suffield, CT	2:00:30
04.	"Poncho" Mach	Adams, MA	2:02:00
05.	Peter Palmer	Avon, CT	2:02:00
06.	Joe Gwozdz	Cheshire, MA	2:05:30
07.	Vic LaPort	Clarkburg, MA	2:05:30
08.	Tom McCrumm	Ashfield, MA	2:12:00
09.	Tom Buckley	Avon, CT	2:15:00
10.	Cynthia Kozak	Avon, CT	2:15:00
11.	Paul Rabenold	Avon, CT	2:45:00
12.	Kathy Schwager	Avon, CT	2:45:00

BAD HAIR DAYS AND BELLY FLOPS

The second annual Tannery Falls Winter Run / Snowshoe came and went without the presence of Bob Worsham, who planned on attending but then remembered he had a haircut appointment. This is a new one as far as excuses, at least as far as I have heard (and I have been told some good ones).

What the guru of womens trailrunning missed was a beautiful sunny day that teased us with a brief snowfall, and just enough snow to warrant the wearing of snowshoes. The falls were stunning, the ice modeled and molded sleek along the falling water as it cascaded it's way into the pool below.

On the way back along Kamick Road, we were approached by a team of sled dogs taking their owners out for a day of training. Visions of Iron Will danced through our heads, and as I daydreamed my way past that and into How the Grinch Stole Christmas, I dragged a lazytired foot and found myself sliding belly down along the hard packed icy snowmobile trail faster than any running I had done for the day. After that it more or less became habit, I imagine much to the humor of the rest of the bunch.

This is a remarkable area for winter running. Many of the roads are left unplowed for the wintry months, and snowmobile clubs do a great job of grooming the routes. Such a fine network of trails exist in western mass that you could lope along marked trails from Granville, Massachusetts on the Connecticut border all the way north to Vermont. The connecting routes in the Savoy area can get you to Greylock if you desire, with stops along the way at many of the hilltown's general stores to re-supply your tank. I find it unnecessary to leave the 20,000 acres of Savoy and Hawley State Forest however (they are connected via snowmobile corridors), as wonderous areas such as Tannery Falls, Borden Mountain, Moody Springs, several old hidden and not so hidden cemeteries, and mile after mile of peaceful serene winter running are available at no charge. It was rewarding to see two new faces at the event this year, and I believe both John Scalise and John Trembley enjoyed the day and the comfortable feel of the ramble. Hope to see more new faces next time around!!

Farmer Ed

HAWLEY KILN KLASSIC ON A BIKE

OK, so I thought it was a good idea.....

Having been mountain biking in Hawley State Forest a lot this winter, I went up to the Hawley Kiln Klassic snowshoe race with both snowshoes and my bicycle. I was hoping the snowmobile trails would be firm enough to ride on, and that the unpacked trails would not be so deep in snow that I could jog and push my bike. I figured the time I lost on the unbroken snow I could make up on the snow packed forest roads.

At 9 AM I rode in a half-mile or so and checked out the conditions, and deemed them firm enough to give the race a try on my bike.

The first mile or so was fine, conditions as expected, but as soon as I tried to ride up a south facing hillside, I realized how much the snow had softened up in the morning sunshine.

From there it got worse, as I had to traverse the north side of the hill in crusty unbroken snow, sometimes breaking through the crust up to my knee.

I figured once I got back to the downhill section of snowmobile trail I could cruise again, but it too had softened up to much, and even riding on the level was almost impossible.

At that point I just gave in to the fact that I should have left the bike at home and run on snowshoes. Of course the snowshoers were long past me by that point.

Eventually I made it back to the forest road, only to find 2 more miles of snow too soft to ride on. Just last week 8 of us did a full moon ride in the State Forest on perfect hard packed trails - it was almost easier than riding in the summer over the same terrain.

Tom McCrumm

TANNERY FALLS WINTER RUN DECEMBER 20 1997 SAVOY, MA

20 Km Foot Division

Fran Mach	55	Adams, MA	3:05:30
John Trembley	35	Cheshire, MA	3:05:31

25 Km Snowshoe Division

John Scalise	41	Agawam, MA	3:39:13
Edward Alibozek	35	Suffield, CT	3:39:14

M. SPRINGS & SMILING SNOWMEN

Seeing as we missed out on Bob Dion's FA50 and also Tony Weisgram's Gruba Dupa, a few leftover wannabees considered multiple loops around the forest of Hawley, specifically Moody Springs. Although we wouldn't come close to the holiday achievement of 50Km, we did spend a wonderfully long time sampling the unseasonable warm temperatures and deep wet snow that Hawley State Forest had to offer. And oh yes, drink from the spring we did...

The unscheduled snowshoe run started with a couple of new members to the web foot allegiance, Konrad Karolczuk and John Tremblay. It had been many years since K2 had been on snowshoes, and for John it was his first time. Both ended their days successfully, managing to finish strong and happy. I hope to see both of them at future snowshoe events.

The Basin Brook Trail is a particularly beautiful section of this forest during the winter months, so much so we ran it in both directions. There is something wonderfully relaxing and peaceful about running in snow along side a frozen snow covered brook rolling along slowly not in any hurry. Infrequent blast of hot blowing air contrasted sharply with the cold wet pocket of air within the bottom of the steep banks of the brook, causing us to wonder and laugh each time we felt the change of temperature. This was a real charge for us, for at this point of the day each of us was feeling tiredness creep in and our judgment may have been a bit cloudy. As each of us admitted feeling the difference, all became sane again. Well, sort of.

We actually circled Moody Springs twice, filling our bottles and drinking long and deep both times. The shelter had a huge snowman perched on it's roof, looking out for approaching visitors and greeting them with a welcoming hand raised in salute. None of us could figure out how anyone managed to raise the big balls of snow up onto the roof, but the frosty thing sure did look happy sitting there alone at the magical place known as Moody Springs. Come to think of it, so did we.

Farmer Ed

MOODY SPRINGS SNOWSHOE RAMBLE I JANUARY 3, 1998 HAWLEY, MA

Konrad Karolczuk	12km	5:45
John Tremblay	15km	3:05
Peter Keeney	13 miles	3:59
John Scalise	13 miles	4:05
Edward Alibozek	13 miles	4:05

LACK OF LOST MOUNTAIN

Well, despite Bobarino Worsham insisting that we would "find that lost mountain", Mt. Riga would have to wait for the ice to leave before any of us ventured out that way to search. Instead, a quick call to Maple Syrup McCrumm in Ashfield put us in the direction of Hawley for the second time in two weeks. There was plenty of fresh light fluffy snow within it's confines!!

We ended up breaking trail no matter where we went, and the conditions were as perfect as one could hope for. Our stop at Moody Spring had us in tears (due to laughter) as Bob Worsham rambled on and on about how he had imagined it to be a huge tourist attraction with signs and all. The pipe shooting out of the stone with the tasty mineral filled water exiting it wasn't exactly what he had expected, but he did admit to it's powers of "regeneration". When I let him know that it took me 9 years to find the thing, he could understand why. Up until last February when Karl, Chip Tuthill and I finally made it to the water, it was "Lost Spring" along with "Lost Mountain" we were searching for.

Several of the trails we explored are not on maps, and are not exactly "trails" either. Blasting down the slope to Moody Spring had someone mentioning that it "wasn't much of a trail", to which Karl laughed and said "who needs a trail??" That about sums it up for snowshoeing..... you really don't need a trail, just snow.

Farmer Ed

MOODY SPRINGS SNOWSHOE RAMBLE II JANUARY 17, 1998 HAWLEY, MA

Peter Keeney	20km	3:21:00
Karl Molitoris	20km	3:22:00
John Scalise	20km	3:23:00
Bob Worsham	20km	3:24:00
Edward Alibozek	20km	3:25:00

MLK REFLECTION RUN II

The WMAC continued it's Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Tradition with the first & last MLK Mountain Park snowshoe run. The conditions were great & the trail fairly easy. Felt great, I guess we have those days...

John Scalise

GREEFIELD MNT PARK GREENFIELD, MA JANUARY 19, 1998 12KM SNOWSHOE

Peter Kenney	12Km	1:25:00
John Scalise	12Km	1:25:00

SKIS, SHOES AND SNOWSHOES

How can you argue with a full day of entertainment at no cost???? That's pretty much the story as far as Moby Dick goes.

Big blue skies and loooong views greeted the 20 entrants interested in conquering Mt. Greylock this February. Weather hasn't been much of a factor other than in 1996 when it was snowy, grey and cold. Not a single complaint from anyone within shouting distance, the air temperature stayed around 25 or so until you opened into a sunny spot where the warmth sure felt fine.

The field consisted of a nice mixture of veterans (12 who new what they were getting into) and first-timers (8 brave hardy adventurers). We also saw three members of the elite with too much time on their hands tackle the mountain on snowshoes, and one wild man-beast come back for more on ski's. Absent this season were any sign of women, perhaps that accounted for Bob Worsham not making the trip. Someone needs to let the "Guru of Women's Trail Running" know of the incredible possibilities for the viewing of his foot fetish as wounded compleat-ist of Moby Dick slide off their shoes and socks in front of the fireplace within the cozy confines of the lodge afterward.

No Steve Schiller either. The three time defending champion wasn't anywhere on the course, but Curt Pandiscio made it and ended up tied for first place in the 30 miler for the second year in a row. Bob Dion and Eric Moore continued their strong winter running placing with Curt in 5:28:19.

In the 16 miler, John Tremblay was victorious in his first try on Greylock, six minutes ahead of four time finisher "The Prez" Poncho Mach. Kenny Gulliver had trouble finding the start along with his father Art, so their attempt at starting early on the 30 miler was a wash out but Kenny came in third place for the event!! (It has been a long time since Mr. Gulliver finished this high at any type of running event I am sure). Ed Alibozek Jr. (Older Farmer Ed) knocked six and a half minutes off his prior best, and Stan Tiska dropped forty-seven and a half minutes off his PR!! That is one heck of an improvement for Stan the Man!!

In the ski division, Mike Albert didn't have Georgie Hendrick riding his butt about "if you wear the ski's on your feet it's supposed to be faster..." this time around Mike finished an even twenty minutes ahead of last season.

Snowshoeing was well represented as three entrants took on the challenge in 1998. Konrad Karolczuk made his first attempt at Moby Dick wearing a pair of borrowed

Tabbs that left him exhausted but happy as he crossed the finish prior to darkness setting in (which once upon a time wasn't the case for a couple entrants I know too well). K2 is only the fourth snowshoe finisher of this challenge. John Scalise and I were attempting a new 28 mile record for snowshoeing, but we came up 3 minutes short. It really fell apart for us coming back up the mountain from North Adams, as we realized it was just as fast walking as running (or attempting to run) and our food supplies dwindled due to the length of time we spent out there. Running only the downhill and absolutely flat sections from mile 15 on didn't help our cause, but you couldn't tell from the smile on our faces when we finished that we had come up shy. After all, there is always next year.

The fourth running of Moby Dick is over. By next February I and most others will have forgotten how painful this journey can be, and a group will again show up to have a shot at climbing the highest point in Massachusetts just to say they did it. It isn't the pain that brings everyone back; it's the warmth and the friendships and the beauty of the mountain. That combination will allow for a little suffering anytime.

Thanks to Bob Dion for organizing this gem, and having the patience to continue the tradition even during the first few years when very limited interest would have discouraged others. The attendance the last two seasons has been wonderful and I am sure many are already looking foreword to February 1999!!

Farmer Ed

4TH ANNUAL MOBY DICK MARATHONS FEBRUARY 1, 1998 LANESBORO, MA

SKI DIVISION

Mike Albert	30's	16 Miles	4:10:00
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SNOWSHOE DIVISION

Konrad Karolczuk	45	16 Miles	6:29:00
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Edward Alibozek	35	28 Miles	6:19:40
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John Scalise	45	28 Miles	6:19:40
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1st ANNUAL SOUTH POND SHUFFLE 4 MILE SNOWSHOE RACE

**FEBRUARY 21, 1998 SAVOY STATE FOREST
SOUTH POND SHUFFLE
4 MILE SNOWSHOE RACE**

1. Bob Dion	41	Readsboro, VT	40:30
2. Bryan Dragon	14	Cheshire, MA	41:10
3. Brian Blanchard	27	Manchester, CT	41:20
4. Karl Molitoris	42	Stafford Springs, CT	43:10
5. John Trahan	41	Mystic, CT	43:20
6. John Tremblay	36	Cheshire, MA	43:24
7. Paul Hartwig	41	Adams, MA	43:32
8. Bob Worsham	52	Woodstock, CT	43:37
9. David Boles	51	New Paltz, NY	44:18
10. Gotha Swann	48	Pittsfield, MA	46:44
11. Sam Majger	27	Chicopee, MA	46:50
12. Jim Preite	34	North Adams, MA	47:25
13. Ed Tompson	46	Northampton, MA	48:15
14. Fran Mach	55	Adams, MA	48:25
15. Ed Alibozek Jr	58	Adams, MA	48:45
16. Lawrence Dragon	37	Cheshire, MA	49:40
17. Todd Worsham	17	Woodstock, CT	52:41
18. Curt Pandiscio	36	Simsbury, CT	53:14
19. Stan Tiska	40	Hinsdale, MA	53:50
20. Bill Donovan	43	North Adams, MA	57:35
21. Leon Beverly	71	Stamford, VT	58:45
22. Mel Band	54	Williamstown, MA	1:02:20
23. James Mathews	31	"Visiting", GA	1:04:32
24. Laurel Rollins	41	Shelburne Falls, MA	1:08:17
25. Scott Rollins	49	Shelburne Falls, MA	1:08:18
26. Erin Worsham	20	Woodstock, CT	1:11:30
27. Tim Mathews	28	Worcester, MA	1:11:45
28. Patrick McGrath	32	Adams, MA	1:12:01
29. Tracy McGrath	30	Adams, MA	1:12:02
30. Claudine Preite	31	North Adams, MA	1:12:03
31. Konrad Karolczuk	45	Windsor Lock, CT	1:20:10
32. Phil Quemette	64	North Adams, MA	1:25:45
33. Ken Freitag	34	Cheshire, MA	1:25:46
34. Ellen Mach	50	Adams, MA	1:11:00
35. Vicki Pandiscio	36	Simsbury, CT	participated
36. Sara Pandiscio	07	Simsbury, CT	participated

AGE GROUP WINNERS

00 - 18	Women "Vacant"	Bryan Dragon	41:10
19 - 29	Erin Worsham	1:11:30 Brian Blanchard	41:20
30 - 39	Tracy McGrath	1:12:02 John Tremblay	43:24
40 - 49	Laurel Rollins	1:08:17 Bob Dion	40:30
50 - 59	Women "Vacant"	Bob Worsham	43:37
60 - 69	Women "Vacant"	Phil Quemette	1:25:45
70 - 79	Women "Vacant"	Leon Beverly	58:45

Climbing up the Mohawk Trail towards Savoy State Forest was a trip indeed, especially for the many of us traveling from Central Massachusetts and Connecticut. By the time we reached Whitcomb Summit, the snow looked a solid foot deep and hoarfrost covered everything in sight, leaving many to feel as though we ventured into a whole new hemisphere. The "tip off" event of the Western Massachusetts Athletic Club's 1998 Snowshoe Double Header would go on as planned.

Bob Dion, the 1997 New England Trail Running Circuit Champion, had the courage to attempt a new competitive activity and use his racing knowledge to surge past Bryan Dragon while on the final spur between North and South Pond to become the first champion at the 4.3 mile South Pond Shuffle Snowshoe Race. The more "race tested" Bob allowed Bryan the luxury of leading the majority of the race, causing the youngster to tire a bit due to the extra energy it takes to break trail and stay focused following the route. Brian Blanchard was closing the gap quickly and finished a strong third, only 10 seconds behind Bryan.

In the women's race, Laurel Rollins kept a steady strong pace to capture the first ever Lady's Trophy. Laurel's time of 1:08:17 is most impressive when you realize she power hiked on snowshoes and most of the other entrants ran on theirs. As 4th place finisher and veteran snowshoer Karl Molitoris said, "Snow and snowshoes are a great equalizer for bringing the field closer together and closing the gap between running and walking." Erin Worsham finished three minutes back mostly due to a missed turn on the course, thus adding another mile to her journey around South Pond and Tyler Swamp. In snowshoeing, as it is with trailrunning, getting lost is a slight possibility.

36 starters and finishers for the first time event organized by the Western Massachusetts Athletic Club. The top nine finishers all broke under 45 minutes for the race, evidence of the conditions being near optimum for fast performances. The high number of couples and families taking part in the event was a welcomed bonus, as the event displayed a more festive atmosphere rather than strictly a competitive one.

BARE LEGS AND FLYING SNOW AT SOUTH POND SHUFFLE

I couldn't believe it. I had actually talked my two athletic kids into doing the WMAC South Pond Shuffle 4-mile snowshoe race! Since we live in Woodstock, CT, in the quiet northeast corner of CT, we had to awaken at 5:30 AM. By 6:36 AM we were pulling out of the driveway with absolutely no snow on the ground and temperatures in the balmy range. The kids, Erin 20 and Todd 18, were skeptical, but I knew that if conditions in Savoy weren't good Farmer Ed would have called everyone the night before. The race had already been postponed once.

As we cruised northbound on Interstate 91 I must say that when we had reached the Northampton area with no sign of snow I too became a little uneasy. But, not to worry. As soon as we got to Route 2 snow began to peek out from everywhere. By the time we were ascending through the mountain passes you couldn't see a patch of earth anywhere for all the snow.

What a surprise upon arrival at the parking lot when I lowered the window to say hello; the temperature was absolutely frigid. Not only was it cold, but we had no indoor bathroom facilities. Right up my alley, but a bit tricky for Erin. She figured it out like a true trail running trooper though.

For the first time in their lives Erin and Todd strapped on snowshoes loaned by Sherpa for the occasion. Erin tested them slowly and carefully, so as not to attract attention to herself. Todd tested them in a full sprint, kicking up the snow all over the place. The kid could have played soccer in those snowshoes! We were all set to do the shuffle, but the raffle got in the way. Can you believe that all three Worshams won a raffle prize? I think there were as many prizes as there were contestants.

Since I had been training on Blue Hill Mtn in Milton, MA, and doing track workouts every weekend, I decided to test how my training was going, and took off relatively fast. One thing that I discovered was that it is much more difficult to pass someone in a snowshoe race than it is in a trail race. The trail had been worn into a v-shaped groove, and if you tried to go out of it to pass, the deeper snow immediately slowed you down. Trying to pass took a lot of energy for me. Passing (and subsequently getting passed by) Karl Molitoris was quite distracting due to the fact that he ran bare-legged in his orange shorts in the frigid weather. He must have read the article about dressing for winter running in the last newsletter. Maybe he even wrote it.

After running in 5th position for a lot of the race I got passed by 3 guys in the last 1/2 mile. However, an 8th place finish in the company of Bob Dion, the winner, and some pretty good other runners was fine with me. I finished only 3 minutes behind Bob.

After finishing I started backtracking to meet Erin and Todd. About a half of a mile out Todd approached without sign of Erin. He was carrying his snowshoes; it seemed that one of the bindings broke, so he took them both off. Todd told me that Erin had been in front of him, so right away I knew that she had ignored Farmer Ed's perfect trail marking job, and started another loop around Tyler Swamp instead of heading for the finish. This was a shame, because she was the first woman at that point. However, part of trail running is being able to actually follow the trail, and not imitate your father's technique of running the Breakneck race. So maybe next year .

The Worsham kids ate all the veggi chili that Donnalee, siren of Lost Mountain, had waiting for the runners. I of course went for the hamburgers, hot dogs, and cookies.

We all had great fun at the Shuffle. Lots of thanks to Ed and other WMAC members for providing us with a great day, great food, and social enjoyment. I'm working on Erin and Todd already to talk them into a trail race during the regular season. I think the secret lies in that great WMAC veggi chili!

Bob Worsham

ENTER THE DRAGON

The 2nd part of the WMAC Snowshoe Series was held a day after the inaugural event, and despite limited participation compared to the day prior, didn't lack for excitement.

Bryan Dragon learned of the importance of pace and keeping a little left in your tank after leading most of Saturday's event only to be passed towards the end. At the Hawley Kiln Klassic 7 Mile Snowshoe Race held in Hawley / Dubuque State Forest, Bryan allowed Karl Molitoris to lead and break trail for the first 5.5 miles, where he followed the leader left instead of right at a trail junction. This wrong turn allowed Ken Gulliver to overtake the two leaders a mere 1.5 miles from the finish.

Realizing their mistake within a few minutes, Karl and Bryan turned back and charged after Ken through the last wooded mile before the course opens up onto the snowmobile trail leading to the kiln. The young legs of Bryan recovered better than Molitoris' (both had raced the day before at the South Pond Shuffle in Savoy) and it was the 14 year old alone closing the gap on veteran trail runner Gulliver.

Ken Gulliver had this to say as Bryan Dragon tore by him on the final quarter mile, "I felt pretty good and figured I would just try to stay with him after being passed. Then, as he began to pull away, I figured "OK, just keep him in sight". As he pulled farther away, I just stopped caring...".

Bryan Dragon finished the event 20 seconds ahead of Kenny Gulliver and 4 minutes ahead of Karl Molitoris who had a wonderful finish also. In addition to both Bryan and Karl, Lawrence Dragon and Konrad Karolczuk had completed the South Pond Shuffle the day before also. This was a difficult back to back achievement for these four gentlemen, and worthy to mention.

FEBRUARY 22, 1998 HAWLEY STATE FOREST HAWLEY KILN KLASSIC 7 MILE SNOWSHOE RACE

1.	Bryan Dragon`	14	Cheshire, MA	1:35:26
2.	Ken Gulliver	34	Sterling, MA	1:35:45
3.	Karl Molitoris	42	Stafford Sp, CT	1:39:30
4.	Lawrence Dragon	37	Cheshire, MA	1:52:35
5.	Edward Alibozek	35	Suffield, CT	2:00:00
6.	Art Gulliver	58	Leominster, MA	2:16:30
7.	Tom McCrumm	51	Ashfield, MA	2:19:20
8.	Konrad Karolczuk	45	Windsor Lks, CT	3:08:56