

Orange County Track Club

December 2003

www.octrackclub.com

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2003 Ride and Tie World Championship; Mike Whelan: World Champion!

by Rick Noer

Some of you may remember that **Mike Whelan** and I have become involved with Ride and Tie over the past six months since we hooked up with Tom Gey and Carol Ruphrect of Newport Beach, CA. Quick explanation: there are three members to a team, two runners (human) and a horse. A race is from 13 miles to 32 miles with each runner/rider switching off riding the horse. Normally, the riders will be ahead of the runners and will tie the horse to a tree or post and take off running while the other team member will then run up to the horse and then ride for a period set by the team. Also, there are one to two vet (veterinarian) checks to make sure the horse is within acceptable respiration and body temperature. The vets also note any additional health issues such as bad leg, etc.

Anyway, Mike Whelan and I soon got involved with team workouts. Mike had a bit of an advantage over me since he was a jockey for years and could ride with his eyes closed. I on the other hand, was soon taking lessons and riding with Tom and Carol 2-3 times a week. Carol matched me up with Melanie Walker who has an Arabian by the name of MC Kamanche. At least I faced forward when I first rode Kamanche but I needed a great deal of practice and patience from Melanie, Tom and Carol, which I received.

Well, fast forward to September 6, 2003 and Truckee, Ca. Melanie and I went September 3, with the idea that maybe we would do the short course which was 15 miles since she had not been running very much (she is in training for Team Leukemia to improve her running) and I had not run any long distances for over a year. However, the spirit of the event took over and we entered the 32-mile championship race.

Meanwhile, Mike had been looking for just the right partner (female, of course) for the championship race. He hooked up with Rachel Toor who is a writer for *RUNNING TIMES* magazine and is from North Carolina. Since neither owns a horse, they leased a horse named Slick and all three met 2 days before the race, practicing in a downpour and hailstorm. (Look for an article on this race in *RUNNING TIMES* in

December, 2003 or January, 2004. There should be photographs of Mike and Rachel.)

Mike and his partner are both excellent runners and they had a horse whose endurance was more than they hoped for. This race really challenges riders and runners as we went on a 12.5, 10.5 and 8 mile loops from a valley floor of 7,000 feet to about 8,000-9000 feet at times and the terrain was rugged. The vet checks were at the end of each loop so the horses could be closely monitored, resulting in three teams that were disqualified by the vets during the competition due to problems with the horses. Mike and Rachel were able to work out their strategy before the race (I hope he shares it with me sometime) and were strong the entire race. Due to a strong riding and running skills, Mike and Rachel finished 5th overall and were the first place team for the Man/Woman division. That means Mike, Rachel, and Slick are **World Champions!**

Oh yeah, Melanie and I placed 30th overall (30th in the world) but only 30 teams finished. Her Dad, sister, and a friend, Mike Moore came and crewed for us at the vet checks. These crews helped us re-fill water packs and assist in having the horses checked – invaluable. When we came in to the finish line, I yelled, “We’re 30th in the world, 30th in the world!” Our party of 12 was pretty excited, as they were the only fans left.

The awards presentation that night started with the last place team, Melanie and myself. Our finishing medal was a belt buckle commemorating the race. When Mike and Rachel were called up the crowd showed their appreciation as they both received a special belt buckle and a plaque for their 1st Place Man/Woman team finish. This was quite an accomplishment for a couple of tough competitors. Ask Mike about details of the race, he can describe it better than this article.

This is one of the most unique athletic events I have ever been involved with and the dedication is no different than what we experience with running, just a different event.

December Club Meeting and Potluck

Monday, December 1 @ 6:30 p.m.

Hosted by Laura Knight
2737 Sandpiper, Costa Mesa
(714) 979-5753

Take the 405, exit Harbor, and go West. Turn Right at Adams. Turn Left at Albatross. Turn Right on Flamingo, which curves to become Sandpiper. **Bring food.**

DECEMBER CLUB RACE

All O.C. Running Club Invitational

Sunday, December 7, 2003

Orange Coast College Track

Captain: Robert Donald

**Pre-register: see Judy Bryant or Rob Corl
\$10.00 for Unlimited Participation.**

Proceeds to OCC Track & Field Programs

Tentative Schedule of Events:

Registration: 1:00

1 Mile: 2:00 200M: 3:40

400M: 2:30 2 Mile: 4:00

100M: 3:00 4x400 Relay: 4:30

800M: 3:20 Awards: 5:00

Team and Individual Awards.

***You must be a current dues-paid member
of your running club and wearing your
club uniform to participate.***

CLUB WORKOUTS

Tuesday Nights

**Speed and interval workouts on the track with
Coach Charlie Appell every week at 6:15 p.m. Rain
or shine!**

Sundays

⇒ 7 a.m., Carbon Canyon Hills off the 57, 7-9 mi.

Contact Emil Coy at (909) 279-7126
or Willie Guevara at (714) 996-6431.

⇒ 7 a.m., Coco's, Corona Del Mar, 16 m.

Contact Oscar Fricke at (949) 586-4906.

⇒ 8 a.m., Huntington Beach Pier, 8-14 mi.

Contact Brad Calvin at (714) 969-3775

⇒ *Snail's Pace Santiago Trail Run*

Meet @ 7 a.m., Warner/Euclid Round Table, FV
15-16 miles of hills and stunning scenery.

OCTC DESIGNATED CLUB RACES

January	So Cal ½ Marathon Pacific Shoreline
March	LA Marathon & 5K The Spirit Run 5&10K
April	Carlsbad 5000
May	Saddleback Memorial 5K & ½M
June	OCTC Pancake 5K
July	Surf City 5K
August	HB Distance Derby 5&10M
September	Race for the Cure
November	OC ½M & 5K Dana Point Turkey Trot 5&10K

OCTC typically has a presence at two local races per month, including the ones shown here. Others may be selected by majority vote at monthly club meetings.

~ Babes in Arms ~

December Birthdays:

2	Oscar Fricke
5	Greg Doud
10	Sylvia Appell
15	Carrie Appell-Boulton
28	Alexandra Wilson Stephanie Goley

~~ SERIOUS DEADLINE ACTION ~~

The next deadline for submissions to the OCTC Newsletter is **Monday, December 15**. Word format preferred. No big butts. Email your submissions to octceditor@hotmail.com or fax to (714) 708-1230.

OCTC OFFICERS

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Monthly Club Meeting and Potluck - Monday, November 3, 2003

by Jamie Bolduc, Secretary

*Those of you who haven't attended a club meeting in a while sure are missing out. First, there's the food; this club definitely knows how to eat. Next, there's the wine. Not only can we eat, but also we occasionally demonstrate good taste! I also really enjoy the face time with people who are normally kicking up dust in mine on the track. More than anything, though, if you haven't attended a club meeting in a few months, **you are missing the opportunity to contribute your ideas and opinions to the many important issues that effect the entire club.** So that you can at least be brought up-to-speed on some of the things that we're getting away with, read on. And maybe next month, your voice can be heard, too!*

President Robert Donald thanked **Tere Ross** for allowing OCTC to host its November meeting in her lovely home. **Treasurer Rena Beyale** reported that we have a current checking account balance of \$3,369.37 and over \$800 in the CD account. We still have uniforms for sale, and the club is carrying the cost of uniforms, which totals \$954. Buy yourself a new singlet or pair of shorts. The Holiday Party on December 6 will be a big expense to the club, as \$20 per person only covers some of the total cost. Everyone was reminded to please send a check, made out to OCTC, to **Laura Knight** directly, as soon as possible.

Mr. Donald is leading in the Grand Prix race as the most active club member, and the race closes after the Turkey Trot on November 27. **Bob Sullivan** is currently in 2nd, followed by **Andy Bailey**, with **Rob Corl** in 4th.

Secretary Jamie Bolduc reported that the newsletter is now available online and can be downloaded from your own computer. See instructions on the back of this newsletter to switch to online-only newsletters. The newsletter costs the club an average of \$.91 per person every month in postage and printing costs, which includes those who save the club money by picking theirs up at track. If you spend a lot of time online or near a computer, you could easily stop receiving the paper newsletter, and effectively do your part to control club costs. **Postmaster Will Sanchez** will begin sending an email notification every month when the next newsletter has been uploaded to www.octrackclub.com. If everyone works together on this, we can reduce monthly club costs by up to 15%.

Ms. Bolduc reported in **Lisa Calvin**'s absence an update on the Charles River warm-ups the club has considered ordering for several months now. Mrs. Calvin discovered that the club logo would be available indefinitely once the club pays the up-front screen and set-up costs, and since there is no need for us to buy in bulk or carry any debt, we decided that we should make the warm-ups available to team members. There was a motion to approve this decision, which will cost the club about \$140. It was

seconded and approved, and Mr. Corl agreed to take the reigns on the project, now that Mrs. Calvin is busy launching her teaching career.

Mr. Corl distributed a new proposal from the Board, updated from the last meeting, on subsidies for club members who run a local race as a team. As proposed, each runner on a team would receive a \$10 reimbursement subsidy after the event to defray the entry fee. There is no limit on the number of teams the club would subsidize at a particular event, and any team member has the option of declining the subsidy (see full details of this proposal in Rob's article, opposite page). A team captain would need to coordinate the race entries so that the team is registered representing OCTC, and he or she would ultimately disburse the subsidy to team members, working with the Treasurer. The goal of this proposal is to promote fellowship and camaraderie within the club while increasing our visibility at Southern California races. Mr. Corl added that he hoped this would be an incentive for teams to get their acts together earlier than usual. Because many races don't offer team competitions, the subsidy would apply to the following upcoming events: So Cal ½ Marathon, Los Alamitos 5K & 10K, Spirit Run 5K & 10K, and Carlsbad 5000. **Bill Fritzsche** motioned to approve this proposal, and suggested the club try this for six months and then review its effectiveness. The motion was seconded and carried out unanimously. Teams, start your engines!

Ken Lilly reported that plans for the upcoming Running Club Invitational Track Meet at OCC on December 7 are coming along very well, and many clubs are getting excited about the competition. A pre-registration form is available in this newsletter; complete and return it to Mr. Corl or **Judy Bryant** (OCTC's representatives) before December 1. This will be the club's only designated club race for December, although a few club members will be running around town competing if you'd like to join them. Mr. Fritzsche, Ms. Knight and others will be at the Lasse Viren 20K on Saturday, December 13th, and **Steve Bloch** and Ms. Bolduc will be at the Christmas Run (5K & 10K) along Venice Beach the same day.

Sheila Callan announced that she would once again be collecting Toys for Tots at track in the weeks before Christmas. So bring a new, unwrapped toy for young child and she'll take it from there. Mr. Fritzsche also announced that he would be taking up a collection of cash and checks as donations for **Coach Charlie**, which will be presented to him at the Holiday Party, as we try to do every year. He usually uses the money to buy sweatshirts for his students.

Mr. Sullivan was the lucky winner of the raffle drawing, and announced that he would be giving the freebie entry fee to **his son, Robert**, at the Track Invitational!

OCTC Team Subsidy
by Vice President Rob Corl

The question was easy to formulate – When an event offers a team competition and we have selected the event as a club race, why would we not enter the members already competing as a team? We have always had a sufficient number of members attending the events but the individuals competing may not have registered as a team. The remedy is advance planning. The trial promotion of this idea is a subsidy. The initial team subsidy proposal was presented at the October club meeting and approved during the November meeting. All of the team races selected for the trial period were 2003 club races.

Mission: Enter OCTC teams where team races are contested especially when the event has been selected as a club race.

Goal: Promote fellowship and camaraderie within the club while increasing our public visibility.

Subsidy: Each runner on a team would receive \$10 from OCTC after the event to defray the entry fee. The maximum number of subsidies for a team will be for five runners, with no limit on the number of teams per event. A team member always has the right to decline the subsidy.

Obligation: The team must select a captain to coordinate the entries and disburse the subsidy. All team members must wear OCTC shirts/singlets.

Duration: Six-month trial

Anticipated Cost: \$250 – (5) five member teams

Team Events – Through March 2004

Day/Date	Event	Location	Team Rules	Entry Fee	Start Time	Awards
Saturday, Jan. 10	Southern Calif. Half Marathon & 5K	Irvine	Half & 5K Teams Must Pre-register Top (5) score by time & finish rank in Div.	Half \$33 5K \$27 After 12-26 add \$5	Half 8:00AM 5K 8:00AM	Top (3) Teams
Saturday, Feb. 21	Los Alamitos Race Around the Base 5K & 10K	Los Alamitos Army Airfield	(5) Member Team Top (3) score*	\$20 before 2-13* \$23 after 2-13*	5K 8:00AM 10K 8:55AM	Top (3) Teams*
Sunday, Mar. 14	Blue Cross of Ca. Spirit Run	Fashion Island	(5) or more runners* Top (3) score* At least (1) female*	\$22 before 3-01 \$25 after 3-01 Entries must be mailed together	10K 7:15AM 5K 8:30AM	Top (3) Teams*
Sunday, Mar. 28	Carlsbad 5000	Carlsbad	(3-5) runners, Top (3) score Open Men & Women, Open Mixed, Masters Men & Women	\$125 before 3-21 \$150 after 3-21	TBD	Top (3) Teams

Compete on an OCTC team to reduce your entry fee and promote the club at the same time! **But how?**

1. Appoint yourself as a team captain - all team members will receive a subsidy if desired.
2. Recruit runners for your team.
3. Gather and submit the entry forms and fees - remember to put the team name on all entries (OCTC should be represented in the name).
4. Coordinate your race day apparel - all members must be wearing an OCTC top/singlet.
5. Submit your subsidy request and list of team members to the OCTC Treasurer for reimbursement after the race.
6. Distribute the subsidy to the team members.

**Information based on 2003 events; 2004 details subject to change.*

Once again OCTC gets muddy!

October 18, 2003

By Stephanie Goley

This year's second Mud Run brought in two OCTC teams, as well as three individual runners. Teams were in high spirits as they headed down to Camp Pendleton for the big event. Teams "All Mucked Up" and "Women at Work" competed in the open mixed team, and the all women team events. Mud Run newcomers, **Stuart Price** and **Pete Rennard** were joined with veteran mud runner **Greg Knight** for the individual race.

A foreshadowing of good luck appeared when a day-old military ID came in handy at Las Pulgas. Team *All Mucked Up* slid right through without a hitch! Another sign of good fortune was the outstanding fashion displayed by *Women at Work* in their race "uniforms". The ladies made quite a statement on the backs of their "uniforms" as well, with the phrase "Royal B----!" They meant business! With a group like this, OCTC was sure to have success!

The teams went through mud pits, tires, tunnels, lakes, hills, and wires- ensuring that every body part was thoroughly doused in mud! Everyone managed to get through without any major injuries or painful falls. While exhausted from the all-out effort each team member put forth, there was still enough energy in most to enjoy a nice cold beer at the finish line! And now, the results:

Stuart Price	59:14	17 th
Greg Knight	1:01:15	10 th Place
Pete Rennard	1:27:29(1:12:24)	(Ran with team <i>All Mucked Up</i>)
Women at Work	1:01:05	1 st Place (6 th overall)
All Mucked Up	1:12:24	6 th Place

Women at Work: **Laura Knight, Beth Baumhardt, Linda Stennes, Rae Stiger, and Diana Greenwood**

All Mucked Up: **Ed Tomasek, Stephanie Goley, Robert Donald, Noel Rennard, Rob Tomasek**



26.2 REFLECTIONS ON A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN CHICAGO

by Alan Locher

1. Although the high was 69, it was, at times, almost too warm, but a lot of tall downtown buildings meant a lot of shade. I understand this good weather is not to be expected every year.
2. The course was changed a bit this year to eliminate the last several miles right on the lake to reduce the amount of wind on us.
3. Sign: "Go Uncle Bellybutton"
4. What an ethnic tour! Greektown, Chinatown, Polishtown, Pilsen's Hispanic Area, Gaytown, even Little Italy.
5. I knew it was Gaytown when the large group of men in cheerleader short skirts and T-shirts that said, "Run Tonto Run", were cheering for us, and the Village People music playing soon after, and the all-Cher transvestite band after that. There were four in the band, each with a different Cher look. I later saw on TV news that they were from the Gay & Lesbian Runners of Lakeview.
6. The couple with words on the backs of their tank tops: his said "Just" and hers, to his right, said "Married".
7. Didn't see any OCTC uniforms, but then there were 40,000 of us and I might have missed a few folks.
8. The three young men running together also with words on the backs of their T-shirts: on the right "He's not heavy", in the middle, "He's my brother", and on the right, "He's my brother, too".
9. The Grease Monkey (with Vaseline on a board) sign that said, "Don't forget to vazz your azz."
10. Sign: "Run like Osama"
11. This was my first marathon since Dublin last October after spending some time in the hospital with a pulmonary embolism in December, in lieu of running the California International in Sacramento.
12. Got a 3-½ year PR: **4:40:41!** Eight minutes better than my last. Didn't expect to do so well until I found myself running for the last several miles with the 4:40 pace group.
13. Chicago was #47 for me!
14. Sooooooooooooo many great looking women!
15. The sign in the bank: "What's the temperature in Hell? It's 33° and dropping fast!"
16. The audience was phenomenal! I've never seen so many people with so few gaps in any marathon, even LA.
17. Sign: "1-2-3-4, Keep on running to the liquor store"
18. There were many blue baseball caps with a red "C" – probably for Colorado.
19. There were lots of signs that said, "Go Chubs". I didn't think that was very nice for the weight challenged runners.
20. Brought back more Cliff Shots than I took: love those Raceready shorts with all the pockets!
21. Went to dinner the night before the marathon and found that all the great fast food restaurants close early – except MacDonald's – but there were plenty of the expensive ones still available. Guess where cheap me ate?
22. The expo runs out of many of the official race wear items when you get to it just two hours before it closes on the last day before the race.
23. If your hotel isn't among those that have a bus to the expo, you can probably find one relatively close to walk to – if, of course, you don't have a car.
24. The finish is spectacular! After turning the corner at 26, the last 2-tenths of a mile has stands set up on both sides with lots of cheering fans.
25. The mile walking to the start from the hotel is shorter than the mile walking back.
26. Didn't meet anyone from CA before or during the race – only on a train from Chicago to Northbrook (for a business meeting the following week) did I meet a young woman from Downey who was going a very long way to Deer Field. Guess that means you want to reserve a near the start/finish hotel area real early.
- 26.2 Did I mention the great looking women?

Orange County Half Marathon & 5K

November 9, 2003

By Rob Corl

Although rain was forecasted for much of the weekend, the Orange County Half Marathon and 5K was run in perfect conditions with a low cloud cover and temperatures in the mid 60's. The event moved this year to its new location at the Irvine Spectrum. Hector Lopez won the half marathon in a time of 1:10:04 and the women's winner was Alena Vinitzkaya of Belarus in 1:18:36 followed by Christine Appell in 1:21:36. The Orange County Register reported that Kathy Smith of Irvine would be running the half as a tune-up for her next race that would be to qualify for her 5th consecutive U.S. Olympic Women's Marathon Trials. Kathy finished 7th overall in the women's race in a time of 1:28:10 with **Laura Knight** right behind her in 8th place. OCTC was well represented in the women's half marathon with five entries including **Shelly Maas** setting herself a new PR.

In the Men's 5K, **Jim Baker** turned in the fastest club time and **Jim Lyons** had the highest placing as 2nd in his age group. Richard Etherine won the race

in 14:51 just edging out Johann Appell finishing in 14:58. We may also have a first for the newsletter, an actual photograph of a new member being recruited (see below). **Paula Fell** filled out a membership application immediately following her 1st place age group finish in the Women's 5K! You may want to note that Paula has both hands free to complete the membership application and received no visible injuries from the arm-twisting administered prior to her decision to join OCTC.

On hand for support were **Andy Bailey, Jeri Bailey, Veronica Burkhalter, Bob Sullivan** running some training miles and **Bill Wilson** encouraging his son in the Kid's ½ mile event. I would like to extend a special thanks to the support team for a full morning of volunteer work at the canopy including set-up and pack-up. Look for the event pictures to be posted on the OCTC web site. Reminder: the Turkey Trot is only two weeks away, hope to see you there!

Results

Name	Race	Time	Comments
Jim Baker	5K	21:16	5 th Age Group
Jim Lyons	5K	23:21	2 nd Age Group
Paula Fell	5K	24:34	1 st Age Group – how did this happen?
Judy Bryant	5K	49:38	Good walking weather
Laura Knight	Half	1:29:39	3 rd Age Group – had to make a pit stop!
Tess Joyce	Half	1:41:26	4 th Age Group
Shelly Maas	Half	2:01:28	PR
Michelle Palmer	Half	2:38:07	
Ruthie Horner	Half	3:17:21	



Michelle Palmer wraps her Half with a laugh.



Jeri Bailey and Judy Bryant recruit a victorious Paula Fell (center) to OCTC!

25th ANNIVERSARY IRONMAN HAWAII

October 18, 2003 Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

by Andy Bailey

At seven o'clock in the morning over 1600 athletes lined up on the water's edge to start the 141-mile World Championship Ironman. It was already starting to get hot as the racers anxiously awaited the start. The Pros were already in the water, slightly in front of the age groupers.

Dick Hoyt, towing his disabled son, Rick, in a raft, were the last ones out of the water. They got a big hand as they headed out the transition area on their customized tandem bike for the 112-mile ride.

The Kona Winds did not blow, for a change, but the temperature on the Queen Kam Highway was brutal. Even the Pros were feeling the heat.

Mickie Shapiro, 67 year-old Orange County triathlete, was one of the last off the bike as she headed out for the 26-mile run. This was her first time to complete the bike portion under the required time. 81-year old Bill Bell from Palm Springs had to drop out. Dick and Rick missed the cut-off because of a bike spill.

It's is 3 p.m. by now and I have been in the transition area monitoring the athletes entering and leaving the area to make sure they do not mount or dismount their bikes in the transition area. My other duty was in the "Sin Bin" making sure that no disgruntled athletes caused any problems while serving their two minute penalty for some infraction out on the bike course before they are allowed back in the race.

The Pros are starting to finish as well as some of the top amateurs. The heat has taken its toll on them. Tim DeBoom, two time American Champion, has dropped out. So has Chris McCormick, top Australian hopeful. Peter Reed, former Ironman Champion from Canada, finished first at 8:22, well ahead of the pack. Camron Widoff, winner of many Wildflower Triathlons, is the first American in at 8:35:59.

Lori Boden, first woman Pro, finishes at 9:11:56. She is the wife of Peter Reed and this is the second time they have finished first together at Ironman. Defending champion Natasha Badman is second a few minutes back. Gina Kehr, first American, finishes in 7th place.

Jeri and I head for "hot corner" (Hualalai Rd. and Alii Drive), the corner where the athletes head south out, north out and south finish. The top "Irongents," (60 years and older) are starting to finish by 7:00 p.m.

Poncho and Lefty's Restaurant on Alii Dr., our favorite place to eat and watch the athletes finish, is standing room only. The last one and a half miles on Alii Dr. is packed curb-to-curb with spectators. Mike Riley, "the Voice of Ironman," is calling out the names of the finishers. Family and friends start chanting "Ironman, Ironman" as soon as they hear their names.

It will be like this until midnight when the course closes and the last official athlete crosses the line.

Bill Albright, 75, and Mickie Shapiro, are the oldest Irongents to finish in under seventeen hours.

It has been a great week here in Kona with the excitement building everyday. We have enjoyed every moment of it and are now looking forward to unwinding in Kauai with our friends and club members, **Vince and Diana Sweetser**.

Scuttlebutt

by **Veronica Burkhalter**

Leela Meredith was born on Oct. 25, weighing in at 5 lbs. 2oz. and 16 inches long. Her thrilled parents are **Marla and Ross**. Marla is back to exercising and hopes to be in marathon shape for next year's New York City Marathon. Lucky Leela. Her parents both work at home so she gets lots of instant lovin'.

Also adding to the next generation of OCTC runners will be **Kimberly and Matt Smith** who are expecting their second child in the spring. **Joaquin Perez** and his lovely wife are expecting their first in the spring.

Speaking of babies. **Grandpa Coach Charlie** seems to have softened a bit. There is a new twinkle in his eyes, and it might be our imagination, but he seems to be just a tinsy winsy easier on us at Tuesday night workouts.

Nan Kappeler just returned from a trip to Washington D.C. and reports that running in 20 degree weather can be a bit chilly! The change of scenery was nice but she is glad to be home.

Jeri and Andy Bailey just returned from an Ironman vacation in Hawaii. Andy served as a Transition Area and "Sin Bin" monitor during the daylong race. They made time afterwards to relax with OCTC friends, **Diana and Vince Sweetser**.

Did you see **Shelly Maas** in the audience at the American Music Awards? We understand she was a "seat filler" again. Wonder how it feels rubbing elbows with the rich and famous!!!

Ken Lilly and his committee of all the Orange County running clubs hope to see you at the **December 7 Track Meet!**

When in Rome, Run Like the Romans

by Paul Gonzales

Rome is a magnificent city. But even in its magnificence, melding ancient, medieval, renaissance and modern, one can become fatigued seeing it all as a tourist. It was in this frame of mind that I found myself slumped in a tour bus seat bouncing past the Baths of Calacala.

It had been a day of visiting major religious sites. Tromping from bus to cathedral to obelisk, back to the bus, then to a statue, a baptismal font and several crypts. Every site was memorable, but by early evening—morning in California—my energy had drooped about as low as Emperor Caligula's morality. What I needed was a bit of exercise. That's when my eye caught a flash of light.

As my head turned, I spied a beautiful synthetic running track, surrounded by a hedge and fence, well lit for night runners. As a runner in training for the L.A. Marathon, my jaw fell agape, much as Caesar's must have when first witnessing Cleopatra (OK, maybe not).

I immediately hatched a plan. I would return to the hotel, change into my running clothes, jog to the track and do a short workout, then return in time for dinner (never served before 7 p.m. in Italy). I was thinking I would run between four and five miles.

It was a glorious winter evening in Rome, temperature in the 40's and the sky cloudless. Dusk was falling when I left the hotel and jogged slowly two blocks to the Coliseum. I ran past the archway where gladiators once entered—just to my right, Constantine's Arch. The empty Roman Forum looked mysterious in the gloom.

One block later I reentered the modern world where thousands of motorcycles, scooters and tiny cars whizzed. I increased speed along the cobblestones as the lights of the track came into view at the end of the boulevard.

I was puffing when I arrived at Stadium de Calacala after the one mile run. I walked through the gate and gazed at the beautiful track. There were impressive looking sprinters working with personal coaches and distance runners blazing past, gobbling up yards with every stride. I was feeling a bit out of place as these runners were higher caliber than the neighborhood people I jog with at the Crescenta Valley High School track.

As I pondered my athletic insecurity, a guard approached speaking Italian. I don't speak Italian, but by mixing Spanish with pantomime I was able to discern that this is a private club. Feeling a bit like riff raff, but with new-world moxie, I explained that I was a tourist from Los Angeles, I was in training for a marathon and I would be very grateful for the chance to use the track.

It took the guard only a moment to realize that I was not a plebian interloper. A smile unfolded from behind the cigarette he had screwed into the side of his mouth. With an upward wave he turned and walked away, giving me leave to use what only members have the right to. Grateful, I turned

toward the 400 meter oval with the idea of breaking a good sweat and returning to the hotel.

After one turn around the track to get my bearings, I ran a mile at a 7:15 pace. Then I ran a quarter mile slowly to recover and ran another mile at 7:15. Feeling rather satisfied that I had worked out the kinks caused by my religious experience, I was ready to jog the mile home. But the American visitor had sparked the interest of an observing coach.

A man with silver hair and a white goatee approached with a smile as big as the Pantheon. He extended his hand and introduced himself in halting English as Candido Sostero. Afraid that I was being challenged again, I explained about the training and he nodded, his brow knitted.

"Write down every race you've run this year and the time of each race, then come talk to me," Candido said.

That seemed an easy thing to do. I had only started running events a few months before, so all the times were fresh in my mind. He looked at the 10K and half-marathon times and suggested that he have a look at my form.

"I want you to run 1K as fast as you can," Candido said with a tone in his voice somewhere between genial host and demanding coach.

I complied and was catching my breath when he gave another instruction, "Run around the track four times. Sprint on the straits and run slowly on the curves."

I did as told. As I was slowing from the last sprint, Candido approached with four young men in tow. He introduced me to Fabrizio, Macelo, Marco and Francis. He said that I should go for a short jog with them, but I should not worry about them running fast because they had a strenuous workout the day before. They were all sporting sweat soaked T-shirts, so I figured they would not want to run too fast. Eagerly, I agreed.

Off we went. Around the track once, out the gate, up the main street, past the Baths of Calacala, up a hill and outside the ancient gates of Rome. Headlamps from passing cars played on the 2000-year-old wall like so many ghosts that haunt the eternal city. As my mind gathered in the uniqueness of the moment, I observed that my fellow runners were leaving me behind. The guys who were going to take it easy, were running my legs off. Feeling the need to maintain my nation's pride, I caught up and ran with them.

For a Roman, running over the cobblestones where ancient legions marched off to expand an empire and find glory is prosaic. But, like people who long ago came from Carthage, Britannia, or Gaul and stood in awe of the accomplishments of the greatest civilization of its time, the tourist from California was impressed. Running past the flower shops that stay open late, or the pizzerias that sell slices of oblong pies by the gram, one begins to feel Roman.

As the lights of the running track appeared at the end of a long turn, my running partners faces softened from the strain of exercise into inquisitive smiles. They wanted to know about Los Angeles, what I do for a living, how long will I be in Rome, do I like the city?

One word describes the city: Bellísima.

By the time we pulled into Stadium de Calacala, I had put another four miles of Rome under my New Balances. But Candido was far from finished. He asked me to run one last mile for time (7:05) and invited me to return in two days to work out again. He also offered to design a training regimen that would prepare me for the L.A. Marathon. Including the jog back to my hotel, I put in 11 miles that evening.

I did return and was treated to six, 1K intervals run at finish time goals that began at 4:35 and decreased by five seconds each interval.

Everyone was surprised, but happy when I produced my camera for photos to remember them. Candido gave me his workout program to get me through the final six weeks before the L.A. Marathon. I promised to email him my finish time (4:30:44).

What stays with me so many months later is not the difficulty of the workouts or the quality of the track, but the hospitality of the people. We can travel across the world and find a person with whom we have something in common. With that established, that person can become a friend and share with us a part of their world. Candido, Fabrizio, Marco, Marcelo and Francis shared that world and became my friends.

Rome is a magnificent city.

*~Paul Gonzales has been a journalist for 23 years, works with **Steve Bloch** and ran with OCTC in last year's Camp Pendleton Mud Run.*



ORANGE COAST COLLEGE RUNNING CLUB INVITATIONAL

Sunday, December 7, 2003

ORANGE COAST COLLEGE TRACK

Take Fairview Rd. South from 405 past Adams. Turn right on Monitor Way and you're there!
Parking is FREE Additional parking at Costa Mesa High School across the street.

Race Day Registration and Event Sign-In Begins: 1:00 P.M.
Events Begin: 2:00 P.M. Awards Ceremony: 5:00 P.M.

\$10.00 For Unlimited Event Participation

***Make checks payable to Orange County Track Club (OCTC)**

Proceeds to Orange Coast College Track & Field Programs

Team Scoring: 5 pts. 1st Place; 3 pts. 2nd Place; 1 pt. 3rd Place

Awards to Top Three Individuals In Each Event Based On Age Graded World Records

Over-All Team Award – Perpetual Traveling Trophy

Invite your family and friends to cheer!

Pre-register by December 1 with your club representative using the form below:

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Sex: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Eve. Phone () _____ - _____

Club: _____ *To participate, you must be a current member and wear your club uniform.*

Check all events below that you intend to run. Start times shown are approximate.

Sign in for each event on day of meet for heat and lane assignments.

_____ 1 Mile: 2:00	_____ 200M: 3:40
_____ 400M: 2:30	_____ 2 Mile: 4:00
_____ 100M: 3:00	_____ 4x400 Relay: 4:30
_____ 800M: 3:20	_____ Awards: 5:00

WAIVER & RELEASE OF LIABILITY: In consideration of acceptance of my entry to this event, I hereby release from liability the Orange County Track Club, Orange Coast College, and their officers, agents, and employees for claims for damages or injuries, demands, and actions whatsoever in any manner arising from my participation in this event. I am fully informed of the risks of participating in this event, and I am physically fit and capable to participate. I further attest that I have read the entry information provided. I give permission for the use of my name and/or picture for whatever purpose.

Date _____ Runner's Signature _____ Parent's Signature if Under 18 _____

Running Club Representatives: Mail Pre-registration forms by December 1 to:

Orange County Track Club c/o Judy Bryant, 2229 W. Hemlock Way, Santa Ana, CA 92704

Questions? Email: Race Director, Ken Lilly: Kenlilly5@msn.com

The Orange County Track Club
PO Box 1307
Costa Mesa, CA 92628

HELP REDUCE CLUB EXPENSES:

Send an email to OCTCeditor@hotmail.com if you would like to stop receiving a paper newsletter. Simply type "online only" in the subject line and sign your name. Wil Sanchez will send an email announcement every month when the electronic newsletter is online and available to download. It's simple!

STAY CONNECTED!

Subscribe to Wil Sanchez's email notification for all the latest OCTC news and events. Send an email to Wil2run@yahoo.com if you are not already on the list.

LEFT IN THE DUST

Due to a momentary brain lapse by the author (Bill Fritzsche), two individuals were inadvertently left out of last month's St. George Marathon article.



In an outstanding time of 3.08.18, **Sue Zihlmann** set a PR and was a top 10 finisher in her age group. Not to be out done, her husband and fellow club member **Rob Harris** ran a PR best of 3.24.09, in only his second marathon.

Congrats to both of you!!!

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Renewals due this month:

Tony Cannon
Dan & Kathy Harshburger
Greg Hummel
Courtney Knapp
Ken Lilly
John Olstein
Kathy Sanchez
Rae Ann Stiger
Alexandra Wilson
J Wood

Your renewal date is on your mailing label.

If you are due or almost due to renew, mail your check, made out to OCTC, along with any updated information (name, address, phone number, email address) to:



Membership Fees:
\$35/single
\$45/family

Annual Dues:
\$25/\$35

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2 months
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