



I Can See Clearly Now

Five days after the 2009 Boston Marathon

Sometimes I suffer from an acute vision problem and I just can't see myself continuing to run anymore. It usually occurs when my body hurts all over, or when the weather is terrible, or when a 14-year-old girl blows my doors off, or when a 55-year-old blows by me, or when I just can't see taking another step except in the direction of my car. It is hard to see why I keep signing up for these goofy road races when I usually feel disappointed afterwards that I did not run fast enough or finish strong enough.

My wife seems to have a different vision problem. She can't see why anyone would get up at 4 AM to run 22 miles with a flashlight in the rain just because it is on your training calendar. She also has no visions of glory when she sees grown men and women losing their lunch on the side of the road, using the woods as a public restroom, seeing blisters and blood in odd places, or the occasional running gladiator laid out on their shield heading to the hospital after a tough battle with 26.2 miles of concrete. She does, however, have Superman-like vision when it comes to seeing right through my veiled attempt to disguise a running event as a family vacation. Like when I said, "Honey, let's take a great family vacation to San Francisco". She said with a note of sarcasm, "There must be some silly marathon that weekend".

Most everyone reading this probably has no clue who I am. When Monika asked me to write a piece about my experience at the 113th running of the Boston Marathon I thought, "What does an ordinary guy like me have to share with such a distinguished running audience?" When it comes to running, I have been described as a Clydesdale, a running duck, a Pace Princess, and someone who breaks concrete with every stride. A good friend even sent me a photo of a race finish in which he had photo-shopped a Skort on me and said, "If you can't hang with the big dogs, stay on the porch". Needless to say, I was honored by Monika's request to share my Patriot's Day experience in Boston with the MTRC.

Standing in the starting corrals on Main St. in Hopkinton, MA at 10 AM, Patriot's Day morning is like no other running experience I have had to date. This year it was a cold, windy, overcast morning steeped with anticipation of running the famous stretch of road back into Boston. Being 6'4" tall, my vision was perfect during this portion of the race. I saw all the athletes' heads bobbing up and down as they tried to stay warm during the last few minutes before



Karl with his wonderful wife Gina

the start. As the anthem played and the fighter jets flew by over head it was hard not to get goose bumps on top of the goose bumps I already had from standing around a high school baseball field for almost three hours. Here is where I have to thank Kerry for tip No.5 of 13 she passed along to the other Boston runners before the race. It was the best tip for defluidization I ever received.

And we were off. Walking that is, to the start line. It took only 5 minutes to get to the official start mats from corral 10, but it seemed like an eternity. My vision is great. I see myself having a fantastic race and one of the greatest running experiences of my very average running career. I am thinking of all the other fantastic experiences I have had running other events and really get the sense that I can finally see why we put so much time, effort, and resources into achieving our goal of just starting a marathon successfully. All the training and preparation is worth the feeling of stepping on the mat, hearing the beep, and knowing that you are a part of something special.

Alright, where are the nearest woods? I thought this was not going to happen after implementing tip No. 5, but it did. I need to stop some place soon. At least it was not an original idea. I think I saw about 1,500 runners up to their ankles in grass and weeds alongside the first 3-mile stretch of this famous road. I just had to watch out upon reentry back on to the course due to the street being fairly narrow and runners flying by with their fresh legs and dreams of PR's.

(Continued on page 6)

Running Club News:

By President Sam

A "Running Club" or a "Club of Runners"?

This July will mark my 3rd anniversary of running with *PURPOSE*. I started with a quest to be healthier and thinner. Then my focus changed to becoming faster and to have better endurance. I've always had a personal reason to run. This year I made a commitment to coach other runners so they could achieve their ultimate goal(s). I shared my intent on a posting in our web forum and things have taken off from there. I felt it was time for me to follow the example of our club's veterans and make myself available to pass on much of the great knowledge that was shared with me when I became a part of the Macon Tracks running community. I have two basic underlying principles that we start off with from day one of coaching. One is to always run with a *PURPOSE*. Second is to become comfortable and familiar with the *Pain of Discipline* (POD). The sport of running is not always easy and heck it's not always fun, but it sure can always be rewarding if we run with *PURPOSE* and choose *Pain of Discipline* over Pain of Regret.

Someone asked me not too long ago whether MTRC was a "Running Club" or a "Club of Runners". I hope I have always given off the impression that we are a running club open for people of any age, size and fitness level; a club where anyone can come and be helped by more experienced runners to get started running, improve on training, or even smash a five year old P.R. If you know someone who may be looking for a club like that, send them our way.

Run Strong Friends,

Sam

Team POD

DID YOU KNOW?

David and Autumn Perry ran the Carlsbad Marathon January 25th 2009. Autumn had a fall in the first mile as the crowd press was great and she was accidentally tripped. She fell hard and had knee, hip, chin and lip abrasions plus she broke her right hand in two places. After connecting with David she decided to continue the race. Autumn decided that she would not waste the trip since it was a Christmas gift from David. Both Autumn and David finished the

marathon and Autumn finished 3rd in her age class.

David and Autumn also ran a marathon in Shiprock, New Mexico the first of May. The marathon's 26.2 miles took place on the Navajo Nation Indian Reservation. The awards were hand made Navajo Indian pottery. (by Autumn Perry)

Roscoe Douglas, AKA "Speedster", together with seven other Tracksters, Leslie Spiegel, Ember Johnston, Kerry and Dave Oedel, Mike Stafford, Michael Corrigan, and Karl Christianson ran the Boston Marathon this April!! A life time goal accomplished.

As Yogi would say, "Its like déjà vu all over again", as a team of Macon Tracks members won the Spring Walk Georgia competition. The "Defending Champs" (formerly the Mercer Marchers) again led the way with 3,032 miles and a winning margin of over 800 miles. The Defending Champs were made up of Kevin Hatfield, Michael LeDoyen, David Dark, and F.M. Barron. The fourth place team, "Mercer MUSES", was lead by Monika Bubacz. The two teams also took home the "Georgia Cup" for teams placing the highest from an institution, Mercer University. These top two Mercer teams logged more than 4,800 miles in March and April. Tom Adrien placed first among the individual competitors with over 800 miles. Kevin had the most miles overall in the competition with 1008, but was competing as part of a team.

Walk Georgia is a state-wide program sponsored by the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension designed to encourage Georgia residents to become more physically active. For each mile or minute of walking, running, swimming, cycling, fitness classes, yoga, weight training, fitness classes, etc, the competitors receive credit for miles based upon a pre-determined weighting factor. (by F.M. Barron)



Michael, F.M. and Monika at the Walk Georgia award ceremony Photo courtesy of Jan Baggardy

MTRC's partnership with Piedmont Sports Medicine

I have been working at the Athletic Therapy and Rehabilitation Institute (A.T.A.R.I.) for a little over seven years. Our facility contains an open treatment area, along with an acute care area for massage, manual therapy, and modalities. We are equipped with state-of-the-art isokinetic exercise machines, cardiovascular equipment, free weights, balance/core training equipment, and a current pool for aquatic therapy. Each patient's therapy and rehabilitation process is completely customized to meet his or her specific needs. ATARI is located in the Piedmont Orthopedic and Sports Medicine complex in North Macon. Piedmont Orthopedics and Sports Medicine has been serving the athletic and non-athletic community in the middle Georgia area for over 23 years. Our facility includes a doctor's clinic, a surgery center, and a rehabilitation facility (ATARI).

During my seven plus years at ATARI, I have had the opportunity to work with many patients with a wide variety of orthopedic injuries and the majority of the athletes that I worked with were involved in collision or contact sports (i.e. football, basketball, baseball, etc). I have also worked with athletes with non-contact injuries (i.e. running, golf, etc). In February of 2006, I began to work with a patient who had recently begun training for marathon and was experiencing foot pain. This patient and I had something in common because, at the time, my wife, Melissa, and I were training for the 2006 Music City Half-marathon. Unbeknownst to me, I would get to know this patient very well over the next few years. Some of you may know her as Amy Tarpley. Well, during the course of one of her many treatment sessions with me, Amy informed me that she was a part of a running club called the Macon Tracks. She also mentioned that the Macon Tracks had a website that included a forum, and since I had become such an expert at treating running injuries since working with her, that I should share my knowledge with other runners on the forum. In January of 2008, I made my first post and my relationship, as well as Piedmont Sports Medicine's relationship with the Macon Tracks began. Since that first post, my co-workers

and I have enjoyed the opportunity to answer many of your questions about running related injuries and have added many posts to the forum about treating these types of injuries.

In 2008, our facility also had the pleasure of sponsoring the first annual Macon Tracks/Piedmont Sports Medicine Race Series. I enjoyed getting to meet some of the Macon Tracks members and participants of the race series at the awards ceremony held here in ATARI this past January. I do appreciate everyone's participation and look forward to our continued relationship with the Macon Tracks. During the time since starting the "Ask the Injury Expert" forum, I



A.T.A.R.I. Staff: Heath Mills, Brandon Wright, Stephanie Owen, Brian Ross, and Sam Hadaway (from left to right)

have learned a lot about runners, like the fact they want to keep running no matter how bad they hurt and suggesting "rest" as a treatment option is, as my wife says, "like the worst thing ever." I have had the opportunity to treat some of you in person in ATARI and it has been a delight to be able to help you with your injuries. I have met members at local running events and have even had the opportunity to run with you during training sessions. My wife has always been somewhat addicted to running and I never really understood it, but since participating in the forum, meeting and treating some of the runners, and actually running more myself, I definitely have a better understanding of the addiction to the sport of running. I must admit that I have actually developed a mild addiction to running myself. It's definitely an awesome sport. I do not get to make it out to many of

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

the group runs and races, but if any of you see me at any of the local running events, please stop and introduce yourself, I would love to meet you. I would also like to invite anyone that would like to, to come by and visit ATARI anytime.

Through the forum, it has been the goal of my co-workers and me to help educate runners on how to effectively prevent and/or treat injuries in order to return to running as soon and as safely as possible. It seems now we will also be getting the opportunity to do this through the Macon Tracks newsletter as we have been asked to begin submitting articles about running-related injuries. I consider it an honor to be asked to write articles for this newsletter and I look forward to being a contributing writer. If anyone has any suggestions for future articles, please post them on the Macon Tracks discussion forum or you can email Monika Bubacz from the Macon Tracks. Thanks again for allowing Piedmont Sports Medicine to participate with the discussion forum and the newsletter. God Bless!

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If you have a special request for a medical topic to be covered by ATARI experts send a short note to macontracks@cox.net or contact ATARI directly

LET'S WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Johnny Hinman has been running about 12 years and now wants to improve his ability. He will be running his first race at the Daylily 5K in Gray on June 5, with the goal of participating in the Labor Day race this year for the first time. Currently, Johnny runs 4-4 1/2 miles, 5 days per week. He is a regular reader of the MTRC forum and is anxious to learn more about running and how to improve. Johnny, we look forward to seeing you on June 5.

Betsy Moore began running in 2001 because she was tired of being a couch potato and was inspired by an older lady she met at the gym. This lady chided Betsy about not running by stating that "I can walk faster than you run." Since that time Betsy has been a regular at local races, placing high in her age group at many. Her favorite races are Run for Missions, Geico, and Al Toll. She enjoys running and hanging out with those who have similar interests. When not running, she enjoys playing with her full grown Great Dane "puppy". Welcome Betsy! *(by F.M. Barron)*



Betsy placed at the Race for Literacy 5K Photo by F.M.

Bryan Whitfield started running last fall during the Weight Loss Challenge at Mercer where he is a Christianity professor. His first race was the Mercer Homecoming 5K in November, and since then he has run in the GEICO, Cherry Blossom, and Gator-Go races. Currently Bryan is training for a faster 5K and the Labor Day 10K as well as swimming and cycling in preparation for a triathlon. He says he joined MTRC to be a part of Macon running community. What a smart choice! *(by M.B.)*



Bryan at the Geico 5K

Team Jones

You take some rough seas, wind, *by Elizabeth Jones* heat and a Saturday in May and you have what is known as the Gulf Coast Triathlon. 1.2 mile swim, 56 mile bike, 13.1 mile run. We (Tom and I) have done this race for 12 years or more. We lost count - it seems to be a tradition in some ways. So this past January I signed us up once again.

I spent much of January, February and March trying to rehab a heel injury, so there wasn't much running going on. We were doing some base training but all of a sudden it was mid-April and we had a half ironman to do. So what does Team Jones do? Go anyway. We packed our gear bags to battle the conditions of Panama City Beach.

The day before the race I became a nervous girl. I've done this race when I was ready and remember how I felt; now doing it when I wasn't ready really messed with my head.

Race day came and with no sleep the night before we went to do our best. Arriving at the race at 5:30 am, we got good news: it's a wet suit legal swim. While setting up our transition the announcer said it would be in the 90's - so hydrate and wear sunscreen.

At 6:35 my wave went off - all women, choppy water. There were a few times I lost sight of the buoys due to the waves. At 6:40 Tom's wave was off - same conditions. Finally, out of the water and onto the bike. We did okay on the bike, had to deal with some winds but both of us knew to keep it steady. Now onto the run. My run quickly turned into a shuffle, shuffle, run, walk from one mile marker and aid station to the next. Get ice, put in hat, drink water, Gatorade and cola. Keep moving forward, no shade and 13 miles to go.

This is when you ask yourself, "What did you do all winter?" And then I reasoned with myself. There were only 40 women in my age group and 20 men in Tom's who had the courage to do this today. So we weren't in perfect racing shape, but we were strong enough to finish. I believe long difficult days build character. They put things into perspective and you learn just how far you can push yourself. So it wasn't the fastest day we've ever had, but we finally found the finish line and didn't need the medical tent. We were both tired that afternoon but felt good on Sunday.

I don't advise doing races unprepared, but if you do, take it one step at a time and know that somehow with will and determination, you too will find the finish line.

The next weekend we did another race. This is known

as the Turtle Crawl on Jekyll Island. 1.5K swim, 40K bike and 10K run. We were excited about this race, knowing for sure we could handle the distance.

Team Jones once again packed gear bags and off we went to Jekyll.

Race morning was nice, seas were calm and again it was a wet suit legal swim. The fun thing about this swim is every 2 seconds someone starts. So I started 2 seconds before Tom. I was out of the water in 15 minutes and Tom in 17 minutes. Then we were on the bike, a flat fast course trying to go all out for the entire race. At mile 18 Tom catches me, "okay, you go I'll catch you" that was my thought. Into the second transition I saw Tom, "go fast" I thought. I got out of the transition before he did. Now the run - yes we actually ran this one. The first half mile we ran together, and then he was in front of me. That was a good thing because I didn't want to slow down. We made the turn at 3 miles and were heading back in. At mile 5 I caught Tom, "stay steady" I thought. I then saw a girl in front of me and wanted to catch her, and there was the finish line. We both had fun and felt great!

The awards were the best part, Tom got 3rd in his age group and I got first female master. Being 47, that meant I beat the entire age group of 40-year-olds!!!

Coming off a tough weekend, then having a perfect race, will keep us motivated for our next event.

Now we're off to Camp Little Shot for a week. The kids will be making great awards for the race in September. Mark your calendar for Saturday, September 12th to run a 5K so that kids living with diabetes will have the opportunity to go to a summer camp.

*Whether you're a new member or have been a member for years, we want to hear from you!
Please submit profiles, stories, race recaps,
or other running-related articles to
macontracks@cox.net*

MTRC is grateful for new Macon Labor
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in making this year's race
another great success.

(Continued from page 1)

Well, there goes a minute off the old clock. Maybe I can make it up on the first part of this course which is slightly down hill and very fast. Man, these other runners around me are fast. Because everyone has qualified with about the same time I had, no one seems to be dropping off a pretty brisk pace, so the crowds were thick passing through the first 5 or 6 water stations. I was getting a little sticky due to all the Gatorade being slung around every mile.

Wow, the first half of this marathon was going great. Slightly down hill, very fast, and extremely historic. To think that some of the best runners from all over the world have run this stretch of road for over 113 years. What a humbling experience to be involved in a small way with such a big event.

For the men in the crowd they should call mile twelve "PR mile". The women of Wellesley College line the right shoulder of the road screaming at the top of their lungs as the runners pass by. An amazing thing happens. The women runners stay the course in the middle of the road while the men drift ever closer to the right side of the road and quicken their pace to make it look good. High fives for everyone. It is hard to explain the fan support, but it is an experience like no other in marathoning.

I crossed the mat at the half with "my race" still in hand. There is no place to hide on the trail into Boston. I know when my foot hit the mat that someone in Macon was watching. They were probably saying, "He's toast. He went out too fast". Which at the time I would have denied, but 5 miles later would have nodded my head and said "Yep, I went out too fast." Maybe it was the Wellesley mile, or maybe it was the wind, or maybe I am just destined to be someone's Pace Princess forever, but somewhere on Hill #2 I started losing my vision.

There are four distinct hills on this awesome thread of asphalt into Boston. They begin at Newton Lower Falls around mile 16 and conclude with "Heartbreak Hill" at mile 20. I had written with a black sharpie on my arm where each one of these hills begin and end. I was prepared to conquer each one of these monsters one at a time with the precision of a brain surgeon. I started with the first one breathing from the diaphragm, head up, slight knee lift, textbook running form. Ouch, that was way harder than I had visualized for so many months before.

My wife made it out to the farthest "T" stop from Boston to cheer me on at mile 17 before my next daunting task, Hill #2. I can't explain to her what it means to see that familiar face in the crowd and know that they are there for one purpose only, to cheer you on. I almost tear up every time I see her smiling face during a marathon knowing that only true love would make someone travel miles and miles, stand in incredible expo lines, wake up early, stand in often terrible weather, to watch a stream of sweaty, smelly, nasty-looking runners just to yell a few encouraging words that mean so much to the recipient. I was so happy to stop for a quick "photo op" and a good luck kiss. (I skipped the ones being

given out back at mile 12 just so you know.)

Well, here comes the "Meat of the Matter" as they say. Hill No 2 starts at the Newton Fire Station. This hill goes up 74 ft. in elevation in what feels like 100 yards. At the top, I was gulping air like a guppy out of water. My feet hurt, no more wife to look forward to, GU about gone, and two more hills to go. My vision problem flairs up again. Why did I pay to do this? My Garmin must be running low on batteries because it said I just finished that last mile well over 8 minutes. I am toast. Hey, I can look forward to trying see the John Kelly statue before Hill No. 3 at mile 19.

I missed the statue, but I can still feel Hill No. 3 in my legs a week after the marathon. I thought, "I must have gotten my markings wrong, this must be Heartbreak Hill". No. 3 is a quarter-mile long grinder that goes up 63 ft. That does not seem like much, but approaching Mile 20, it feels like a march up Everest. At the top of the hill I had no vision. I could not see running another marathon ever.

After about a quarter-mile flat spot in the course I saw what I was sure must have been a mistake just a few minutes ago. I saw a half-mile monster laying in the path between me and glory. Here it is, "Heartbreak Hill". All I could do was keep repeating "I think I can, I think I can" and watch the carnage of other determined athletes get devoured by the infamous stretch of real-estate between mile 20 and 21. I was not going to walk. About here is where I lost "All" my vision. I could not see running up this hill. I could not see finishing this race. I lost my vision of a 3:15 Marathon. I even thought, "I can't see ever running again, let alone a marathon, after finishing this one."

As I crested the hill at mile 21 and a stiff wind hit me in the face I thought, "Boy, the city looks a long way off." The next three miles drop over 250 ft in elevation. I thought going up was bad, but coming down was even worse. About mile 22, out of GU, out of gas, and a hip about ready to fall off, I got the worst cramp of my life. I knew if I stopped my legs would never run again. It only took over half a mile to run that cramp out. This is where I agreed with my wife. I can't see any glory in this type of torture. The only solace to be taken is that I am sure I looked better than half the people around me. Wow, did they look in pain.

As we entered the city and the crowds grew to gigantic proportions I started to get my stride and my vision back. "Hey, I can do this." My times are under 8 minutes and I know next year's Boston Q time is in the bag. Maybe I can break 3:20 and get a modern day PR out of this train wreck. With wind blowing directly into our face, and me being the biggest thing on the course, I looked behind me and saw a string of runners hiding in my wake. Believe it or not I felt an obligation not to slow down. Once again relegated to the esteemed position of everyone's favorite Pace Princess, I pushed on.

As I turned onto Boylston St. I saw the famous blue banner hanging over the entire street off in the distance. We were

almost there. Again, I quickened my pace to make it look good for the cameras. The only problem is this short stretch on the legendary road to the finish line seems like it will never end. The pain is worth the experience of knowing that you have just shared this patch of road with the likes of Ryan Hall and Kara Goucher.

I have run past the Sears tower, Soldier Field, the CNN Building, Mickey and Mini's house, the Super dome, Bill Clinton's temporary home in Little Rock, and his temporary house in DC. I have run over the Verrazano Bridge, the Golden Gate Bridge, New Orleans levees, and a patch of famous bricks in Indianapolis. I have stood in front of the Iwo Jima Monument, Tavern on the Green in Central Park, Fisherman's Wharf, Grant Park, and the EPCOT ball. After collecting over twenty five pieces of metal on a ribbon I can assure you one thing. Nothing can compare to the overwhelming satisfaction of crossing a short patch of blue painted on Boylston St. at the end of the most famous marathon in the world in the heart of Boston, Massachusetts.

After a short five days of recovery I can see again. I can see why I put in all that time, money and effort into running marathons. I can see myself as a Patriot in my own little way. I can see the lessons in life I have learned from running. I see that any dream can be accomplished with determination, effort, and most importantly, support from friends, family, and those who have gone before. Being blessed with a passion for all sports and cursed with absolutely no ability or coordination, I see that I have once again found a lifelong activity that can provide incredible life experiences. Maybe I can see running another marathon in the not-too-distant future.

Next April maybe I will reward my wife for all her love and support with a little family vacation to California. Where is Big Sur anyways and how do I find the start line?

Johnny Nash 1972

"I can see clearly now, the rain is gone,
I can see all obstacles in my way
Gone are the dark clouds that had me blind
It's gonna be a bright, bright
Sun-Shiny day."

Kerry Oedel decided to share with all of us the mentioned famous Tip #5 for Boston Marathoners published on Runner's World forum:

"5. OK, guys only, sorry Gal's, but it is just the way things are. Since there is a lot of waiting; carry an empty Gatorade bottle to the starting line and wear a black cut out trash bag (both for warmth and wind protection) and you'll have your own porta-potty. Some people have been doing this for years and its tons better than standing in line at the porta potty. For the pee bottle - the wide mouth 16oz Gatorade plastic bottle works pretty well. The standard bottled water container has too narrow an opening, even for those of us with the Irish Curse, and you really don't want to be peeing on your hand. Empty it first, and then fill'er back up; you're doing yourself and everyone else a favor by not clogging up a porta-potty line." :)

2009 Macon Tracks Piedmont Sports Medicine Series Races:

Day Lily Dash 5K - June 5th

Salute to Freedom 5K - June 13th

Georgia Peach Festival 5K & 1M - June 20th

Bragg Jam Moonlight Miles 5K

Jim Herrin 5K & 10K - August 8th

Macon Labor Day Road Race - Sept. 7th

Race for Camp Little Shot 5K - Sept. 12th

Gordon's Fall Line Festival 5K - Oct. 3rd

Jay's Hope 5K & 10K

Peacemakers 5K - Nov. 7th

Will Robinson 5K

Bartram Forest Marathon & 50K - Nov. 28th

Reindeer Run 5K

Christmas Lane Dash 5K

Michelle Archer and F.M. Barron are currently in the lead for the Race Series, with ten races completed.



Deborah Botkin agreed to serve as a New Member Coordinator.

Deb is a Marathon Maniac # 710 and she loves those 50 milers.

Here she is with her son Noah as a 'human backpack' at the Race for Literacy 5K in Reynolds.

Looks like a great workout!

*Photo by
F.M. Barron*

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Robins Pacers and Macon Tracksters participated in the annual Torch Run-In to kick off the Houston County Relay For Life on Friday, May 15. The Pacers hold this annual tradition of running approximately 4 miles from Perry Middle School to the Houston County Fair Grounds, where the torch is handed off to a cancer survivor who lights the torch that stays illuminated during the duration of the relay event.

by Amy Tarpley

