

President's Corner

It's been busy in Strider land this summer of 2003! It's amazing that we are already talking about the summer of 2003 in the past tense but there were lots of great events that took place that will ensure that this past summer will be slow to fade from Strider memories.

The racing season has been a busy one with the Grand Prix circuit going full bore and the USATF season reaching its climax as I write this. The club races have been well attended and supported and we have seen a number of new faces at the USATF races lending their support for the men's open, masters, and grandmasters teams. Right now all teams are making a strong showing especially the men's open team who are leading the pack for the state championship with two races to go. The Mystic Places Marathon may be critical for scoring so be sure if you are entered to have a current USATF card so you'll be able to score for the team. Thanks to one and all for your participation at all the races so far this year and to the Grand Prix committee for keeping the support for the local races strong.

Speaking of support, the Norwich Rec Run series just concluded a couple weeks back with a final night turnout of over of nearly 100 runners filling the half-mile, mile, and 5K races. Strider Charlie Spellman did his usual outstanding job as maestro of the summer series organizing, timing, and scoring each of the Thursday night races and awarding trophies to the top finishers in the series on the last night. Even though the Mohegan Park course is more suited to grappling gear than running shoes, the Rec Runs are an outstanding opportunity to get in some fast hill work and see fellow Striders on a regular basis throughout the summer. Support has been on the increase the past couple of years, a reflection of Strider family participation and Charlie's guidance.

It wouldn't be a summer in Strider land without two traditional get-togethers that have become a staple of the Strider year: Strider Night at Dodd Stadium and The Strider Picnic. Strider Night at Dodd Stadium took place on August 8th and, once again, proved to be financial success with 200 tickets sold. As always, loads of Strider faithful dotted the crowd to catch Laurie Schaeffer stepping out from the Runz to belt out the National Anthem, to see Strider VP Mike Fusaro zip his best fastball up to the plate in a ceremonial first pitch, and to catch up with old friends in the comforts of the ballpark. Thanks to John Sacrey and everyone else who worked hard selling tickets for a night of family fun for a great cause!

The Strider Picnic took place at Giddings Park in Franklin on Saturday August 16th. It was a hot August day just perfect for a picnic and Striders from all over southeastern Connecticut made an appearance making this year's version of this long time Strider event one of the most successful ever. Chef Jolley worked his magic cooking, making sure that everyone was well fed while the kids loved the picnic games, Slip 'n Slide, and the proliferation of giant squirt guns, some big enough to pressure wash large buildings! This event has enjoyed a renaissance in the past couple of years and special recognition should go to Lynne Hansen, Terri Smith, and Liz Tefft among others this year for their efforts to make this event successful especially in Chairwoman Kris-Anne Kane's vacationing absence.

Summer 2003 is gone but not forgotten and a busy fall schedule is already underway. Take advantage of the cool, increasingly crisp weather to get out there, support all the club races and keep in touch with all your Strider friends before winter's onslaught. I hate talking about winter already since it seems like last winter just ended but there's always something on the calendar to keep us motivated, running, and looking forward to the next excuse to get together. Events already scheduled for the coming months include Strider elections at the upcoming November meeting, the Tommy Toy run scheduled for mid-December, the Strider Banquet on tap for late January, and the Saturday morning slug run series that will be ready to roll just after the first of 2004!

Keep on running and, as always, I look forward to seeing you on the roads!

Tim