

The Van Cortlandt Track Club

BRONX, NEW YORK

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November/December 2005



Triathlons: Diane Calderon Competes in the Hawaii Ironman
Tami Luhby Completes Westchester

Marathons: Bette Clark's First New York City Marathon

VAN CORTLANDT TRACK CLUB

P.O. Box 341, Bronx, NY 10471

2005 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Dotiwala

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VCTC membership meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month at 10:30 am. Club workouts are Tuesdays at 7:00 pm (track), Thursdays at 7:00 pm (trails), and Saturdays at 8:00 am (roads/trails).

The VCTC newsletter is published bi-monthly. For changes of address or missed copies, please notify us at 212 795-6460. We welcome all contributions.

Call race times to Jim Hudick:

201 816-8359 or e-mail:to

jhudick@optonline.net or use snail mail,

U. S. Postal Service. When submitting times, please let us know the date, name, distance, and location of the race; your time; age group award (if any); and other club members who ran.

Articles and times for the next newsletter are due **January 8**. E-mail to neshama44@msn.com.

IN THE LOOP

By Dennis Burns

Autumn, what a beautiful time of year. The time when transition takes place. The green of summer changes to the spectacular colors of red and orange. The trails are covered with a kaleidoscopic-like design of the colored leaves.

The Pete McArdle 15K on November 27th will close out the cross-country season, and mark the transition from fall to winter (Just as the Challenge marks the transition from winter to spring), and runners will don the layers of poly-pro and micro fiber as they train in the fading light. Transition and change is part of the cycle, which governs all things in the universe. Without change, life cannot go on.

In a very similar way, the Van Cortlandt Track Club needs transition and change for it to maintain life and grow. Yes we need the new ideas of new people to keep VCTC vibrant and strong. As I stated in the May Newsletter, each member brings a special talent to the club, which may be needed to help the club survive and grow.

Elections are coming up for Executive Committee positions. If you serve 2 years on the Executive Committee, you are eligible to run for a position on the Board of Directors. Executive Committee positions include: Membership, Social, Clothing, Race Directorship, Athletic Coordinator, and Public Relations. We will have nominations for the Executive Committee positions at our December Club Meeting, and we will vote for those positions at the Awards Dinner on January 28th.

You may have good organizational skills. You may be good with people. You may be a good writer, or you may love the thrill of scoring a race. You may want to be a race director, or you may be good at public relations, or in helping obtain sponsorship. We need your ideas and talents, and your energy.

Would you like to try one of these positions, but are somewhat unsure? Don't be afraid, we will help you get started. All you need is desire and commitment. The same skills you need to be a good runner. Please consider nominating yourself, or another VCTC member.

On another note, congratulations are in order for Diane Calderon, our own IronmanWoman, who finished an awesome 7th place in her age group in the Ironman Triathlon

In the Loop continued I

in Hawaii. After a grueling ocean swim, she averaged 19.6 mph on a hot and hilly 112 mile bike leg, and topped it off with a marathon in under 4 hours! Is that awesome?

And talk about awesome, I was privileged to be standing on 138th street watching our own VCTC runners going by. It was a very humid day, and definitely not ideal running weather. Yet, they forged ahead, no matter how they were feeling. Congratulations to Mike Hudick, Chris Maly-nowski, Bette Clark, Firdaus Dotiwala, Lanny Levit, Yuen Chun, Luis Colon, Edward James, Gilda Serrano, Fernando Ruiz, and Ramon Minaya. I admire you all, and you all inspired me. Our cheerleading section of VCTC members was out there, as they have been every year, giving encouragement to our runners, as the runners inspired us all. The power of the human mind is unbelievable! It was a great day, and made me once again realize how proud I am to be a VCTC member.

Coach's Corner- November

By Ken Rolston

Hello all,

Well, it's time to think about transitioning to cold-weather and/or indoor running. We'll be finishing our outdoor workouts soon, unless the weather remains unseasonably warm.

Occasionally we'll stay outside to do some hill work in Riverdale. Years ago Dave King introduced me to the agonizing benefits of extended hill-training as he had us pounding quarters down and mostly UP Fieldston Rd. Conditions were irrelevant. Snow, rain, annoyingly entitled locals notwithstanding, we showed the hills who was boss. And it wasn't us!

Last year we weren't able to run indoors until the end of January so we were unable to enjoy the competition that The Armory affords us. This year I'm hoping to mix Tuesday night sessions at Fordham U. with the afore-mentioned hill workouts to prepare us for the joys of Thursday Night at The Races. This is a NYRRC series of 4 races that takes place at the 168th St. Armory on alternate Thursday nights in January and February. Races range from 400 meters to 3,000 meters. Generally, there are 4 races per night and you can enter as many as your body can handle. The final of the 4 nights is a relay carnival

Coach's Corner cont'd

that includes 4 x 800, 8 x 200 and the infamous 10,000 meter relay- 10 people x 200 meters x 5 repeats. So prepare yourselves. We might need to spend some money to run at Fordham but I believe it's worthwhile. The track is a little more forgiving than at Manhattan College and we may have an opportunity to run there before Thanksgiving.

One of the benefits of these track workouts is to improve our mechanics. Long distance runners generally land well back on their heels which actually succeeds in slowing us down and increasing the risk of injury! I was reading an article that cited studies suggesting that running shoes themselves may be a major culprit in running injuries.

Most of the cushioning is built into the heel. Maybe the cushioning needs to be front-loaded.

For those who have no interest in going inside, now is the time to enjoy the final weeks of cross-country races at Van Cortlandt culminating in the Foot Locker championships on Thanksgiving weekend. The best high school runners in the Northeast converge on our park in the hopes of advancing to the Nationals. One of my favorite sights is the start, as 250-300 runners bomb southward along the flats and then make the 90° turn. You can appreciate the flat-out speed of these runners who haven't even hit the first half-mile or the first hill yet. Only the top 10 qualify-it used to be the first 8- so the real drama comes into play if there's a group contending for the final spots. For some reason the weather tends to be pretty decent on that Saturday and goes straight downhill in time for the Pete McArdle 15K on Sunday. Maybe this year things will be different.



VCTC Meeting Minutes

VCTC Board Meeting,
September 6, 2005

Present: Dennis, Gary, Diana, Fred, Larry, Bette

Cross-country series: Fred raised a number of issues about the series for next year. These included raising the entry fee to \$5.00 with discounts for groups of children at \$3.00 each, whether or not to offer the last race free, or whether to give a discount for the whole series (for example, \$25.00 for all 7 races, essentially offering the relay and one race free). Dennis suggested raising the entry fee and buying numbers. Dennis also recommended forming a cross-country race committee in order to ensure enough volunteers and overall organization. Fred also raised the question of whether the relay should be offered again, with 3 5K races, the relay, then 3 5K races, as offered this year. Also issues of money management and mailing lists were raised, with the idea of merging lists for the cross-country series with the Ramble and Urban Challenge to avoid duplication. Final decisions about fee changes will be made pending formation of committee and vote by Board.

Permanent meeting place: Dennis raised possibility of using a building at Manhattan College as a permanent meeting place. He was informed by Paul Sawyer that there is a building allocated for use of "community-based" organizations at 238th Street, which could work better as a meeting place than the Golf Course Clubhouse porch, particularly in bad weather. Ken will be asked for a contact name at Manhattan College. Gary is to confirm meeting time/place with Club for this Saturday's general meeting at 10:30.

Training and races: Dennis will bring up with Ken ways of coordinating training with specific race goals. He also suggested that anyone planning a long run in preparation for a marathon should make an announcement on the listserv in case other are interested in joining.

VCTC NYC Marathon table: Bill And Gary will set up tables, organize support . A list will be made of those planning to run the marathon .

VCTC Club Minutes,
October 8th, 2005

New meeting place: We spoke about the importance of finding a new meeting place, to use on a consistent basis. Susan thought a good meeting place would bring in more members to the meetings. Dennis agreed, and stated that he was still searching for the contact person at the Engineering Building of Manhattan College. They serve "Community Based Organizations", and VCTC is, in fact a "Community Based Organization".

Race Director for the Challenge: Dennis stated that he is still looking for a new Race Director for the Challenge. No one has volunteered so far.

Track Workouts: Ken was absent for the meeting, and no one was there to represent the Track Workouts.

Data Base Coordinator: Yuen Chun has volunteered to be the "Data Base Coordinator". She will organize all of the registrants from the Challenge, Ramble, and X-C Series to eliminate double mailings, and cull out incorrect addresses.

Treasurer's Report: Larry reported that the club has \$13,000+ and we now have the money invested in CD's.

Marathon Elite Start: Arnie spoke about the qualifying times for the "Elite Green Start" for the NYC Marathon. We have several members who fit into this category.

X-C National Championships: The X-C National Championships, (and the qualifying race for the World's Championships X-C Race) will be held in Vannie on February 18th & 19th. We would like a big VCTC presence in the form of volunteers, spectators, and have the VCTC Banner displayed. We could also have Membership apps, as well as apps for the 2006 Challenge only 2 months away.

VCTC Marathon Table: Bill Smith was absent from the meeting. Gary volunteered to contact him to plan for the set up of the VCTC Table.

Membership: Membership issues have come up lately, and we realized that we need to improve our awareness of nonpaying members, and those members need to be contacted by mail immediately

September Board Meeting cont'd

Attendance at club meetings: Dennis raised the question of ways to increase attendance. One suggestion was to invite speakers. He will remind Yuen about questionnaire/poll to find out more about people's interests re meetings.

Director for Urban Environmental Challenge: Dennis would like to step down as director and a new director is needed. Dennis will provide support, information, etc. Date has to be set (first Sunday in April?). Again, possibility of merging mailing lists for X-C series, Ramble, and Challenge was raised. Dennis will put an announcement in the newsletter.

Treasurer's report: Larry noted that working capital is about \$8,000, with all bills paid. Figures for summer series to be determined. Summer party cost was \$900.00. Party was felt to be successful, but food was not barbeque as originally promised.

October Membership Meeting cont'd

to inform them that their 2005 dues have not been paid.

Dennis spoke with Tony Thoman about the possibility of sending out the actual Membership file to select members who will need the data, such as Social Committee, Clothing Committee etc. We decided to drop those runners who have not paid their dues in the last 2 years from our membership lists.

Annual Awards Dinner: Linda and Wanda are working on a location for our Awards Dinner. Susan suggested that we be informed about the location by the time of the Pete McArdle X-C Race. We will most likely e-mail members about the location as well as perhaps having a notice distributed at the race.

Elections: Dennis asked the group if there was any Executive Committee or Board Member who is considering discontinuing or changing their service for the coming year, as Elections are coming up.

The Hawaii Ironman: Running with the Champions

By Diane Calderon

So I was turning 45. I had always wanted to do an Ironman. I thought it was just something I would dream about doing. I have three children, one of them only a year old....it didn't seem too likely. But I thought about it and decided NOW OR NEVER! I didn't ask Carlos, my husband, I TOLD him that my plan was to do Ironman Lake Placid in July 2005.

As all of us know, the best way to motivate your training for an event is to sign up. Thereafter, there are no excuses. With the help of a triathlon coach, I came up with a plan to get myself from February to the race in July.

One thing I have always been able to do is put my nose to the grindstone and follow a plan. I began in February and followed my training schedule to the letter. If I had to err, I did so on the extreme side (as in, doing EVEN MORE than what the schedule called for!).

I had races planned in my buildup to Ironman USA in Lake Placid. First was the Bronx Biathlon in April.

Then came the St. Croix Half Ironman in May. St. Croix happened to be a qualifier for the Ironman Championships in Hawaii, to be held on October 15, 2005. It was my dream goal to qualify for that race in St. Croix, but I had to win my age group there in order to do so. With the best support team one could ever wish for—Wanda and Enid—that turned out to be a piece of cake! At the awards dinner the night after the race, I was there with my checkbook in hand; ready to pay for my coveted spot at KONA

Each race leading up to Hawaii deserves its own story. Each was its own unique experience and adventure. I've met so many different wonderful people and have visited great exciting places. I spent some time this summer training in Puerto Rico with some triathletes there. I did some awesome rides in the heat on some great hilly courses. I met a wonderful group of cyclists in Westchester County (one of them goes by the name of Dennis Burns). I could go on and on.....But I'll stick to Hawaii for now.

I had to decide, after St. Croix, whether I would still do the July Ironman I had planned to do. I decided to go ahead and do it. Needless to say, after the Lake Placid Race I was hooked. I felt as though I'd had the most wonderful experience of my life (short of giving birth to my children, perhaps). I met so many people throughout the day while racing—11 hours and 30 minutes is enough time to meet a lot of people! I just had a great day AND came in second in my age group (which, had I not already qualified in St. Croix, would have earned me a spot at Ironman Championships in Kona). It was an all-around fantastic experience which Carlos and the kids shared with me.

I spent August and September honing my training—trying not to do TOO much (given that I'd just completed an ironman at the end of July) or too little. In September I did the Westchester Triathlon, a race I've done many times before. I finished the race and followed it up with a two hour run. I must say, I was getting kind of tired of so much training!

Needless to say, as October began I was starting to get nervous. My apprehension grew as the day to leave for Hawaii approached. I was worried about doing a second Ironman only three months after my first. I wasn't sure if I would be too fatigued from the previous race. I had taken a pretty bad fall off my bicycle while training in Puerto Rico. My neck was stiff and sore and my body didn't feel particularly well rested.

We flew to the island of Kona on October 9. Carlos, my two older children, Lucas and Sara, and my brother Michael came as my support crew. The trip was long but uneventful.

We spent the rest of the week enjoying the beauty of the island. The kids saw unbelievable fish, coral, turtles and other sea creatures in the beautiful Pacific. I did some practice runs, bikes and swims on the legendary Ironman course. Carlos took a trip with the rest of the crew to the volcano. It was an awesome vacation! But there was no avoiding the fact that it was NO VACATION for me!

I tried not to drink too much beer at lunch and dinner (Kona has its own breweries and the beer is quite good!) I was getting more and more anxious as time went on. But, like everything in life, race day was coming no matter what I did.

I woke up at 4 a.m. race day morning so that I could eat breakfast before the 7a.m. start. Carlos and our friend Miles drove me to the start at about 5:30. Our friends from home, Miles and Susie, had flown in the night before to see the race! I arrived at the bike area trying hard to calm my nerves.

So much preparation is involved in long distance triathlon. I had to pump my tires, set up my bike with all of my food and drink for the long ride. Meanwhile, I was sipping on water and sports drink, preparing for the 7 a.m. swim start. I made a last minute bathroom stop, waiting on a long line with other women. I noticed that not one of them had their ages printed on their calves as LARGE as my 46. It was HUGE and I felt OLD.

Eighteen hundred athletes all jammed together at the start of the swim! It was claustrophobic! I hadn't thought the swim would be an issue at all. Piece of cake, I thought! I'll go for a 2.4 mile swim and look at the fish. Boy was I wrong! It was a constant battle, with people pushing, slapping, kicking and otherwise battling one another throughout the entire swim. Not to mention the constant swells that had not once been present during my practice swims.



Hawaii Ironman cont'd

I muscled my way through the swim. I never got into a rhythm so it never felt smooth. But I made it and ran into transition. I needed to use the port-o-san in the transition tent. When I finished, one of the volunteers had moved my transition bag. I couldn't locate my stuff and I had to shout to the people in the crowded tent for help. When I finally had my gear I was a bit flummoxed and ended up running out of the tent without my singlet for the ride. We had to do a fairly long jog to get to our bikes. It wasn't until I was about 7 miles into the ride that I realized I might be in serious trouble without having my torso and shoulders covered from the scorching sun. I was going to be out on that lava-lined, shadeless course for over 5 hours with only a bra-top as coverage!

One thing I'm still trying to learn is to NOT stop at the port-o-san during the bike. This time, however, my pit stop actually saved me. At the aid station, one of the volunteers slathered me with sunscreen and I felt much more at ease about the burn issue!

The bike felt great! I cruised along and never seemed to experience the horrendous winds typical of the bike course at Kona. No friendly faces on any of my fellow racers, though. This was serious

business out there. After all, it was the Ironman CHAMPIONSHIP!

My run was pretty much a torture. I never felt like I got into a rhythm. Instead, it was true grit that got me through. One foot in front of the

other.....only 16 more miles, only 10 more miles.....Then, at about mile 17, I saw a friend of mine from home at the turn around at the Energy Lab (a notoriously sinister part of the run course). I was only about a mile or so behind him. I didn't feel great, but I hadn't felt any worse, so I just kept my pace even. Soon, with about 3 miles to go, I caught up to him. We ended up pushing each other all the way to the finish.

Music was blaring and floodlights guided us in. An announcer was doing a short bio of every finisher. Carlos, Lucas and Sara came running out of the crowd to join me in a triumphant finish. Words cannot describe how I felt!

Anyway, I could go on and on (even more than I already have!). In fact, I've barely touched on all that happened during this past year and during my time in Hawaii. I want to thank all my friends from VCTC who helped me achieve this wonderful goal.

Who's going with me next year?



You Never Know What's Going to Happen on Race Day.

By Tami Luhby

After doing three marathons in just over a year, I felt like trying something different this summer. Introduced to mini-triathlons last year by my friend Felicia, I wanted to challenge myself and do a full Olympic triathlon, which is double the distance.

How hard could a triathlon be, I thought. If I can run 26.2 miles, I should be able to do a .9-mile swim/25-mile bike/6.2-mile run, right?

It didn't take long for me to learn how difficult training for an Olympic triathlon is.

Running would be the least of my problems...or so I thought. Since I was training for the NY Road Runners' half-marathon series, I was doing more than enough running to complete a little 10K, the last event in the triathlon. On the other hand, I couldn't really swim. I knew how to do the breaststroke - which is how I made it through the sprint tri - but I couldn't master the crawl no matter how hard I tried. Finally, I had only a clunky hybrid bicycle, and I needed to buy a road bike.

My husband, Ed Purce, and I decided to do the Westchester Triathlon, which takes place in late September. We signed up for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program, which trains people to complete triathlons, marathons and century cycle rides. In exchange, participants raise funds for the Society, which supports research and provides patient services. I had trained for my three marathons with TNT - after learning my college friend Dina was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, a blood cancer - so I knew how great the program was.

Training consisted of run practice on Tuesday nights, where we did loops and hills in Central Park; swim practice on Wednesday nights, where we learned to do the crawl with the two-beat kick in Riverbank State Park in Harlem, and bike practice on Saturday mornings in Central Park. In exchange, Eddie and I each had to raise \$2,900.

Initially, I thought I had a chance to beat my husband. While I knew he was faster than I was in every individual event, I thought I'd have the endurance advantage since he'd never done a marathon or a triathlon.

The biggest hurdle ahead of me was learning to swim the crawl. Felicia, who was a TNT coach, always told

me: "Don't do the breast-stroke unless you're desperate because you'll tire your legs." And I always answered: "Felicia, I'm desperate." But I figured the coaches had four months to teach me the crawl...and I could always fall back on the breaststroke if I was desperate.

The next challenge was buying a road bike. I knew I couldn't do an Olympic triathlon on my hybrid bike, with its fat tires and heavy frame. For Heaven's sake, 70-year-olds were passing me in my previous triathlons and biathlons so I needed all the help I could get. But I wanted the perfect road bike...so I asked the triathletes I knew about their bikes, researched the different brands and models online, peppered sales people at stores with questions and finally settled on the Specialized Dolce Elite, a beautiful, sleek blue bike. I was a little wobbly on it at first, since I was used to sitting upright on my hybrid. But I got the hang of it. Eddie bought himself a Trek road bike soon after...he had resisted but was stunned at how he couldn't keep up with me on his old mountain bike.

Training started, and as I feared, swimming turned out to be a big problem. I did just fine practicing my form holding onto a buoy, but six weeks into training I could not swim across the 50-meter pool without stopping and gasping for breath. I began to dread Wednesdays. Finally, after three weeks of failing to reach my goal of making it one length without stopping, I asked the coach for help. He took a few of us "remedial swimmers" aside in mid-July and practiced breathing techniques for an hour. Amazingly enough, I got the hang of it! Two days later, I was jetting across the 50-meter pool in Van Cortlandt Park with no problem. My husband, who knew how to swim, stared at me the next time we swam together, asking "Where did you learn to do that?"

The bike, unfortunately, also became problematic. In late June, I took a bad spill in Central Park and ended up sliding across the pavement on my left side. Thank Heavens, my coach was nearby. Feeling bits of something in my mouth, I started shouting at him "Do I still have my teeth? Do I still have my teeth?" It turned out it was just dirt. Still, I ended up in the emergency room, badly scraped on my arm, elbow, shoulder, knee, knuckle and face. While those wounds healed after a while, I didn't realize how internally scarred I was. ,



Tami (center), Ed (to her right), and their cheering squad: (from left to right) Tami's Mom; her friend, Helen; and Ed's Mom. (Photo courtesy of Helen Carlson DelVecchio)

It took me more than two months to feel comfortable on my bike, finally coming to terms with the accident two weeks before the Westchester Tri.

Running, as I thought, turned out to be a breeze. We ran at most eight miles during practice, which was no problem...until I strained my back 10 days before the big event. I went to the doctor, who said I could still do the tri but predicted that I'd be in pain during the 25-mile super-hilly bike course. He turned out to be wrong.

On the morning of the big race on Sept. 25, I set up my transition area, carefully laying out my towel, bike shoes and sneakers under my bike. Donning my wetsuit, I stretched my back repeatedly. My husband and I walked down to the beach at Rye Playland, where the swimmers were gathering.

Surprisingly, I felt great when I got into the water. I concentrated on my form and on looking at the buoys to make sure I was not going off course. Though the water got a little choppy, I had no problem pushing through the waves. Gliding in on them on my way back to shore, I rushed back to the sand and looked at my watch. 27:51. How was that possible? I didn't think I could do it in less than 40 minutes. Confused, I stood there while my

coach shouted at me to start peeling off my wetsuit and run to the transition area. Later, I learned that the officials cut the swim to .65 miles because of the rough water.

Getting on the bike, I knew the hills of Rye and Greenwich lay ahead. Eddie and I had done the course over Labor Day weekend to practice. Hoping my back wouldn't give out, I started pedaling. The first half was tough and I struggled up the hills. But I felt better on the second half and even passed a few people who had whizzed by me earlier. I wanted to complete it in less than 1:45 and I did - by 14 seconds! That time, however, included a five-minute stop to help a teammate fix a flat tire. The best part was that my back didn't really hurt.

Racking my bike and pulling on my sneakers, I headed out for the run. That's when it hit me. I felt my back with every with every step of the 6.2-mile course. It slowed me down by at least a minute a mile, but I told myself I was not going to walk under any circumstances. I brightened when we passed the Coveleigh Club in Rye, where Eddie and I got married, informing all my teammates nearby of the special location.

You Never Know cont'd

As I neared the finish line, Eddie was waiting for me and cheering. Oh well, I didn't really think I could beat him anyway. My coach ran me up the little hill just before the end, encouraging me to give it my all. Around the bend, I saw the finish line and my family and friends cheering for me. I gathered up whatever I had left and "sprinted" to the end...completing the run in 1:03:34 for a total time of 3:23:09.

Looking back, I never would have predicted that the swim would have been my best event and the run my most painful. But as they say, you never know what's going to happen on race day. Let's see what the New York City Marathon holds on November 6th and the Ford NYC Triathlon next July. Maybe I'll even beat my husband.



Runners (with apologies to Dr. Seuss)

By Anonymous

New ones
Old ones
Fast ones
Slow ones

What funny creatures
Runners are

This one is so very tall
This one is so very small
This one zooms in races
This one follows steady paces

Straight up the hill this one goes
While that one stops to touch her toes
This one dashes to the tree
While that one slowly lifts his knee

What funny creatures
Runners are

Boy they have fun
In the hot hot sun
And even in the snow
They go go go

You find them here
You find them there
You find runners everywhere

So next time you see one zipping by
Don't just stand there with a glint in your eye
Put on your shoes and follow
You'll join more of them tomorrow

What funny creature
Runners are

SPECIAL DECEMBER CLUB MEETING

For Nomination of Board & Executive Committee Positions

Saturday, December 10th at 10:45 am

Nominate Yourself or a Friend

Location to Be Announced.....

25-Jun Western States 100 Miler (100.0 M)

**Auburn, CA
Saturday (AM)**

23:14:57 OlgaVarlamova F35 **9th F**

9-Jul S.O.B. 50 K (100.0 M)

**Ashland, OR
Saturday (AM)**

5:52:07 OlgaVarlamova F35

16-Jul Vermont 100 (100.0 M)

**Woodstock, VT
Saturday (AM)**

23:29:20 OlgaVarlamova F35 **10th F**

30-Jul PCT/Hood 50 K (31.0 M)

**Sandy, OR
Saturday (AM)**

6:05:23 OlgaVarlamova F35

14-Aug Haulin' Aspen Trail Marathon (26.2 M)

**Bend, OR
Sunday (AM)**

5:10:23 OlgaVarlamova F35

4-Sep Henry Isola Cross Country 5K (3.1 M))

**Van Cortlandt Park
Sunday (11:30AM)**

29:30 Firdaus Dotiwala M36
31:46 Bette Clark F49 **1st 45-49**
31:47 Paulino Santana M44
33:23 Arnold L Gore M64 **2nd 60-64**
34:15 Ramon Ruiz M65 **2nd 65-69**
39:02 Edith Jones F65 **1st 65-69**

5-Sep New Haven 20 K (6.2 M)

**New Haven, CT
Labor Day, Monday (AM)**

2:12:07 Fernando Ruiz M73 **2nd 70-74**

10-Sep Wasatch Front 100 Miler (100.0 M)

**Salt Lake City, UT
Saturday (AM)**

34:04:57 OlgaVarlamova F35

10-Sep Ramsey Run 10K (6.2 M)

**Ramsey, NJ
Saturday (AM)**

41:16 Michael P.Hudick M60 **1st 60-69**

10-Sep NYC Marathon Tune Up (18.0 M)

**Central Park
Saturday (7:30AM)**

2:16:48 Richard P Conley M50
2:24:53 Neil Ghezzar M34
2:43:40 Zafar Shahbaz M48
3:00:06 Ivan Ragoonanan M60
3:08:10 Katherine Callan F43
3:11:40 Marisol Zapata-Ruiz F39
3:11:04 Gilda L Serrano F56
3:21:07 Edward James M59
3:27:37 Daniel O Flynn M63

11-Sep Nyack 10 Miler (10.0 M)

**Rockland County, NY
Sunday (AM)**

1:16:32 Bette Clark 49F **2nd AG**
1:25:30 Hector Santiago 68M **1st AG**
1:35:20 Gary Spalter 52M
1:35:45 Arnie Gore 64M
1:39:47 Bill Smith M60
1:41:13 Fernando Ruiz 73M **1st AG**
1:41:49 Susan Epstein 62F

17-Sep Harlem Renaissance 5 Miler (5.0 M)

**Manhattan
Saturday (AM)**

47:20 Fernando Ruiz M73 **1st 70-74**

17-Sep Fitness Mind Body Spirit Games (4.0M)

**Central Park
Saturday (9:40AM)**

26:38 Michael P Hudick M60 **1st 60-64**
37:42 Carl Morrishow M49
40:35 Gilda L Serrano F56
39:20 Ira A. Weiner M46
41:40 Lisa E Fleischmann F42
43:46 John Arbucci M47

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18-Sep Fred Lebow Cross Country 5K (3.1M)
Van Cortlandt Park
Sunday (11:30 AM)

29:20 Noel J Byrne M71 **2nd 70-79**
 30:50 Jean Harkins F34

18-Sep Dutchess County Half Marathon (13.1 M)
Wappinger Recreation Artea, NY
Sunday (AM)

1:50:58 Blas Abadia Jr M50 **5th 50-54**
 2:14:09 Fernando Ruiz M73 **2nd 70-74**

24-Sep Fifth Avenue Mile (1.0M)
Fifth Avenue, NY
Saturday (10:00 AM)

7:43 Edith Jones F65 **1st 65-69**

25-Sep Pfalz Point Trail Race (10.0 M)
New Paltz, NY
Sunday (AM)

1:26:38 Rachel Gissinger F29
 1:30:44 Marie Kearns F47
 1:32:43 Bette Clark F49
 1:33:22 Firdaus Dotiwala M36
 1:41:19 Wanda Bills F44
 1:47:52 Yuen Chun F48
 1:55:21 Gary Spalter M52
 2:01:20 Rozsa Gaston F47

2-Oct Norwegian Festival Norway Run
2.7 K (1.7 M)
Central Park, Sunday (9:30 AM)

14:27 Luis Colon M51
 16:17 John Arbucci M47

2-Oct Grete's Great Gallop
Half Marathon (13.1 M)
Central Park, Sunday (9:30 AM)

1:28:25 Michael P Hudick M60 **2nd 60-64**
 1:35:32 Louis Csak M39
 1:47:17 Blas Abadia Jr M50
 1:49:05 Zafar Shahbaz M48
 1:51:06 Ramon Ruiz M65 **3rd 65-69**
 1:51:34 Edward James M59
 2:03:55 Edith Jones F66 **1st 65-69**
 2:13:53 Yuen Na Chun F48
 2:13:18 Daniel O Flynn M63
 2:17:15 Rozsa Gaston F47
 2:20:42 Gilda L Serrano F57
 2:18:33 Susan R Epstein F62
 2:17:20 Carl Morrishow M49
 2:22:11 Ira A. Weiner M46
 2:36:18 Ramon Minaya M65
 3:04:34 Patricia Robinson F64

2-Oct Pamby Half Marthon (13.1M)
Ridgefield, CT, Sunday AM

1:54:09 Hector Santiago M68

15-Oct Ironman 2005 World Championship
Kailua-Klona, Hawaii
Saturday (AM)

Diane Calderon F46
 1:16:21 Swim - 2.4 M
 5:49:19 Bike - 112.0 M
 3:59:40 Run - 26.2 M
 11:15:54 Overall

16-Oct Paramus 10K (6.2 M)
Paramus, NJ, Sunday (AM)

41:26 Michael P. Hudick M60 **1st 60-64**

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**16-Oct Staten Island Half Marathon (13.1 M)
Staten Island, NY, Sunday (9:40 AM)**

1:23:12	Chris Malynowski	M29	
1:42:12	Neil Ghezzar	M34	
1:45:34	Bette Clark	F50	1st 50-54
1:50:16	Firdaus Dotiwala	M36	
1:55:08	Zafar Shahbaz	M48	
1:57:44	Edward James	M59	
2:15:48	Fernando Ruiz	M73	
2:17:32	Selma Seq'ira Raven	F39	
2:22:13	Ivan Ragoonanan	M60	
2:24:39	Gilda L Serrano	F57	
2:41:24	Tami Luhby	F35	

**23-Oct Kurt Steiner Cross Country 5K (3.1M)
Van Cortandt Pk, Bx, NY
Sunday (11:30 AM)**

25:22	Bette Clark	F50	2nd 50-54
26:25	Ramon Ruiz	M65	2nd 65-69
29:41	Edith Jones	F66	1st 65-69
31:06	Jean Harkins	F34	

**30-Oct Poland Spring
Marathon Kickoff (5.0M)
Central Park, NY, Sunday (9:00 AM)**

32:33	Michael P Hudick	M60	2nd 60-64
35:36	Neil Ghezzar	M34	
35:39	Blas Abadia Jr	M50	
37:21	Heidi Pabon	F32	
38:44	Bette Clark	F50	4th 50-54
39:19	Ramon Ruiz	M65	3rd 65-69
43:24	Edith Jones	F66	1st 65-69
43:01	Carl Morrishow	M49	
44:47	Selma Seq'ira Raven	F39	
45:46	Luis Colon	M51	
49:19	Gilda L Serrano	F57	
48:28	Ira A. Weiner	M46	
48:49	Fernando Ruiz	M73	
53:11	Ramon Minaya	M65	

**8-Nov New York City Marathon (26.2 M)
New York, NY, Sunday (10:00 AM)**

3:22:44	Michael P Hudick	60M	5th 60-64
3:30:28	Frankie J Ruiz	26M	
3:33:56	Chris Malynowski	29M	
4:00:32	Bette Clark	50F	
4:09:28	Firdaus Dotiwala	36M	
4:24:26	Lanny E Levit	54M	
4:46:13	Yuen Na Chun	48F	
4:53:51	Ivan Ragoonanan	60M	
4:53:41	Luis Colon	51M	
5:00:18	Edward James	59M	
5:27:24	Gilda L Serrano	57F	
5:55:25	Fernando Ruiz	73M	
6:13:33	Ramon Minaya	65M	

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Running New York City: A First Marathon Story

By Bette Clark

While my legs are still sore and the excitement is still keeping me on my feet, I want to try to recapture the experience of running the New York City Marathon—my very first marathon.

The story may end with my aching legs (or maybe this is just the first chapter) but it's harder to decide on a beginning. In many ways, it all started with me finding VCTC. About a year and a half ago (June, 2004) I was looking for a way to get back into shape, to get back to running (I had run on and off in the past, but never very consistently), and I was curious about the trails of Van Cortlandt but did not want to venture on to them by myself. So I checked on line, read about VCTC, and contacted Ken, who warmly invited me to join a Saturday morning run. I met such a friendly, welcoming group of runners that first morning that I didn't hesitate to join in. I didn't have a clue about how far or fast I wanted to run, so I took my cue from other runners and joined a group heading to the trails. As we approached the railroad tracks, I asked, casually, "so, how far are you going?" When the answer was "about 10 miles," I gasped silently (having never run more than 5 or so at one time in my life), and not wanting to turn back, said "okay, I'll try it." I did—and had a great time. Not only was I hooked on running longer distances that day, but I loved the camaraderie. I grew to look forward all week to the Saturday runs, and later, to the track workouts which I eventually joined (those were a lot harder for me—I had never pushed myself for speed, had never raced

Running is contagious and addictive. Somehow the more I ran with VCTC, the more I wanted to run—and I began to run races. After just a few months of running with the club, I decided to run the Yonkers half-marathon (kind of nutty, as I had never run a race longer than 5 miles at that point). I trained hard on the hills of Van Cortlandt and Yonkers and ran the race. I really enjoyed it—and quite to my surprise, placed first in my age group. There's nothing more encouraging (further fueling the addiction) than winning your first medal, and this was a big plaque!

Just two months after running Yonkers, I joined VCTC to cheer runners in the New York City Marathon of

2004. It was the first marathon I had ever watched. It was so exciting to see all the runners, and especially to support our members running by in the Bronx. It was probably about that time that I began to vaguely contemplate the idea of running a marathon. Could I maybe do this too? It also struck me that it would be great thing to do to celebrate my 50th birthday (coming up exactly one month before the 2005 New York City marathon).

Running through the summer and into the fall, I was sort of following a training plan—more weekly miles, wonderful long runs at Rockefeller...but still not completely sure that I was actually training for a marathon. I raced more halves (Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan) and shorter races. Running (and my friends in VCTC) helped me get through a very difficult summer after my father passed away but systematic training was erratic. By September I should have been revving everything up (I was sure I could handle the tapering much better) but so much interfered with training—like daily life, family, etc. It seemed harder and harder to find the time for those very long runs I was supposed to be doing. I kept asking everyone—some said two or three 18-20 milers should be enough. Others said do at least five, and some should be 24 miles. Oh, oh—will I have time for any of that?...I avoided the long training runs in Central Park to preserve my knees...oh no...should I have done them?

Finally a week before the marathon—and I still didn't know if I would run it. I was sick with some kind of flu—terrible fatigue, sore throat, fever. The good news was that I was forced to taper pretty dramatically—in fact, I couldn't get out of bed. When I went to the Javits Center to pick up my race number, I was very excited—but still feverish, and I kept wondering—will I be able to run?. Literally the day before the marathon, I did not know for sure whether I would feel well enough.

The morning of the marathon. Mist was hanging over Van Cortlandt when I went to meet Ken at dawn in front of Firdaus's apartment.(another example of how supportive VCTC is—Ken drove us to the start, as he routinely does for members running NYC, so we didn't have to deal with the buses from Manhattan. I was a nervous wreck—still not feeling a hundred percent,



New York city Marathon cont'd

but at this point not sure whether or not this was my virus or anxiety. We picked up Chris in the city and drove to Staten Island. Would I be able to run? Could I actually finish? I took some Tylenol hoping that everything would stop bothering me.

Despite my constant doubt and worry (and secret wish that we would get stuck in traffic and miss the start) we arrived at Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, and Ken drove away. I was now stuck in Staten Island. Chris, Firdaus, and I walked towards the staging area. I was struck by energy in the air and the sense of being in a global village, with announcements in German, Italian, French, Spanish. Waiting at the edge of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, I talked to the woman next to me who was from Germany—not her first marathon but first in New York City. She was also excited and nervous. Another woman told me she lives just on the other side of the bridge but had to go into Manhattan to get to the start (could things be any more difficult and complicated than a marathon in New York City?)

At this point, everything began to move quickly. What I thought would feel like an eternity whizzed by and the start gun went off. We were moving, the mats underfoot were beeping, we were running slowly, then faster, like a trot, up the incline, as the mist above the bridge lifted and sun broke through the high clouds. Women begin to pass items of clothing from the center towards the side of the bridge where they were flung over the railing—sweatshirts, pants, hats moving sideways as we moved forward and upward. As I crested the top of the bridge, men began to join us from the sides of the bridge. I began to get a sense of runners all around me. We passed the one mile marker and I was glad to see it was a slow mile—just as I planned. I was wearing a wrist pace band (which I could barely see) but remembered Ken's

advice about starting slow and about what to aim for at the half-marathon distance. I was determined to keep it slow in the beginning.

We descended to the end of the bridge and suddenly there were all kinds of people standing along the side of our route. Now we were running through the streets of Brooklyn—we passed so many different sights, different neighborhoods, most of it unfamiliar to me. Horns blaring, people shouting, music playing. I heard a rapper singing: "you go girl!" and while I knew it was his song's refrain, it felt like it was directed at me. "Go Kate go," "Go Canada," "Go Italy," "Go Bunny ears." Everyone got their own private cheers. I noticed only two miles in that I was really sweating—it already felt very hot and humid. First water stop and I poured water on my head to keep cool. For the rest of the race I did this at each water stop, even when I didn't take anything to drink.

In Brooklyn, little girls with long dresses offered us lollipops, a chorus of children were sitting on church steps dressed formally in black and white (looking a bit like the girls in rows in *Madeline* books), people smiling, waving signs, children reaching out to touch runner's hands. We passed the 10K mats and I could not believe we had already run 6 miles (then realized that's less than one quarter of the way...). I saw people with 3:40 and 3:50 pace markers on their backs and stayed close because this was the time I was aiming for. So far, everything felt just right—not too fast, not too slow. Brooklyn lasted a long time, but then, suddenly, I saw mile 13. could this be the half-way point already? We ran over the half-marathon marker mats as we crossed the Pulaski Bridge into Queens. It seemed like such a short distance before we were on another bridge—this one bigger, full of shadows, and I look down and saw a sea of spectators.



New York City cont'd

As we descended from the Queensboro Bridge, there was a roar which at first I thought was traffic but then realized it was people shouting: we made a sharp turn, and we were flying down First Avenue. The mile markers seemed to come so quickly: the music quickened, cheers got louder—but I remembered words of warning (“don’t get carried away on First Avenue—you still have a long way to go). Now I was focused on getting to 96st street, where I expected to see my family. This was more familiar territory—I watched the street numbers get higher. Just past 96th street I heard “mom” and caught a glance at my son, daughter, husband, waving, holding up signs (only later did I get a chance to read them). I suddenly realized we were at mile 18 and I still felt great. I had run this far before but never in a race. Now I was entering new territory, but I was feeling good.

We were still on First Avenue and I began to focus on reaching the Willis Avenue Bridge. I was looking forward to seeing everyone at the VCTC table. We crossed the bridge, Yes, we were in the Bronx, but where were they? Further up, near the next bridge. I saw the overpass and remembered from last year that the table was right there. Still didn’t see anyone I knew until I saw one VCTCer after another, waving, smiling, calling out my name, telling me I was right on pace. They had been following my splits through the Athlete Alert e-mails transmitted to cell phones and Blackberrys, and ran towards me, asking me what I wanted, passing me water—and in a flash, they were gone. A runner said: “boy you have a big fan club” and I said, proudly, “that’s my running club.”

We crossed another bridge. I saw people next to me bending over, not looking too good. More and more I become aware of runners struggling, some holding on to their sides, others gripping a calf, one or two sitting down, a few walking. We rounded off the bridge and were on Fifth Avenue. Another warning came to me (“it’s all up hill,” the last miles are the toughest,” “the real race begins at mile 20”). I still felt good. What was this about “a wall.” This wasn’t too bad, really—maybe I’ll do another marathon one day.

But then, all of a sudden, just as I pass mile 22, I was aware of feeling very, very tired. My legs, which felt so springy minutes ago, were leaden, and I felt that everything began to go in slow motion (whereas before, it was fast forward). Ah, but we were in the

park, this should be familiar. Where was my family? They were supposed to be somewhere behind the Met. I had just passed the Met but didn’t see them. (I found out much later that they had seen me and shouted but I was so zoned out I did not notice them.) So this must be what “hitting the wall” feels like (though I expected my legs to get rubbery which they didn’t, thank goodness). I was aware of feeling more and more thirsty and I stayed thirsty even when I drank water and Gatorade. More and more people were walking around me—a woman was lying on a stretcher with a neck brace, with medical people surrounding her. What happened to her? Would I collapse too?

The miles were longer and longer. The last three miles felt like the longest three miles I had ever run. I saw the times and realized that I had slowed down. Now I knew I was way off pace and suddenly it didn’t matter—I just wanted to make it (could I do it under 4:00 at this point?) Two miles to go. I knew I could do it, two miles was nothing. But why did it feel so so, so far. Finally 1.2 miles, 1 mile, 800, 400, 200 meter markings, but even these do not come soon enough. I was still running but it felt like a crawl (was I crawling?). I saw the finish line and hoped that it was as close as it looked. I heard that beep, looked up at the clock (no, not under 4:00, but just over—disappointed, only a bit, just glad to be standing, but barely, so glad to have finished...but was told to keep walking.

Wow. It was over, I actually ran a marathon. I gave myself a wonderful 50th birthday present. I felt great for the first 22 miles (and even stayed on pace) and really enjoyed myself on the streets of New York. Today (the next day), I am only just a bit tired and sore. Thank you, VCTC. You led me here and got me through it.. I was befriended, inspired, coached, and supported by the runners of VCTC. You helped me set new goals, face new challenges, enjoy new accomplishments, find wonderful running partners, make new friends, and enjoy running even more.

So, when do I begin training again? Should I run Boston? (I did qualify with my NY time. You don’t have to be too fast at my ripe old age). Means training this winter...I’ll make sure to put in more long runs to run those last ones stronger... I know VCTC will keep inspiring me to do more. Just don’t start talking to me about ultras, Firdaus.

SAVE THE DATE!!

Saturday January 28, 2006

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Van Cortlandt Track Club Awards Dinner Party

7 pm Till Midnight

Eastwood Manor

Bronx, NY

Details will be mailed out Soon....

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