

## RECOVERY PLANS SHOW SIMILAR THEME

By DON SIKORSKI  
*Special to the Bulletin*

Over 35,000 runners crossed the finish line of the New York City Marathon on Sunday. I'm betting that not one of them walks without some sort of pain or discomfort today. Spectators that line the 26.2 mile route often witness the agony that many marathon runners endure during the trek through the five boroughs of the city to the finish line in Central Park. But few realize that the discomfort and pain associated with such an athletic achievement have only just begun.

Watching race winner Paul Tergat of Kenya and Hendrick Ramaala of South Africa dig in down the race's final stretch showed how grueling the marathon can be. Ramaala, the defending champion, lunged towards the tape in desperation only to fall a mere 1 second short of Tergat, the world record holder. And despite training mileage that approached 170 miles weekly, Tergat and Ramaala are probably both in a world of hurt right now. There's also plenty of local runners out there who are familiar with the post-race discomfort of the marathon.

Wayne Jolley seems to recover from marathon racing efforts better than most. The 54 year-old Brooklyn resident has run 30 marathons and often schedules three per year; the Disney Marathon in January, Boston in April, and then a fall marathon in October. In addition to Jolley's three marathon efforts, he usually manages about 35 road races per year. "I usually don't even take a week off," said Jolley of his marathon recovery. "I run Boston just about every year, and then six days later, I'm down in Westerly running the Clamdigger 5 Miler just about as hard as I can go."

Karen Short and Sue Smith often train together for marathon races. After recently completing the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, DC this past month, both Short and Smith are just now returning to some easy recovery running. Short accomplished her goal of qualifying for Boston after clocking a personal best at the 2004 Chicago Marathon. But despite cruising through her Boston Marathon race at a comfortable pace, the recovery experience was less pleasant. "Boston was horrible; the worst marathon to recover from," claims Short, mostly due to the hills that greet the runners over the later stages of the race. "The recovery was much easier after Marine Corps." But both ladies agree on a recommended formula for post-marathon recovery. "Guinness and dancing are good for the legs," claims Smith.

Uncasville's Kevin Gallerani has a total of 40 marathons, including 20 Boston's, to his credit. He also coaches marathon runners, so he is well versed in the science of recovering from a 26.2 mile effort. "If it's a hilly course, I usually try to do something of low resistance on a stationary bike, maybe 20 minutes a day." I'll take 3-4 days off from running. But on a flat course, I've had no problem getting back to running after a day or two". Gallerani advocates no racing for at least three weeks following a marathon. "The downhill beat up your quads and lower back pretty bad. You have to take some time to let the microscopic tears heal." Gallerani also has his own unique ritual that seems to work well for him. "Don't laugh, but I always have one Bacardi and Coke after every marathon. The alcohol takes away a little of the pain and the coke helps settle my stomach."

Norwich's Tim Smith is considered the area's best marathon runner. Just this past month, at the age of 57, Smith finished 25th overall in 3:00:00 at the Hartford Marathon, running in less than ideal weather conditions. Smith also owns the course record at the East Lyme Marathon by virtue of his 2:23:56 clocking in 1982. He claims that not much has changed for him over the years concerning his marathon racing philosophy. "I like to enjoy the moment but then get out as soon as I can," says Smith of the marathon. With 53 marathon finishes on his running resume, few are more qualified to talk about the marathon experience than Tim Smith. "I really enjoy that 24-48 hour window following a marathon," he explained. "And I must say that I enjoy knocking down a case of beer over the next 3-4 days," says Smith of this post-marathon relaxation technique.

As a coach of distance runners myself, I believe that the recovery process from hard racing efforts is probably the most overlooked aspect in any training plan. Watch any marathon runner try to walk down a flight of stairs the next day and you've witnessed the sight of marathon pain first hand. If I'm ever foolish enough to race another marathon again myself, I'm hoping that Guinness and dancing thing really does work.

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