



We had a good planning meeting for the Labor Day Road Race on June 14th. Lots of ideas were discussed, sometimes rather heatedly. I'm pleased to announce that this year we'll be offering team competitions in three different categories: Husband/Wife, Parent/Child, and Team of 5. For the Team of 5, at least 2 members must be female. Get your team together and think of a creative name! Answers to some questions I've had so far: awards will be based on combined times for all team members, all team members must run the same race (5K or 10K), and, yes, you have to be married to enter the husband/wife competition. Glad to get that straight!

Another change this year is that the race t-shirt will be made of sweat-wicking technical fabric, AND finally, ladies will get a ladies shirt! These will have cap sleeves and a tapered waist. We don't expect guys to wear our shirts, why should we always have to wear theirs? Many thanks to our major sponsors for making this possible. In addition to **Run Fit Sports** and **Walthall Oil**, we now have **Security Bank/Fairfield Financial** as a major sponsor. Thanks to the law firm of Chambless, Higdon, Richardson, Katz, & Griggs and The Medical Center of Central Georgia for also sponsoring the race.

If you'd like to participate in a group track workout session to get ready for Labor Day, send me an e-mail!

Kerry Oedel
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Salute to Freedom 5K

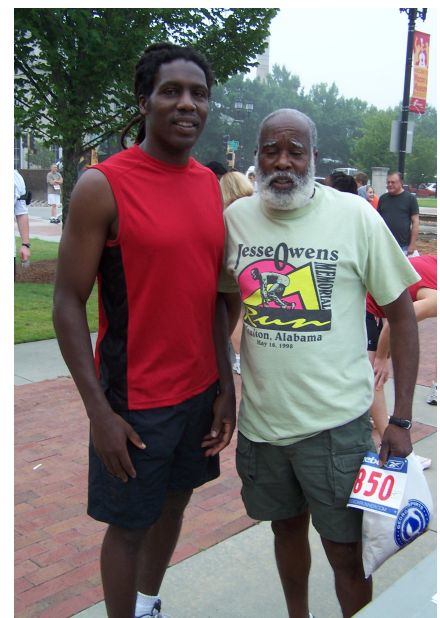
by Sam Martinez

I hope everyone enjoyed this race as much as my family and I did. Running in downtown Macon is a treat for us. When you consider how busy and hectic those streets are during the week with people hurrying to work and fighting for parking spaces, it's nice to just run down the middle of the streets and take in the scenery. Clarence Thomas did a great job directing the race and communicating a theme of community, health and peace. That message struck a chord with me because those are all the things that attract me to running. It's a joy to run alongside people of all ages, races and ethnic backgrounds. When we're at the starting line, there always seems to be such a strong sense of community and fellowship in the crowd. We all share a common goal, that is to complete the race. I feel safe letting my 10-year old daughter run with everyone because I know people are all around her watching out for her and encouraging her to do her best.

The layout of the course was pretty nice. There were enough twists and turns to make things interesting in spite of the lack of hills. I found myself happily distracted by the quick changing scenery. First we were on downtown streets, then we were running on the Riverwalk, then we ran around Central City Park, then we were in an old industrial area. We made a quick right turn and one last 400 yard sprint to the finish line in front of the Terminal Station and Georgia Sports Hall of Fame. There was an enthusiastic crowd there cheering us in.

We were surprised to hear there was a 1-mile fun run. Our 5-year old decided she had to run in that race or the world would end. We borrowed \$10 from a friend and tried hard to find some other little child we could talk out of their sneakers. In the end she ran with high heel flip-flops and was thrilled to have her own police escort throughout the race. He even cheered her on using his squad car bullhorn.

Then came all the post-race gatherings where friends quickly caught up with each other since the last time they met at a race. The organizers had a very good awards ceremony and gave out some cool awards and door prizes, with special awards for Bill Causey, Willie Wright, and Coach Alvin Copeland in keeping with their theme of health and peace. It was a great event for all that participated. I was very proud of our community, the organizers and our runners. Well done, friends!



Rudy Mendes & Willie Wright getting ready to run the Salute to Freedom race.

Lessons from Kenya

By Kerry Oedel

Fourteen of the last sixteen Boston Marathons were won by a Kenyan man. Six of the last seven Boston Marathons were won by women from Kenya. In the World Marathon Majors series, Kenyan runners hold six of the top nine spots. What makes these Kenyans so fast, and what can we learn from them?

Obviously, it helps to have a genetic disposition towards being long and lean, and training in high altitude is helpful, too. I recently read an article in The Wall Street Journal by Allen St. John, however, that made a more complete case for why the Kenyans have come to so dominant the distance running competitions worldwide. There is a culture of running in their country that leads to wide participation in the sport, and that strength in numbers leads to mutually superior preparation.

In the book First Marathons, by Gail Waesche Kislevitz, Paul Mbugua writes of his childhood in Kenya, telling how it's quite normal for young children to run three miles to school and back. Oh, yes, and they also run home for lunch before returning for the afternoon's lessons. Did I mention that they run maybe four miles during recess too? That adds up to 16 miles per day. Their sports heroes are their runners. Becoming an elite runner is a way to earn enough money to buy a car and a nice house, and to travel the world. Mbugua also says that most of the elite runners are married, because they need a wife to stay home and protect their money. They make desirable husbands, and women line up at the airport when they fly back from training camp. I suppose, for the young men, this is

equivalent on the "chick magnet" scale to joining a rock band in our country. No wonder they're motivated!

Kenya has a population roughly the same as California, yet they claimed 62 of the 111 sub-2:11 marathon times in 2006 (only three were from U.S. runners). 62 of those times were posted by 58 different men. In St. John's article, he credits this depth as the secret to Kenyan success. While top runners from other countries are racing against the clock, Kenyan runners are practicing with and against each other. In close races, the winner isn't always the fastest, but often who is the smartest competitor. Kenyans get lots of practice running strategically while training together.

So what does this have to do with the Macon Tracks Running Club? Perhaps we can create our own "depth of field". Running doesn't have to be an individual sport. We can work together, spurring each other towards goals we might not be able to reach on our own. We can form our own elite training camp right here in Macon, Georgia. Here's a good place to start—there will be team competitions at the Labor Day Road Race this year. Get yourself on a team and come be a part of the running community. Join an established group run or start your own. Come do a speed workout at the track, or run a race. Who knows, you might even run your own equivalent of a sub-2:11 marathon!



Day Lily Dash 5K

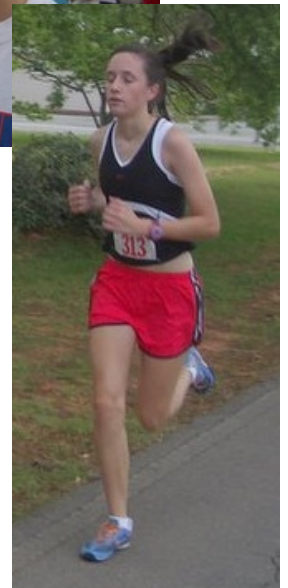
By Dan Ash

The 4th annual Day Lily Dash was run Friday, June 1st at 7:30PM. This event consists of a 5K and a 1-mile fun run. The race is part of the Day Lily Festival in Gray which runs through the weekend. This is one of only a few evening races in the area and had a record turnout with 145 finishers this year. The weather for this year's race was great considering the last couple of years this race has been run under stormy conditions. The course, which begins and ends at Gray Elementary School, is relatively flat with a few gentle inclines. The runners pass

the start/finish area at about 2 miles, giving the spectators a chance to see how their favorite runners are doing. In addition to the usual overall and age group awards, this year, Masters, Grand Masters and Senior Masters awards were given. Buddy Davis was the race director for the Day Lily Dash and provided the runners with a good, well-organized race. Complete results are available at www.macontracks.org.

Overall winner Elizabeth Lambert, 15, beams as she receives her trophy.

Photos by Don McClellan



Macon Tri-Athletes Rock

By Kerry Oedel

The athletes looked festive in their color-coded swim caps on the beach at Lake Tobesofkee as they prepared to begin the first leg of their swim-bike-run journey at the Rock 'n Roll Triathlon on Sunday, June 3rd. Over 130 athletes competed in the Sprint Triathlon (.4 mile swim, 15 mile bike, 5K run), and more than 450 finished the Half-Ironman (1.2 mile swim, 56 mile bike, 13.1 mile run).

The wave start went off smoothly, despite a late start. Soon the sprint tri-athletes began emerging from the water, running uphill to the transition area to get their bikes. The crowd was supportive, cheering as athletes headed in and out of transition each time. For the Sprint Triathlon, Lori Brewer was the first woman from Macon to finish, placing 10th overall, and 18-year old Brady Thomas was first in for the guys, 5th overall. It was great to see Bill Causey looking smooth running to the finish, despite his bike accident almost 2 years ago that he is still recovering from. He was 10th overall and 2nd master, so maybe that bionic hip of his is actually helping! His daughter, Bryn, competed too, coming in 4th for her age group, 17th overall (athletic talent obviously runs in the family). Other running club members who did well include Bill Harrison, who won 2nd in his age group, and Dorneen Shipp from Lizella. I was proud of my two sons, Liam Bassett (age 10) and Ike Oedel (age 11), who completed the entire sprint triathlon (with their dad along to keep them on track). They were the only boys in the 15-and-under age group that competed. They hadn't quite finished the race when the awards were being given out, but they were happy to collect their medals afterward!

For the half-ironman event, amazing Anne Wright, age 63, was the first woman from Macon to finish. She was 25th overall with a time of 5:54. Maybe if I keep practicing, by the time I'm 63 I'll be fit enough to finish a half-ironman too! Other intrepid MTRC women who finished the half-ironman include Claudia Ayerdi and Nancy Myers. For the men, I was interested to see that Brandon Suttle and Joby Peake, both top runners on the FPD cross-country team, were competing. Joby, unfortunately, cramped up



Bill Causey & daughter Bryn Bush both competed in the Rock 'n Roll Sprint Triathlon.

during the run (and no wonder, given how blisteringly hot it was), but still finished. Brandon was the first man from Macon to finish, 76th overall, with Beau Donner not far behind.

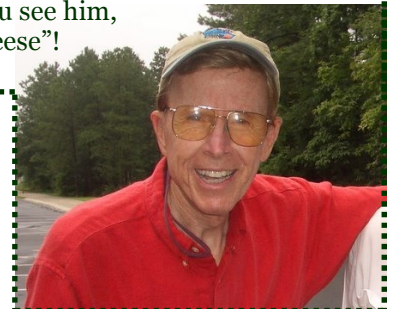
I did the run part of a relay team, "Two Chicks and a Dude". We got 4th overall,

which I thought was pretty good given that, a) we were competing with all male teams, and b) one of the other relay teams had Alan Black as its runner. His team "Two Boosters and a Rocket" won. Alan had the second fastest run time, despite racing and winning the Torture Trail 10K the day before.

I found the run course very difficult given the heat and the hills, and I hadn't even been biking and swimming for hours before I started. The good part about the course was that it consisted of a 3-pronged out-and-back design, so we were continually passing by runners ahead and runners behind. The athletes were very supportive of each other, whispering "good job" as they passed, mustering what little energy they had left to give encouragement to fellow competitors. The young volunteers manning the aid stations were wonderful, and we couldn't have done it without them. I am in awe of all the athletes competing in such a tough event. Maybe I'll join my boys and try the sprint triathlon next year!

Photo Finish

When he's not busy reporting for WSB-TV in Atlanta, Don McClellan is out reporting while racing every weekend. He does an amazing job of taking pictures during the race, then puts them together in a story complete with music. View his photo shows at www.runningintheusa.com under Georgia results. The most recent local race he's done is the Day Lily Dash. He'll be back for the Labor Day Race, so, if you see him, say "cheese"!



Need to Renew? Check your mailing label for your renewal date. Membership Applications can be found at www.macontracks.org. Thanks for supporting your local running club!

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Torture Trail 10K June 2nd, 2007



These Macon Tracks Running Club Members look pretty happy for having just been on the Torture Trail for 6.2 miles. Maybe it's because they all brought home some hardware! (left to right: Dan Ash, Amy Boyer, Elizabeth Jones, Leslie Tuck, Jerry Worley, and Sam Martinez) Hope they enjoy those beautiful trophies!

Strider's Web

Want to get a customized training schedule without paying big bucks for an elite running coach? Go to www.runnersworld.com, click on "training", then fill in your information on the Smart Coach form. In seconds, a training schedule will pop up, tailor-made just for you. Pull up a schedule now for your fall marathon training!

Georgia Runner Magazine is now out of print and on the web. For an extensive list of Georgia races and links to race applications, check out their new site at www.georgiarunner.com.

Want to know what your time was for Labor Day 2005? Pull up a list of your personal race results and connect with other runners at www.athlinks.com.

Happy surfing!