

MARATHONING 101: THE RACE AND RECOVERY PROCESS

By DON SIKORSKI
Special to the Bulletin

Despite challenging weather conditions that offered runners competing in the 111th Annual B.A.A. Boston Marathon a build-in excuse for a sub-par performance, Kevin Gallerani offered a realistic response on his race result. "I didn't get what I wanted," said Gallerani of the bottom line. "We had some rain and headwind gusts here and there, but the weather really wasn't that bad". There might be a few 110 pound runners from Kenya who may disagree with Mr. Gallerani's assessment.

Gallerani had spent 16 weeks preparing to race the Boston Marathon, with realistic aspirations of competing the 26.2 race in a time of 3 hours and 20 minutes or better. However, the inclement weather that descended upon the region this past weekend caused havoc for the runners. Gallerani was able to run an even-paced effort to finish the race in a very respectable time of 3 hours, 27 minutes, and 58 seconds; slower than his target goal but an excellent effort given the conditions.

While some registered runners opted to stay in bed and avoid the rough conditions, a hurricane couldn't have kept Kevin Gallerani away from the starting line on Patriot's Day morning. His pre-determined plan to wear sweats that would eventually be discarded at 4 miles into the race kept allowed Kevin to remain comfortable at the start but cost him about a minute during the race. To his credit, Gallerani displayed excellent pacing skills despite a crowded start and challenging conditions. "It took me about 6 or 7 minutes to get to the starting line (after the gun went off)", explained Gallerani of the Hopkinton start. "And I lost a minute at mile 4 to take my sweats off. But from the second mile right up until about 17, I hit 7:50 pace almost right on, then I averaged around 8's on the hills. But I didn't get down to running 7:30's or 7:40's like I wanted to." Gallerani admits that he began to slow down at mile 24, where he ran an 8:07 mile. But he anticipated a reward for his effort in the next mile. "I slowed down and took a 16 ounce Budweiser from (Way) Hedding and the boys at the 1 Mile to Go mark," claimed Gallerani. "It was planned because I knew this would be my last Boston (Marathon)."

In reviewing his training plan, Gallerani feels that he accomplished what he had wanted to and had trained efficiently. He blames Father Time for not being able to run as fast as he had in past years. "I was sore fore the last couple of miles," confessed Gallerani. "But I felt that I did everything right in my training. It's just age. I don't have the hamstring strength to run faster. It's all relative to what I'm capable of doing". Gallerani did point out the positives of his training that proved beneficial over the late miles. "I'm glad I did the weights; I didn't feel that beat up on the downhills," said Gallerani. "And I did a lot of ½ mile hill repeats. I'm glad I did".

Overall, Gallerani was pleased with his effort. He also continued with his tradition of a post-race Bacardi and coke "for medicinal purposes". "I do it to kill the immediate pain," joked Gallerani. He was also adamant about giving thanks to his supporters. "I really want to give a personal thank you to my fiancée Allison for her 16 weeks of unending support and to my future in-laws Walt and Dot, who went to the race to support me." Kevin also thanked the Norwich Bulletin for paying so much attention to him.

This past week, Gallerani recovered with 15-20 minutes on an exercise bicycle "just to get the lactic acid out of the legs". He will do some light jogging on grass later in the week. He doesn't plan on racing for at least 2-3 more weeks. "Then I'll get back and see what I can do," said Gallerani of his plan to take advantage of his current fitness level.

Kevin's 3:27 effort on a day not conducive to running fast is commendable. I am extremely impressed with his mile splits, which are about as consistent as you can get. His fastest 5K split and slowest split are within a minute of each other, he averaged sub 8's (7:56 per mile), and he ran negative splits (1:44:54 + 1:43:04 for each half marathon), which is terrific on the Boston's course. Personally, I would have tossed the sweats before the starting gun went off (which cost him 1:09 in time) but it may have been worthwhile to Kevin to warm up in the first few miles. As for the beer at 25.2? Some temptations are just too difficult to resist. Congratulations to Kevin on his 21st and what he claims was his final Boston Marathon.

Connecticut Recap

Brendan Prindiville of Hamden was the top Connecticut finisher at Boston, running 2:29:02, good enough for 45th place overall. Guilford's Kimberly Battipaglia ran 3:11:45 as the state's top female finisher. There were a total of 20 Connecticut runners that posted sub 3-hours efforts. Despite the conditions, the race boasted a total of 20,348 finishers, a number which would have been greater by adding in the percentage of runners who were registered and ready but did not start. Runners from all 50 states, as well as a total of 55 different countries, were represented at this year's Boston Marathon.

111TH B.A.A. BOSTON MARATHON – Monday, April 16th, 2007 Kevin Gallerani 4,988th Place 3:27:58 (7:56 per mile)
View Kevin's and all Boston Marathon finisher results, 5K splits, and race recaps at www.bostonmarathon.org.

Don Sikorski writes a twice-monthly running column for the Norwich Bulletin. His "Coach's Corner" column can be accessed at www.moheganstriders.org. He can also be reached by e-mail at kdcsikorski@sbcglobal.net.