



Winter 2006

Curro ergo sum (I run, therefore I am)

www.pgroadrunners.ca

Greetings from the Prince George Roadrunners!

We seem to be a busy bunch these days with little time to communicate about our running. Hopefully this is a sign that we are all busy getting outdoors, enjoying the winter weather, and training for upcoming spring events such as the Heights Fiver, the Vancouver Sun Run, and the Vancouver International Marathon. As you complete your training, please take some time to consider writing about it for a future edition of the Prince George Roadrunners Newsletter. It is always inspiring to read about other people's running experiences.

We hope to see you at our first race of the season, the Heights Fiver, on Sunday, April 2nd. This event offers a 5km walk, a 5km run, and a 8km run. The race begins at Kool Cats Kid Care, 6989 Gladstone Drive. The gun goes off at 9:00 a.m. Please come early to register for you Prince George Roadrunners and B.C. Athletics memberships.

The Prince George Road Runners Board of Directors

President and Secretary:

Oliver Hui 964-9647

Vice-President:

Cory Watts 564-6736

Treasurer:

Michele Sinclair 564-3751

Race Directors:

Chris Budac 562-0333

Cross Country Races:

Larry Rowe 564-8141

Web-Master:

Shayne Hoehn 612-4754

Newsletter:

Harmony Watts c_hwatts@yahoo.ca

Directors:

Bill Owen
Matthew Church
Kelly Sharp
Sig Hemmerich

Cheers to Volunteers!

Do you enjoy great local events such as the Prince George Roadrunners Race Series, the Iceman, the Swamp Stomper Triathlon, and the Labour Day Classic. The success of these events relies entirely on volunteers. More help is always needed and very much appreciated!

Currently, there are many big shoes to fill in the local athletic community. The Prince George Roadrunners are looking for a Race Director. Much of the seed work has already been done for our 2006 race series; however, we still need someone to manage these events so that they run smoothly. We also need race day volunteers who are able to help with course set-up, timing, and clean-up. If you are able to assist, please contact Oliver Hui at 964-6947. On a similar note, the Prince George Iceman is looking for a Race Coordinator. If you are interested, please contact Kathy Lewis at lewis@unbc.ca.

Thanks again to all of you who helped out with the Roadrunners 2005 Race Series. We hope to see you out again this year!

The Prince George Road Runners is a non-profit society that supports area runners and walkers by providing well organized races throughout the year. The club is open to people of all ages and athletic ability, from learn to run runners and walkers to competitive racers. Our goal is to offer a venue for fun competition.



Winter 2006

Curro ergo sum (I run, therefore I am) www.pgroadrunners.ca

My Las Vegas

By Bryan Tuson

Race day started with sky dark, clear, and a bit cold for standing around until 6:00 a.m. when the Elite Women would have a start fourteen minutes ahead of the Elite Men. Just as the eastern horizon grew lighter the Elite Women were off! The excitement was building, the clock was ticking down, and finally the Elite Men streaked off. Just a few minutes later, so did we.

The sky was lit up with an incredible fireworks display that came just before the sun. Down Las Vegas Boulevard we went, past Mandalay Bay Casino, then MGM Grand, Bellagio, and Caesar's Palace where a Roman Centurion was standing, past the Aladdin, the Luxor, the Excaliber, the Mirage, Treasure Island, and the Stratosphere. There were several Elvi, dressed in white with gold trim, pushing a hand cart with Elvis tunes blaring. There were runners dressed in full military gear with the U.S. Flag; there was Uncle Sam; there was a group of fairies with gossamer wings bouncing on their backs; and there was even an almost-naked guy wearing only a flesh-coloured bikini and a stop watch.

The temperature still hovered just above the freezing mark. At the five mile mark there was a run-thru wedding chapel where several couples exchanged their wedding vows and many more renewed theirs. The route turned onto the famous "Fremont Street Experience" and then into, until now, unknown streets.

As the sun rose higher in the sky so did the temperature and soon it was time to lose that old sweatshirt. The crowds thinned out. At every major intersection there were more race fans cheering us on and shouting the names printed on the race bibs. As we ran west with the sun at our backs the wind blew into our faces at five to ten miles per hour, which was refreshing as it got warmer. Once again we turned south and the wind died down to just a nice breeze. We ran through the streets that most visitors never see; flat, wide streets with very little cover for those who needed a bit of privacy, where construction was new and it was still very much desert with just scrub brush here and there.

Nearing the twenty mile mark the spectators increased and the cheering seemed to help drive us to run harder. "Almost there! Looking good! You can do it!" echoed through the streets. As we ran down the backs of the casinos down Frank Sinatra Boulevard we could see the Mandalay Bay, where the race finished, looming large ahead but still at least a mile away. Then we could hear the huge roar of the cheering at the finish line which was still out of site and around the next corner behind the hotel. 200 metres, 100 metres, around a bend in the road... and there it was: hundreds of people waving and cheering with the finish line clock showing our times. Then we crossed those timing mats and it was over! Off came the timing chips and they placed those shiny finishers medals over our heads. Food, water, shouts of joy and "Where's the beer" all mingled in the cacophony of the finisher's area.

What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas? Not this time!



Winter 2006

Curro ergo sum

(I run, therefore I am)

www.pgroadrunners.ca

Iceman 2006: "It's A Miracle! I Can Swim!"

By Denny Strausfogel

"Oh, stop being such a baby about it! Just say you're going to do it, then do it!" That was the conversation I had with myself six weeks before this year's Iceman, the skiing, running, skating, swimming event held every February in Prince George. I've thought about doing the Iceman as a solo after I first participated in it as a relay team's runner three years ago, and every year since. I was comfortable on skis and skates, but the problem was that I was the world's worst swimmer. (I've since been assured by several other runners that I am the world's *second* worst swimmer--they themselves being the worst.) I knew how to swim. I had swimming lessons as a kid and had no fear of drowning if I fell out of a boat. But swimming laps, 800m of them, after skiing, running and skating for two hours was just, just...unthinkable! After that first Iceman, I went to the pool with our team's swimmer and she patiently showed me ways to improve my stroke, breathing, kicking, etc. "You can do this, Denny, it's no big deal." Since 800m to a competent swimmer is akin to 5K, or less, to a competent runner, I probably didn't appreciate just how patient she was! I realized right away, though, that she was wasting her time. I hadn't done any real swimming for fifteen years and was shocked to find myself irrationally preoccupied with gasping for air and sinking like a stone. I couldn't process anything she was telling me. I needed to get over this, but knew I had to do it on my own. That was three years ago.

So in early January of this year, after telling enough people to make backing out a rather unattractive option, I started going to the pool. Just like running. Start with short distance then keep increasing. One length, 25m. Rest. Breathe in, breathe out. Okay, another 25m. Rest. Breathe in, breathe out. "What have I gotten myself into?! Oh, stop being such a baby about it!" And so it went.

I guess being a runner was helpful in that I knew my heart and lungs could handle the exertion. Also, like running, I had good training days and bad, but knew not to overreact to the bad ones. I guess the best thing, starting out as the world's worst (or second worst) swimmer, I saw a lot of improvement right away. Granted, improving up to swimming a whole 50 metres without stopping is like running *one whole lap* around the track--but I'd take whatever encouragement I could get. I tried not to think too much about having to do the 50 metres sixteen times in a row--after skiing, skating, and running for two hours. "What have I gotten myself into?! Oh, stop being such a baby about it!" And so it went.

In the meantime, the amazing Kathy Lewis, Iceman Race Director (and one of my running partners) thoughtfully gave my name to the Prince George Citizen when asked for any interesting Iceman stories. So there was an article about me in PG This Week--"Marathoner Doing the Iceman Solo" sort of thing. I figured there'd be a great follow-up story--"Marathoner Drowns in the Iceman" sort of thing. "What have I gotten myself into..." You know the rest.

Six weeks goes by fast when facing death by drowning; the Iceman cometh.

I can honestly say I've never been so intimidated by a race. Even in my first marathon, I was confident I could finish it, but this was different. I was sure I could make it as far as the pool, but had no idea what was going to happen then. After all the other events, I could imagine not being able to swim a single lap. "Okay, you can always roll over and do the whole thing on your back," I told myself. Okay.

continued on page 4...



Winter 2006

Curro ergo sum (I run, therefore I am)

www.pgroadrunners.ca

"It's A Miracle! I Can Swim!" (con't)

My plan for the first four events (8K ski, 10K run, 5K skate, and 5K run) was to just take it easy and save myself for the pool. The ski was, far and away, my worst event. I was the only solo male using classic skis. (For Harry Potter fans: I felt like Ron Weasley on a Cleansweep 7 with everyone else on Firebolts!) I finished the ski dead last, and of course made my one and only fall coming down the very last hill in front of the crowd. Oh well, humiliation cleanses the soul. I was never so happy to be putting on my running shoes. The 10K run went okay, as did the skate. The 5K run was more difficult than I expected--my legs were really tired by then, mostly from the skating I think. And now, the moment of truth.

Deep breath. Dive into the pool. Then...the miracle happened. I think this was the best swim I had in the entire six weeks of training, or for that matter--ever. I can only think that the fact that I was so darned tired, especially my legs, that I couldn't do my usual "oh-my-god-I'm-going-to-drown" useless thrashing kick, essentially trying to run my way through the water, and just settled into a slow-but-sure, almost relaxing, swim. Stroke, stroke, breathe. Stroke, stroke, breathe. "Hey! I can do this!" I stuck to my plan of doing some of the laps on my back to rest and recover, but think now I probably should have done more freestyle. I think I actually enjoyed the swim, a first ever experience, and was almost sorry when it was over. Unbelievable!

So, to all you runners out there who have convinced yourself that you simply can't swim--our legs are too heavy, we have no upper body strength, our breathing is all wrong; I've used all the excuses--it simply isn't true. Just stop being a baby about it and go do it! Miracles happen!

Happy running...and swimming!

Iceman 2006: Luc's Shady

Ladies

by Harmony Watts

This fall, I became the Health and Safety Representative at Shady Valley Elementary. I decided that I was better suited to be the Health and Wellness Representative and so I (unofficially) changed the job title and description to suit my own devices.

After a few low-key activities, which included a walk; a run; and a dinner out at Moxie's, I decided that our staff was ready to be challenged. The Iceman seemed like the perfect event to promote some physical and social activity; hence, I started recruiting.

It was quickly decided that our principal, Luc St. Denis, would do the 8km ski. Debbie Rowe, our K/1/2 teacher, and I were to be our runners; although, it took a trial run of the 10km course (on the snowiest day of the year) for us to decide that she would do the 10km and I would do the 5km. In hindsight, it should have been obvious that the woman who covers three grades in one classroom would have the better endurance and strength for the long, hilly 10km course! Gail Ware, one of our teaching assistants, volunteered to skate and bravely borrowed some hockey skates from her neighbour in order to start training. Several blisters later, she had perfected her self-professed "short, choppy stride" and was ready to go head to head with the some of the best skaters in Prince George. Our swimmer Kathy Rice, a local teacher on maternity leave, was recruited online with an ad that stated "Swimmer needed. Goal: to finish in time for the banquet." As it worked out, we found a ringer in our speedy online recruit.

continued on page 5



Winter 2006

Curro ergo sum (I run, therefore I am)

www.pgroadrunners.ca

Goulash Soup

1 lb ground beef
1 lb ground pork
2 large onions, chopped finely
3 green peppers, chopped finely
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper
1 cup ketchup
2 x 5 oz cans tomato paste
2 cups dry red wine
pinch caraway seed
2 cloves garlic, crushed
3 tbsp paprika
2 tbsp curry
1 large bay leaf
dash Tabasco sauce
dash Worcestershire sauce
dash Maggi or Soya sauce
2 pinches marjoram
2 pints of water

In a large roasting pan, brown the pork, beef, and onions.

Add green peppers, salt, pepper, ketchup, tomato paste, and wine. Let boil, stirring constantly.

Add remaining ingredients, stirring until well mixed, and bring to a boil.

Remove from top of stove and place in hot oven (325). Let simmer for 2 to 3 hours.

This is a great, hearty, soup for after a day of skiing. You can let it simmer in the slow-cooker all day and come home to the smell of a great dinner

Luc's Shady Ladies (con't)

Our team name had some historical significance as the traditionally all-female Shady Valley staff went by the name "Shady Ladies" for many years until a male was added to the mix and the name had to go.

Luc's Shady Ladies had a great race. We finished; nobody got hurt; and we were still smiling when the last person crossed the finish line. Our team came in 175th out of 201 teams and individuals... and... most importantly, we finished in time for the banquet!

I'm sure that everyone got something different out of the experience. Some participated in the event for the first time while others set new personal records. More importantly, the event gave us the opportunity to socialize together outside of work; to get some exercise; and to enjoy some fresh air.

**For full Iceman results go to:
<http://www.mag-net.com/iceman/>**

What's In The Next Issue? Whatever You Send Me!

Have you been to a great race lately? Do you have some training tips or a healthy recipe? Send me your ideas, stories, and photos and I will try to get them into the next newsletter!