



# INTERVALS

Newsletter of the Frederick Steeplechasers Running Club

## HAPPY HOUR

Its Five o'clock somewhere - - - - !!



Join the Steeplechasers at one of the Happy Hour events come and meet fellow members

Next Event  
May 28th; 5:00 pm  
Dutch's Daughter



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### FSRC - 2009 Officers

**President – Mark Lawrence**  
**Vice President – Mary Zielinski**  
**Secretary – Peggy Waxter**  
**Treasurer – Anne Hafer**

#### **Committee Chairs**

**Social – Kim Hessong/Luanne Houck**  
**Membership – Mary Zielinski**  
**Competition – Victor Cretella**  
**Race Support – Ken Anderer/Tim O’Keefe**  
**Training – Eva Rosvold**  
**Web Site – Rich Potter/Stephen Dobson**  
**Newsletter – Malcolm Senior**

### Steeplechasers Forum

The steeps are enjoying their forum. If you want to get firsthand accounts of the Frederick Marathon, for example, on the same day, just check out the forum. That goes for pretty much any local race. You get the inside story and you can find out what went good and not so good right away. One story that comes to mind will be interesting to any of you who remember Joe Tiso who moved to Myrtle Beach a few years ago—Tim O’Keefe writes about Joe’s struggle to qualify for Boston.

Under the “Training Runs” topics, you can find out who is going where. Looking for a training run next Sunday? Just check the “Training Runs” topics and you will find plenty of choices.

*Forum continued...*

There is a social topics area where you can post just about anything whether it is a car you want to sell or girl scout cookies you have for sale.

The forum is set up so that only FSRC dues paying members can post new topics or post replies, but the whole world can read or view the posting. We had a strange situation with the forum recently—we were attacked by Bots. The Bots have created over 1000 bogus accounts on the forum. Luckily, the forum has always been set up so that just having an account on the forum is not enough to let you post new topics—only when an administrator puts you in the FSRC Group are you able to post. Thus, the bogus accounts have not been able to do anything but we are in the process of deleting them anyway.

Our first action against the bots was to require Verification of new registrations. Verification just meant that the new registrant would get an email that they had to reply to in order to complete registration. This did not stop the registrations--many of these automated bots completed registration anyway. Our next action was to require approval by an administrator. This did not help because the administrators (Rich and Steve) got 30 emails per day from bogus registrations. We have now shut off registrations. New accounts will now only be created by the Administrators.

If you have already joined FSRC but have not yet registered on the Forum, send an email to me ([potterr@comcast.net](mailto:potterr@comcast.net)) or to Steve ([sd44@earthlink.net](mailto:sd44@earthlink.net)) to request a forum account. Also, if you have registered on the forum and have paid your 2009 dues but you are not able to post topics, email Steve or me and we will put you in the group to allow you to post. In the future, when FSRC applications are received, we will automatically register the new member in the forum. - Rich Potter

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## President's Address

### Functioning in an All Volunteer Organization

**F**rom time to time, I am approached by someone who wants to know why the club doesn't provide a certain function. It's likely a function that they've seen or heard that another running club provides somewhere. Why don't we have more to offer for kids? Why don't we do more for walkers? Why don't we have programs for sprinters? The answer is that we could. All we need is someone to step-up and take charge of it.

When people say, "Why doesn't the club (fill in the blank with whatever you choose) . . .?" I always wonder who they think "the club" is? It is us. All of us. We don't have any paid professional staff who are responsible for making things happen. We only have volunteers, and we can only do what people are willing to volunteer to do.

As the club's president, I feel that one of our primary purposes is to encourage and support efforts of any kind that benefit the running community. I don't feel responsible for personally executing every good idea that's put in front of me. I wish I had the time to do that, but I'm a volunteer with a full plate of responsibilities outside of the club too. I do what I can because it feels recreational to me most of the time. I love the atmosphere of being at races and being around runners. But like everyone else, I've got to make a living and take care of other aspects of my life as well. So we all do what we can do.

We have about 200 members, but all of us have joined for individual reasons. Some are looking for training partners. Some want to be in the information loop. Some want to meet other people who share their common interest. One great reason to join is to have the chance to utilize the club's membership as a source of potential volunteers and/or participants in an event or activity you want to do or conduct.

When I joined the club, I was interested in training to run the JFK 50. When I began to ask around, I found that there weren't too many members who did that kind of running. I was a real novice though and I had no preset expectation of what a running club should offer. I simply found those few members that were interested and started running with them and any others I felt I could learn from. These days, there have been more Steeplechasers participating in the JFK than any other race in the area. I'm not saying I'm responsible for that phenomena, but it's funny how things work if you just get involved. ....What's your interest?



#### Breaking News:

Hood College Track team is getting its first runner in the NCAA championships?  
Coached by Brent Ayer the current RCCA president, check out:  
[http://hoodathletics.com/sports/wtrack/2008-09/news/20090519\\_wtrackparrish](http://hoodathletics.com/sports/wtrack/2008-09/news/20090519_wtrackparrish)

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## White Hall 15k – 29<sup>th</sup> March 2009

The 3rd race in the Baltimore Road Running Club (BRR) Grand Prix series. The BRR organize low-key low cost series of races several on the North Central Railroad Trail (NCRT). For this race date the weather can be unpredictable. This year it was cloudy with rain forecast. The course is simple, start at the 11 mile mark on the trail, run north for 4.5 miles turn round and run 4.5 miles back to 11 mile mark then add an extra 800 yard or so to make up the 15K. See map, below note the Mason-Dixon line at 19.5 miles but that's history. It is open countryside and the river is narrow with little falls, all uphill going north and super running down hill against slower runners still heading up the trail. Plenty of spot prizes however no other prizes in this race as it was only \$2.00 to enter for members and \$6.00 for non-members. There were bagels at the end that were from Panera Bread – worth running 9 miles for I can tell you!!



Enthusiastic runners at the start line.

### North Central Trail History

The Northern Central Railroad connected Baltimore with York Pennsylvania. From 1838 to 1972 the railroad carried Union troops during the Civil War, and Abraham Lincoln traveled this road to deliver the Gettysburg address. The railroad was greatly damaged by Hurricane Agnes in 1972 and abandoned by the railroad that year. In 1984 DNR converted the right of way into a multi-use trail for hiking, biking, and jogging & running trail.

Continued on the map on the right



<http://www.brrc.com>

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### RRCA Club Challenge

Although snow threatened to cancel the RRCA Club Challenge for the third time since 2003, the ominous forecast did not deter Steeplechasers' participation at the race; a record 28 club members made their way to Columbia, Maryland on February 22 for the start of the Howard County Strider's annual 10 mile race. The weather also had no detrimental impact on the Steeplechaser's performance. With flurries holding off until later in the race, the cumulative time for the top 12 Steeplechaser men was 30 minutes faster in 2009 than 2008. Led by **Doug Oates**, whose 55:08 finish broke Paul Spurrier's 2006 Steeplechaser course record of 56:52, and his 4<sup>th</sup> place finish, the men had reason to be excited with their performance; and they let the other clubs know it when the race director announced their seventh place finish, erupting in a cheer that eclipsed all the other clubs combined.

The Steeplechaser women fared equally well. Powered by **Elizabeth Gannon's** 1:14:38 finish, the women also finished 7<sup>th</sup>. And as the race director was about to announce the result, he gave a hesitant glance in the direction of the club. He was not disappointed by the club's spirited reaction. By the time the race director read the co-ed results, there was no doubt. He gave a quick nod to the club as he announced their third 7<sup>th</sup> place finish, and waited for the cheer.

The RRCA club challenge served as a tune up race for many members' spring marathons, including: Mountain Marathon: **Oates** (1<sup>st</sup> overall 2:44:04); Boston: **Aaron MacNab** (2:06:58), **Lisa Hickman** (3:42:11), **Joe Harris** (3:54:16), **Karen Gardner** (3:53:42) and **Rick O'Donnell** (4:12); Frederick: **Joe Basford** (3:13:50 3<sup>rd</sup> in 30-34 age group); **Rick O'Donnell** (3:58:35); **Dawn Cahalane** (4:06:18); **Victor Cretella** (½ 1:20:26 2<sup>nd</sup> in 35-39 age group); **Mike Marino** (½ 1:54:27 ); **John Maynard** (½ 2:09:47); Illinois: **Ron Robisch** (3:46:22); Shamrock: **Travis DeBruyn** (3:37); **Terrance McMahon** (½ 1:32:21); Hat Run 50k: **Steve Pilarcik** 6:30:46; **Maria Rubeling** (7:07:48); **Mary Zielinski** and **Becky Walter**; **Carole Smith** (three way tie at (7:11:18). Two other Steeplechasers (**Michael Dee** and **Mackenzie Riford**) used the Club Challenge to build base mileage for their high school outdoor track season.

**Tim O'Keefe**, on the other hand, took the road less traveled—except perhaps by Steve Dobson (3:15 at Frederick) or Karsten Brown (2:52 at Frederick). He used the Club Challenge as part of his active recovery from the Myrtle Beach Marathon (3:58:55), which he ran with Joe Tiso one week earlier.

The RRCA club challenge also served as the first race in both the Steeplechaser Grand Prix and the Maryland RRCA State Grand Prix. The state grand prix consists of 10 races held by different RRCA clubs around Maryland and D.C. Information about the state Grand Prix can be found at:

[http://mdrrca.org/index.php/grand\\_prix\\_series](http://mdrrca.org/index.php/grand_prix_series)

You must run in 4 of the races to qualify. (The Market Street Mile is the Steeplechaer's contribution to the series.) Cretella and Connors ran the second race in the series—the Springburst 8k—which was put on by the Prince George's County Running Club, coming in third and sixth respectively. Both are currently in the top three in scoring.



### Summer Splash Picnic

Save the Date: July 25, 2009

Venue: To Be Decided

Check out the web site for further details

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### Cherry Blossom Race

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 mile race sells out notoriously fast. Last winter, Runners World identified it as one of the 5 most competitive races in the country for registration. After selling out all 12,000 spots in less than 4 hours in 2008 it did not seem likely it could get any harder to obtain an entry into the Runner's Rite of Spring. That presumption was dispelled in only 2 hours in 2009 - which officially was the number of hours that Internet registration remained open. (Unofficially, registration may have been active longer than 2 hours as many runners reported accessing the website prior to 8:00 a.m.). With entries in such short supply, it would have been easy for some Steeplechasers to miss the fun. However, as an RRCA club, the Steeplechasers were eligible for several automatic entries into the race. All the club needed to do was sign up for the race's team competition. The club made full use of this opportunity, getting two extra entries into the race for the open male and mixed-master teams.

Not all went smoothly for the Steeplechasers, however. Proving that no good deed goes unpunished, team captain Victor Cretella, sat in traffic for an hour driving from the Roosevelt bridge to the expo so he could pick up the bibs and chips for 7 of his teammates; when he got to the expo he found a line snaking around the block. Mark Lawrence also found that it does not pay to be "Mr. Nice Guy". He decided that he did not want to bother Cretella with the details of his bib and chip and arrived at the expo shortly after Cretella. He found an even longer line - along with a \$30 parking ticket when he returned to his car. With thirty mile an hour winds buffeting the D.C. area and threatening to linger through the start of the race, things did not bode well for the Steeplechasers on the eve of the race.

Despite the inauspicious start to the weekend, race day could not have gone better. The car pool of seven Steeplechasers left Urbana at 5:40, parked adjacent to the Washington Monument by 6:30 and arrived at the port-a-potties well before any significant lines formed. Then, as the sun rose on the mall, the club members were greeted by perfect racing conditions—high forties, no humidity, and . . . no wind. After doing a short 5 minute warm up around the Washington Monument, the Steeplechasers headed off to their respective corrals.

The Open Men team was led to its 10<sup>th</sup> place finish (out of 19 teams) by Cretella and his 59:13 finish. Cretella was followed closely by Chad Connors. Connors stuck close to Malcolm Senior, who anchored the Steeplechaser mixed-master team, and D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty. When Fenty made his move, so did Connors. Although he did not quite catch the mayor, he finished with a substantial PR (1:03:36). The team was rounded out by Rick O'Donnell, who also was able to set a PR (1:18:37) despite racing the New Market 5k one day earlier, and Mark Lawrence (1:19:24)

As with O'Donnell, Senior picked up Grand Prix points at the New Market 5k on the Saturday before the Cherry Blossom race. His effort at New Market seemed to have little detrimental impact at Cherry Blossom as he led the mixed-master team to an 8<sup>th</sup> place finish with his 65:05 finish. Other members included Steve Pilarcik (1:12:18); Maria Rubeling (1:18:02); Carole Smith (1:33:57), and Kelley Doane (1:37:58), who ran her first race longer than 5k.



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Cheery Blossom Report continued.....

After the race, Steeplechasers and their families gathered under the shadows of the Washington Monument for some refreshments, light stretching, socializing and a visit from Santa Clause. The award ceremony was also unique. Rather than giving out prizes based upon random drawings, the organizers chose a slightly more arbitrary approach, e.g. giving prizes to the person who could yell the loudest or jump the highest, or who had come the farthest. Cathy and Victor Cretella got a Cherry Blossom hat for having the youngest child in tow—Anthony Dominic Cretella who was born in October 2008. One Steeplechaser even got to leave the award ceremony with hardware in hand. Senior came in 4<sup>th</sup> place in the 55 to 59 age group! Senior got to receive his award from a friendly face; Steeplechaser Brent Ayer was working the award ceremony in his capacity as RRCA President.



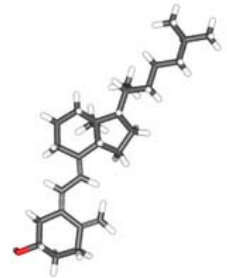
Cherry Blossom 10 mile race DC  
Members of the Steeplechasers Team with the  
Washington Monuments in the background

## Vitamin D not just Grandma's problem - Dan Gudat

**V**itamin D has long been linked to bone health. Visit any nursing home and you can see the effects of Vitamin D deficiency. New research indicates Vitamin D is far more important than previously understood. Adequate Vitamin D is critical for normal cellular function in many organ systems. Sufficiency is integral to general health homeostasis. Maintaining optimal levels actively contributes to disease prevention. In addition to Osteoporosis, Vitamin D insufficiency or deficiency is directly linked to multiple cancers, Type I Diabetes, Hypertension, Cardiovascular Disease, autoimmune dysfunction, and Multiple Sclerosis. Sadly, it is estimated 25-57% of Americans are Vitamin D deficient. Visit any bar on Frederick's Market Street and you will see plenty of Vitamin D deficient patrons (among other things...). The good news is the solution is simple. Running outside for 15-30 minutes with exposed limbs can produce your daily supply of Vitamin D.

### Old News

Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the vital role of Vitamin D in maintaining good bone health has been known. Bones are dynamic organs that continually undergo a tightly coupled process of mediated degradation and rebuilding. Working in concert with parathyroid hormone, 1,25-dihydroxy vitamin D (1,25-diOH D) increases bone resorption of calcium and phosphate. It also stimulates new bone formation and absorption of calcium. Deficiency of Vitamin D leads to leaching of calcium from bone, causing osteoporosis, osteomalacia, and rickets. Studies show that inadequate Vitamin D levels inhibit calcium absorption. If you take calcium supplements, but are Vitamin D deficient, that extra calcium more than likely just gets flushed down the toilet along with your money.



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Sun exposure is humans' primary source of Vitamin D. A cholesterol metabolite in the skin is converted to Vitamin D<sub>3</sub> when irradiated with UVB

radiation. Duration and intensity of solar exposure determines the extent of production. Vitamin D<sub>3</sub> formation typically plateaus within 30 minutes of exposure and overproduction is prevented by the photosensitive conversion of Vitamin D to inactive compounds. However, there are limiting factors. Darker skin types require higher intensity and longer exposure to the sun to produce adequate Vitamin D (melanin, great for tanning, bad for Vitamin D). *Unfortunately, for the health or wrinkle-conscious, sunscreens w SPFs as low as 15 block Vitamin D production by 99.9%.*

### New Science

Volumes of recent studies show Vitamin D plays a key role in maintaining overall health and is critical for normal cellular function in many organ systems. Vitamin D Receptors (VDRs) are located in most non-skeletal organs and tissues. Vitamin D Response Element (VDRE) is present in >1000 human genes and provides cellular response and gene transcription. Activated Vitamin D increases bone growth and formation, promotes cell growth and development, prevents cancerous cell growth, activates T & B lymphocytes for infection prevention, protects cardiac vascular tissue, increases insulin production, and inhibits renin production for blood pressure control. These findings lead researchers to now suggest adults should be taking at least 2000 IU/day of Vitamin D. The current FDA recommended daily intake of Vitamin D (400 IU/day, equivalent to 1 gallon of D-fortified milk) is totally inadequate.

It is now also understood that excessive fat contributes to Vitamin D deficiency. Since Vitamin D is lipophilic, it tends to be absorbed by excess fat, resulting in diminished plasma levels.

### Vitamin D Insufficiency & Disease (Cancer, CAD, Type I DM, Multiple Sclerosis)

Americans are overwhelmingly Vitamin D insufficient.

- 36% of young healthy adults under the age of 30 yrs.
- 42% of African-American women ages 15-49 yrs.
- 41% of hospital outpatients ages 49-83 yrs.
- 57% of U.S. hospital general medicine inpatients

The elderly, African-Americans, and Hispanic populations are at greater risk of Vitamin D deficiency. Published studies now link Vitamin D insufficiency with incidence of influenza, the risk of falling (sarcopenia), diffuse musculoskeletal pain, osteoarthritis and inflammatory arthritis, gingivitis, depression, and pulmonary dysfunction.

More specifically, researchers at Creighton University studied the efficacy of calcium alone and calcium plus Vitamin D in reducing cancer risk of all types. They found both treatment with Vitamin D and serum Vitamin D concentrations were significant and independent predictors of cancer risk. Garland and co-workers (The Harvard Nurses Health study and Saint Georges Hospital Study) found that individuals with Vitamin D levels greater than 52 ng/mL had a 50% reduction in **breast cancer** compared to individuals with Vitamin D levels less than 13 ng/mL. This group recommended a daily intake of 2000 IU and an additional 15 minutes of sun exposure. Gorham and collaborators (meta-analysis of five studies) suggested increasing Vitamin D levels above 46



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ng/mL could reduce **colon cancer** incidence by approximately two thirds.

Two studies (1739 and 3299 patients, respectively) examined the link between Vitamin D and **Cardiovascular Disease**. Authors found individuals with Vitamin D levels below 15 ng/mL are at increased risk of cardiovascular events. Additionally, it was concluded that low levels of Vitamin D are predictive for fatal strokes and that Vitamin D supplementation has promise for stroke prevention.

Autoimmune Diseases also share an association with Vitamin D insufficiency. Epidemiological studies reveal individuals living close to the equator have a lower incidence of autoimmune diseases than those folks living at higher latitudes (Aruba anyone?). One study showed the risk of **Multiple Sclerosis (MS)** decreased significantly with increasing levels of Vitamin D. This inverse, direct relation with MS risk was particularly strong when Vitamin D levels were measured before age 20, highlighting the need for life-long Vitamin D sufficiency. People with Vitamin D levels greater than 39.6 ng/mL have a 60% lower risk of developing MS.

**Type I Diabetes** is relatively rare in equatorial regions while Finland has the world's highest reported incidence of this disease. When 12,000 Finnish babies were given Vitamin D supplements, their likelihood of developing diabetes dropped 80% relative to a control group receiving placebo.

### Take Action

Vitamin D plays a critical role in protecting the body from many diseases. Unfortunately, a large percentage of an otherwise healthy population is, in fact, Vitamin D deficient. DiaSorin classifies deficiency as less than 10 ng/mL. Insufficiency falls in the range of 10-30 ng/mL. Sufficiency is 30-100 ng/mL. Optimal levels of Vitamin D are an openly debated topic. Strive for >32 ng/mL, but know some researchers are calling for guidelines to target 50-70 ng/mL as optimal. In reality, no recognized guidelines exist today. Vitamin D testing is widely available from many commercial laboratories and through your doctor's office.

Vitamin D is not found in many foods. Primary sources are limited to fatty fish (mackerel, salmon, sardines, and cod liver oil), green leafy vegetables and solar exposure. Supplementation is a good source of Vitamin D, assuming daily sun exposure and spoonfuls of cod-liver oil are not consistent, year-round options. Vitamin D is available without a prescription. Be sure to supplement with Vitamin D<sub>3</sub> (Cholecalciferol). Cholecalciferol is the naturally occurring form of Vitamin D in humans. Vitamin D<sub>2</sub> (Ergocalciferol), often found in multi-vitamins, is one tenth as potent and quickly cleared from the body.

Sunlight is more powerful than any drug; it is safe, effective, and available free of charge. If it could be patented, it would be hyped as the greatest medical breakthrough in history. It's that good.

~ Mike Adams, Consumer Health Advocate.

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Inaugural Illinois Marathon  
Champaign/Urbana, Illinois R Robisch  
April 11, 2009



As I stood patiently listening to a beautiful rendition of the Star Spangled Banner, one thought dominated my mind. Now that I'm finally first in line for the porta-potty, do I go in and pee during our national anthem? Or do I wait and risk a late start to the race? My dilemma was thankfully resolved by my predecessor who took enough time that the song was finished before I had the chance to go in. Ah, but I was not yet out of the woods! Seconds later I'm inside, half panicked that the race is about to start without me (which really doesn't help the process, by the way), all ready to take care of business, and I hear through those thick blue-plastic walls around me, "Now please bow your heads as Father MacReynolds leads us in the benediction prayer." Oh, no!!! It seemed to me that the potential desecration of the first act was exceeded only by the blasphemy of the second! But I was alone in that potty. No one would know except me. And maybe God. The race was just seconds away. I'm sorry, dear Reader. I peed over the benediction. I finally stepped out and into the cold, relieved to find that the Inaugural Illinois Marathon had not yet started. I wiggled my way onto the street and glanced skyward nervously, waiting for the bolt of lightning to strike me down. Ahead, spanning First Street in a huge arc, were the ladders from 2 fire trucks: one from Urbana on the east side of the street and one from Champaign on the west side. In the middle where the ladders met was a huge American flag. Very cool start line!

My plan for the race was to start easy and then find the 3:40 pace group and hang with them as long as possible. The first mile followed First Street north to campustown. On the way we passed my niece, Tessa's apartment, and my family was outside to cheer me on. Early on, though my forearms and fingers were going numb, the running was easy. I checked my pace after about a mile and a half, and I was cruising at around 8:10. Cool. I was sure the 3:40 group was behind me, so I eased up. Mile 2 brought us back through the heart of my alma mater's campus. On the right: aged Altgeld Hall, home to the Math Department and a bell tower that I can still remember playing the theme to the Flintstones on Fridays when I was an undergrad. On the left, the major engineering buildings: huge brick and stone structures home to so many of the classes that I probably should have attended with better regularity. Then the Illinois Union on the right; that's where our team of five freshmen from my dorm won the all-campus bowling intramurals by blowing out the boisterously cocky frat champs. Ah, THOSE were my glory days!

But I digress. There's a race to run! The course starts out flat for the first few miles and levels out after that. By about Mile 5 the pace group catches me, and I merge. It's neat to run with a pacer for a couple of reasons. First, I think it's always fun to run in a large group of people. There's plenty of conversation to provide distraction. The other benefit is that with the pacer carrying a "3:40 Pace" sign, the fans really start cheering when the group goes by. "Yeah for the 3:40 pacers!!!" Always nice to hear some cheering! Mile 1- 8:11. Mile 2- 8:13. Mile 3- 8:17. Mile 4- 8:14. Mile 5- 8:31. Miles 4-9 were through residential neighborhoods in Urbana, and the fan support here was sensational! Lots of people and lots of noise – much more than I would have expected from a marathon of this size. During the 6th mile we ran through Meadowbrook Park, which was basically a prairie with some trees along the borders. As we came around one bend in the path, however, I saw something that quite shocked me and had me wondering briefly if the hallucinations of the later stages of the race were already kicking in. For rising out of the tall grasses ahead of me was a young, attractive woman without a stitch of clothing! Never mind that her skin was green, this chick was

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nekkid! Talk about instantaneous inspiration! Turns out we were passing a sculpture by artist Peter Fagan! By Mile 10 we were returning to campus and I was feeling quite comfortable with our pace. Mile 6- 8:40. Mile 7- 8:17. Mile 8- 8:28. Mile 9- 8:24. Mile 10- 8:26. Next we moved on to the residential sections of Champaign. Again, the crowd support was really strong. All was well until, for some inexplicable reason, the 3:40 group started picking up the pace! Why on earth were we suddenly accelerating? I checked my GPS watch several times and each time we were at a sub-8 minute pace! I intentionally let myself drop to the back of the pack, figuring there was no need stay at the front at this pace. I was a bit worried even so. Mile 11- 8:17. Mile 12- 8:19. Mile 13-8:14. Mile 14- 8:03. Mile 15- 8:04.

And for good reason. The torrid pace continued, and while miles 16-19 were still strong and on my 8:23 goal pace, by 20 I was steadily falling further behind the pace group. Mile 16- 8:12. Mile 17- 8:28. Mile 18- 8:11. Mile 19- 8:22. Mile 20- 8:32. Running more or less solo at this point, my legs were now carrying the weight of the previous 20 miles. Muscles at my hips groaned with every forward stride, and my knees ached as they absorbed the continuous pounding. Calves and quads grew tighter and protested the stride length that I wanted to maintain. I become oblivious to much of what was around me; I ran past nice homes and peaceful parks with lots of people cheering, but I really couldn't process any of it mentally. No details stuck. I was becoming a bipedal vegetable, and wasn't so sure how long the bipedal part would apply! Miles 21 and 22 were tough. One bright spot, however, was getting to see my mobile cheering section again, and that reinvigorated me a bit. I plodded forward and tried to slow the rate of my velocity's decay. Mile 21- 8:30. Mile 22-9:06. Mile 23-8:48. The final few miles were back on campus, where the fan support waned a bit, probably because it was Easter weekend and many students went home. All I could do was keep moving toward Memorial Stadium, which finally loomed ahead in the distance. I finally started moving a little faster once I made the final turn to enter the stadium. Down a painful dip, into the dark tunnel, and then suddenly the lights were back on as I ran out onto the stadium's green artificial turf in front of a huge crowd in the stands!

I'm very old school when it comes to arguments about grass vs. artificial turf, but I'll tell you what, after 26 miles of punishing pavement that turf felt like I was running on pillows! I kicked it in, running first from one end zone to the other, then turning toward the goalpost, and then finally sprinting back up field to the 50-yard line and the finish! Finishing in the stadium was awesome! Mile 24- 9:33. Mile 25- 9:54. Mile 26- 9:59. My official finish time was 3:46:22 (8:38 pace), a personal best by over 7 minutes! I finished in 410th place out of 1619 finishers (top 26%); 351st among the 1106 men, and 66th out of 173 men in the 40-44 age group.

Overall, I thought the race organization was great and the fan support even better. Crowding during the race was never an issue for me. The medal and long sleeve technical T-shirt were nice, but the "goodie" bag was weak.



Ron Robisch after the Illinois marathon reunited with his family

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## Summer Decathlon Series

Run a fast mile lately ?

Would your running benefit from some speed-work ?

Or do you just want to meet some fellow members ?

Why not join the Steeplechasers for their summer decathlon series at the Frederick High School track. These are free to enter for all steeplechasers members. Prizes are awarded at the end of the series and the race times are age adjusted and points count to the overall results.....[See You There](#)



### Frederick Steeplechasers – Summer Decathlon Series

Date	Race	6:30	7:00	6:45	7:00
June 3	SD# 1	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	1600 meters	Handicapped Fartlek Run
June 10	SD# 2	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	600 meters	4 Person Relay Ice Cream Social
June 17	SD# 3	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	2 miles	Reverse Relay
June 24	SD# 4	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	1000 meters	Too Many Tens
July 1	SD# 5	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	200 meters	Firecracker 5 Km
July 8	SD# 6	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	800 meters	Gutbuster
July 15	SD# 7	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	1500 meters	Poker Run
July 22	SD# 8	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	400 meters	Too Many Twos
July 29	SD# 9	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	3000 meters	Runners Choice
August 5	SD# 10	1 mile fun run	Kid's Mini Run	1 mile	Mystery Run

All Races at The Frederick High School Track - Wednesday Evening main event 6:45 pm

**Check the website calendar and forum for the latest updates and further details  
[www.steeplechasers.org](http://www.steeplechasers.org)**

Date/Time	Event	Location	Contact
<b>JUNE 2009</b>			
6/7/2009 8:00AM	Carroll Manor Elementary Roaring Lion Run 5K	Carroll Manor Elementary School Adamstown MD	Patty Lombardi, Race Director patricia.lombard@comcast.net
6/7/2009 8:30am	Run Through History 10k & 2 mile Fun Run	Antietam National Battlefield Sharpsburg MD	See website for contacts
6/13/2009 8:00am/8:30	YMCA Family Fun Run 5K & 1 mile fun run/walk	Whittier Park Frederick MD	Chrissie Reimnitz 301-663-5131
6/20/2009 5:00PM	Regina's Summer Solstice Run 4 & 8 mile options	Braddock Heights Community Pool Schley Ave. Braddock Heights MD	Regina Clark rbiker001@comcast.net
<b>AUGUST 2009</b>			
8/1/2009	Catoctin 50K	Gambrill State Park Frederick MD	
8/15/2009 8:30am	Women's Distance Festival	Frederick Community College Frederick MD	Peggy Waxter pwaxter@comcast.net
8/29/2009 7:30am	BAFC Charity 5K	Baker Park Talley Rec Center Frederick MD	