

Just For The Fun Ultra

Library, Pa.      September 20, 1987  
30mi./40mi./50mi.  
.478 mi. cinder track

40 Miles

1. Fred Davis, 39, Ohio    6:41
2. Bruce Mc Glothlin, 40, Pa.    7:54

30 Miles

1. Greg Helbig, 31, WV    3:49
2. Bill Ware, 32 PA.    4:08
3. Tom Henry, 46 PA.    4:40
4. Fred Davis, 39 Ohio    4:44
5. Tim Young, 41 NY    4:50
6. Norm Frank 56 NY    5:10
7. Andy Gero 39 PA.    5:21
8. Irene Schoeller, 30 WV    5:22
9. Chuck Rauber, 47 PA.    5:27
10. Bruce Mc Glothlin 40 PA.    5:40
11. Jim Reeve, 45 MI.    5:53
12. Edgard C. Barreto 50 FL.    5:55
13. Sy Mah, 62 OHIO    5:58 (50K)
14. Jim Enright 34 PA.    3:42 (20Mi)
15. Mike Tuttle 29 PA.    2:34 (19.5mi.)
16. Andy Grzellea 37 PA.    1:20 (9mi.)

When plans for the "Just For The Fun Ultra" were first initiated it was hoped that the weather wouldn't be a hazzard to all of the ultra runners that might enter.

The weather in Pittsburgh during the month of September had been horrible with continuous rain and high humidity. The threat of hypothermia loomed larger and larger.

But the "Big Guy" upstairs was watching over our ultra runners because the day was perfect---cool temperatures and overcast conditions throughout most of the run. The sun did come out, but not until the latter stages of the race.

Ultra races attract unique people. It is interesting to talk with these people about their careers, accomplishments, and just exactly what keeps them going. Some of their stories are truly amazing, especially if you are interested in physical fitness and running, in particular.

My goals for this race were two fold. One was to provide these ultra runners with a low key type of event that would be an enjoyable experience. Second was to learn as much about these interesting people as possible.

As the race began at 6 A.M. in the cool and eerie darkness of the South Park Fairgrounds, no one seemed hard pressed to set any world records or establish any PRs. They all seemed content on just having a good run and keeping their footing in the dark.

There was a good sense of friendliness and comraderie among old friends who hadn't seen each other since the last race.

As expected, there were a low number of pre-entries---one, in fact. We all pretty much expect the fact that ultra runners just show up. That seems to be part of their mystique. Run long and hard. Then disappear into the crowd with very few even knowing they were there.

The only real race seemed to center around Greg Helbig and Bill Ware. Greg, who is from Morgantown, West Virginia has such long and easy strides that move him at a remarkably quick pace. He seemed to push the pace a little near the end, which caused him to cancel his original plan to run 50 miles. So he packed it in at 30.

Bill came to the race with ~~two~~<sup>three</sup> other fellows from Washington, Pa.. He may have been somewhat tired, since he had completed the Groundhog Fall 50 in Punxsutawney the weekend before. Bill gave it a valiant try, but fell short. He still had a good time in finishing second to Greg Helbig.

Sy Mah showed up with Jim Reeve. When I first caught up to Sy, he was walking with one of the groundskeepers from South Park. He had been in a triath lon in upstate New York the day before and hoped to make this race on his way home to Toledo. Of course he did, completing his 475th marathon in the process. I worried a little about Sy when he mentioned wanting to find a boat dock to go canoeing after the race. Not bad for a 62 year old!

Jim travels with Sy and hails from Bloomfield, Michigan. Jim has completed 70 marathons just in 1987. He did mention he tries to "dabble" in employment whenever he gets the urge.

Norm Frank, who was running his 327th maraton, circled the track with quiet desire and determination. Norm, who is from Rochester came down with Tim Young from Waterloo, New York. Look for the blue pick-up truck with a Marathon Lawn Service sign on it. Is this trip considered a business deduction, Norm?

Tim has run close to 160 marathons and is quite a conversationalist. He is very personable and keeps everyone in good spirits, even during the bleakest of times.

Fred Davis ran a very even and well-paced race. He seemed like a jovial and good-natured fellow. He spent a lot of time joking with Sy Mah and Jim Reeve. His handler, Carol, tried to talk him into going 50 miles, but he decided to pack it in when just about everybody else went home. No one seemed interested in going 50 miles today.

Ed Baretto flew up from Florida especially to run the race. He has an interesting story. Ed is trying to break the record of running a marathon a week for a full year. So far, he has run a total of 26 marathons this year. If all goes well, he should finish in mid-April. Good luck, Ed!

Irene Schoeller came from Morgantown, West Virginia and has been a frequent competitor in our local ultras. She adds a pleasant touch of female beauty, along with very smooth and graceful strides that keep her going for long periods of time. Sorry you couldn't pick up any good radio stations on your Walkman, Irene. But remember it's Sunday morning!

Tom Henry, Andy Gero and Chuck Rauber ran strong and steady races. Tom ran the race to celebrate his birthday. Andy started late, but ran well and had plenty of reserves left at the end. This was Chuck's first ultra. Congratulations, Chuck!

Jim Enright, a running mainstay in the Pittsburgh area, ran an enjoyable 20 miler(aren't they all, Jim?), but had to cut short his run to go to work. Call in sick next time, Jim. We hate to interrupt your fun. Tom, Andy and Jim belong to our local Allegheny Mountain/Greater Pittsburgh Road Runners Club.

Also to be congratulated are Mike Tuttle and Andy Grzellea(local "Librarian"). Anybody that gets up that early to run on a dark track for even an hour deserves a pat on the back.

It was nice to see some South Park Runners who came out to "act" as spectators. Sometimes I feel like I am taking on the job as the local "Seen" columnist. Seen were: Lori Heinicke, Ken Lesk, Dave Frey, Don Smith, Tom and Claire Henderson, and Tom Kwiatkowski. Also seen were Ed Hall and Dick Haggerty from the Road Runners. The support and encouragement was very much appreciated. Thanks!

In summary, everyone seemed to enjoy both the run and the T-shirt that was given as a participation award. The only complaint was that Library was a bit hard to find. Come on, guys! Library is the hub of the Pittsburgh area! All "Librarians" know that!

I did discover one advantage in organizing these ultra runs. No one has to wait for you to finish the run since you are the race director. You can go "as you please" without any undue pressure. In fact, I was having such a good time that I forgot what time it was. I suddenly remembered that I had told my wife I would cut the grass this afternoon. Hopefully, she will understand. After all, it was "Just For The Fun".

Bruce Mc Glothlin