

WMAC SNO-NEWS

THE SEARCH FOR PONCHO'S GOLD -- DECEMBER 27, 1995

Origins of the WMAC DION Snowshoe Series

August '95, during the trail marking ceremony, the one for the Savoy 20 Mile Trail Race. Race director "Poncho" Mach, Joe Gwozdz and Joe Zustra picked me and my trusty canine companion "Dusty" up for blazing duties in Joe's shiny pickup.

Trouble began immediately upon dropping Joe and Joe Jr. off at Tower 51, when Poncho asked me to grab something out of his pocket. As I reached into his pants, feeling kinda goofy about it, he told me that he meant the pocket to his backpack. Oh well.

The next day, as the race was winding down, Poncho asked me for his special container, the one he had me grab from his pocket the day before. Uh oh. I had just finished the 20 miles and he was asking me for an elixir I couldn't remember being responsible for. With tears in my eyes I told our President it was vanished, gone, forgotten.

Time passed by. Fall went and Winter came, and with it massive snow falls. I had the elixir on my mind. I wanted to find it, if it meant traveling to the ends of the earth. Or at least Savoy.

The only way to get into the woods at this time of year would be with snowshoes. I checked the topographical map, figured I could trek up the Hoosac Range from Adams, via Little Egypt. Hadn't been in it's wilderness since 1978.

Leaving my folk's house, I walked 1/4 mile to the snowmobile trail I knew so well as a youth. Put on the snowshoes and enjoyed the ease of running on a packed trail. Down I plummeted, crossing Tophet Brook and seeing the trail turn toward my Uncle's barnyard. This wasn't right. I needed to climb the mountain to the top, all the way to High Bridge. I couldn't understand why the snowmobiles would bypass a wonderful mountain trail, surrounded by pines and hemlock, to scoot through a barnyard and up a now paved road!

My dog Dusty and I scooted across the crooked bridge, he very delicately, to begin the climb up the mountain. It looked like no snowmobiles had been through this way all winter; causing the depth of snow to reach mid-thigh.

The snowshoes were a lifesaver, but slowed me down to a crawl as I struggled up this hill. My dog bounced from shoe hole to shoe hole, looking at me in disbelief every hop of the way. Two-thirds into the climb I found out why no sleds had passed. A huge tree had fallen across the path, one side a steep bank rising upward, the other side a sheer cliff dropping straight down. No way for the sleds to get around, trouble for my companion and me. We used all our remaining strength to get ourselves around this obstacle, me pulling the dog by his collar at times as he dug in with all four wheels, churning and spinning wildly in the three-foot powder. Finally busted through around to the other side, happily seeing fresh packed snowmobile tracks lying molded into the snow.

Now we could make up some time as we approached an hour. "This snowshoeing was no walk in the park," I said aloud as I

removed soaked wool hat and gloves from my perspired body. The easiness of running on a packed trail was a welcome change from breaking trail up the side of a mountain that climbed 650' in less than a mile, but maybe not as rewarding.

Being in an area that hadn't been disturbed, snow untouched except by occasional animal tracks zigzagging across the narrow path, was both hypnotic and spiritual. Nothing seemed to exist other than my footsteps in the three feet of snow. Tiredness leads to a deep relaxation that borders on self-meditation. I experience life in it's simplest form: breaths, sight, sounds and feeling within my own temple.

I ran past High Bridge upward to an open, swampy area on top of the mountain I recognized as part of the Savoy Mountain 20 Miler. A few steps down a pine tree lined section of trail introduced me to Brown Road, and with joy I realized that from here I could find my way to other magical places. I was lucky to have found these connecting paths. I also realized how lucky I was to be able to have with me on most every adventure a loyal dog to keep me company. Most of all I was both lucky and happy to have found Poncho's magic elixir.

All can find the magic elixir; it's there for each and every one of us. The elixir is the peacefulness you will feel when you are "out there" on a journey in your own wilderness, wherever that may be. The wonderful aspect of trail running and snowshoeing is that you can reach a point where the trails exist in your heart and mind. You will have reached the true Zenith. I had found "PEACE" that day. Poncho is kind enough to leave a bunch of it sprinkled along the Savoy Mountain course each year for others to discover. It is there for the taking, stop by and treat yourselves.

Farmer ed

I am often asked how, why and when I started thinking about a snowshoe series. It was while on this adventure in December of 1995 that I really began thinking about snowshoe events. Early on, when it was just me and my dog, I always dreamed of getting a dozen participants someday. Thanks everyone!

Dusty my cocker spaniel. Aug 1986 – Sept 2000. Doesn't seem



that long ago, because I will tell you all a secret. I believe that sometimes, if we are especially blessed, we keep getting the same dog back, over and over again. Tippi and I are working on over

8-years together. Often, I realize she is the same dog that Dusty was. It is comforting to know.

6th CAMP SARATOGA 8KM SNOWSHOE RACE

February 14, 2009

Camp Saratoga

Wilton, NY

PL	NAME	TIME	POINTS	PL	NAME	TIME	POINTS
01.	Tim Van Orden	40	0:32:50	100.00	56.	Kaitlyn Sonnett	23 0:50:45 49.54
02.	Tim Mahoney	29	0:33:30	99.08	57.	Lindsey Sabatka	28 0:50:57 48.62
03.	Jeremy Drowne	31	0:34:02	98.17	58.	Laurel Shortell	42 0:51:15 47.71
04.	Matt Westerlund	36	0:35:09	97.25	59.	Rich Tanchyk	57 0:51:23 46.79
05.	Ahmed Elasser	46	0:36:02	96.33	60.	Jeff Hattem	57 0:51:55 45.87
06.	Ken Clark	46	0:36:56	95.41	61.	David Boles	62 0:52:42 44.95
07.	Abby Woods	30	0:37:03	94.50	62.	Will McGivney	46 0:52:54 44.04
08.	Leslie Dillon	25	0:37:46	93.58	63.	Peggy McKeown	51 0:53:05 43.12
09.	Edward Alibozek	46	0:37:57	92.66	64.	Kim E. Scott	40 0:53:19 42.20
10.	Richard Teal	31	0:38:42	91.74	65.	Denise Dion	50 0:53:30 41.28
11.	Brian Northan	33	0:38:47	90.83	66.	Charles Brackett	63 0:53:43 40.37
12.	John Onderdonk	41	0:39:04	89.91	67.	Diane Gray	45 0:54:04 39.45
13.	Jason Clark	37	0:39:25	88.99	68.	M. Della Rocco	57 0:54:11 38.53
14.	Jason Pare	36	0:39:32	88.07	69.	Dave Wilber	49 0:54:28 37.61
15.	Bob Dion	53	0:39:58	87.16	70.	Chris Johnson	51 0:54:45 36.70
16.	Doug Hazelden	49	0:40:19	86.24	71.	Denise Terzian	45 0:54:57 35.78
17.	Daniel French	37	0:40:37	85.32	72.	Alex Chlopecki	37 0:55:09 34.86
18.	Ian Webber	35	0:41:19	84.40	73.	Daniel Morgan	43 0:55:12 33.94
19.	Tina-Marie Poulin	36	0:41:32	83.49	74.	Jason Nipper	34 0:55:13 33.03
20.	Richard Chipman	48	0:41:58	82.57	75.	Maureen Roberts	51 0:55:21 32.11
21.	Mort Nace	42	0:42:26	81.65	76.	Laura Clark	61 0:55:29 31.19
22.	Beth Herder	50	0:42:44	80.73	77.	Juicebox Cox	16 0:55:34 30.28
23.	Rick DeCarr	24	0:42:49	79.82	78.	Bob Massaro	65 0:55:41 29.36
24.	Andy Esperti	45	0:43:10	78.90	79.	London Niles	11 0:56:10 28.44
25.	Andrew Wahila	24	0:43:12	77.98	80.	Jennifer Bernstein	29 0:57:52 27.52
26.	Timothy Bardin	47	0:43:17	77.06	81.	Ian Irmischer	34 0:57:53 26.61
27.	Jeff Clark	51	0:43:22	76.15	82.	Glenn Schaefer	58 0:58:29 25.69
28.	Tim Ratowski	36	0:43:26	75.23	83.	Jamie Howard	43 0:58:35 24.77
29.	Jared Asmus	23	0:43:31	74.31	84.	Peter Thomas	61 0:59:13 23.85
30.	Brendan Dunfee	34	0:43:53	73.39	85.	Debi Batcher	49 0:59:33 22.94
31.	Glenn Tryson	55	0:43:54	72.48	86.	Douglas Gerhardt	41 0:59:46 22.02
32.	John Pelton	69	0:43:58	71.56	87.	Robert Armagno	62 1:01:23 21.10
33.	Charles Petraske	31	0:44:16	70.64	88.	Kathleen Tersigni	38 1:01:26 20.18
34.	Russell Clark	57	0:44:43	69.72	89.	Mary Rappazzo	47 1:01:27 19.27
35.	Jessica Hageman	33	0:44:51	68.81	90.	Larry Peleggi	51 1:02:08 18.35
36.	Sean Curtis	16	0:44:55	67.89	91.	Barbara Downs	48 1:02:09 17.43
37.	Mike Lahey	57	0:45:08	66.97	92.	Steve Obermeyer	47 1:02:32 16.51
38.	Patrick McGrath	43	0:45:12	66.06	93.	Barbara Sorrell	51 1:03:00 15.60
39.	Dave Shumpert	38	0:45:31	65.14	94.	Xena Onderdonk	39 1:05:09 14.68
40.	John Demers	48	0:45:37	64.22	95.	Phyllis Fox	56 1:05:30 13.76
41.	Dennis Fillmore	56	0:45:43	63.30	96.	Konrad Karolczuk	56 1:05:33 12.84
42.	Steven Legnard	32	0:45:45	62.39	97.	Janet Tryson	55 1:09:04 11.93
43.	Tom Mack	44	0:45:56	61.47	98.	Gregory Taylor	62 1:09:50 11.01
44.	Jeffrey Lutzker	57	0:46:04	60.55	99.	Richard Busa	79 1:09:53 10.09
45.	Paul Hartwig	52	0:46:36	59.63	100.	Luis Pacheco	55 1:12:23 9.17
46.	Tom Tift	51	0:47:00	58.72	101.	Laurie Hughes	55 1:14:04 8.26
47.	Mark Raymond	46	0:47:22	57.80	102.	Sibyl Jacobson	66 1:14:20 7.34
48.	Gretchen Nace	17	0:47:55	56.88	103.	Ann Miller	45 1:15:00 6.42
49.	Tracey Robertson	40	0:48:29	55.96	104.	Victoria Daley	50 1:15:13 5.50
50.	Natalia Hogan	40	0:49:11	55.05	105.	Anne Webig	51 1:16:53 4.59
51.	Kaitlyn Skelley	25	0:49:32	54.13	106.	Sue Nealon	58 1:16:54 3.67
52.	Pamela DelSignore	39	0:49:43	53.21	107.	Jeff Clark	62 1:17:39 2.75
53.	Frank Paone	51	0:49:36	52.29	108.	Raymond Jr. Lee	66 1:18:53 1.83
54.	Brad Herder	49	0:50:00	51.38	109.	Ed Alibozek Jr	69 0:41:24 ** 0.92
55.	Thomas Ryan	48	0:50:33	50.46			** Ed Jr missed a turn and his 19 th place turned into 109 th .

CUPID CAMPS OUT

While most Americans celebrated Valentines Day by writing love poems, eating chocolates and sniffing red roses, participants at the Camp Saratoga Snowshoe Race in the Wilton Wildlife Preserve did all that and more. Like the male chickadees who have just begun to broadcast their e-bay mating call to all eligible females, we humans have been bustling around locating possible partners, reviving old relationships and planning parties. For although my backyard Gertie the Groundhog has predicted six more lovely weeks of winter, the days are getting lighter, Tom McCrumm's maple tree sap is running and there is a certain lightness to the air.

The second annual Camp Saratoga Snowshoe in 2004 also landed on Valentines Day and ever since then in has been associated in the public mind with this very special day. Even years afterward folks would inquire "Will the race be on Valentines Day again?" Dumbfounded, either Jeff or I would reply, "Not likely, unless you are free (fill in appropriate weekday) morning to run a race." This year, much to our mutual relief, we have come full circle and have once again landed on this most significant day.

If you have ever directed a race you know that the biggest reward for all the countless behind-the-scenes tasks is the satisfaction of seeing old and new friends enjoy themselves and perhaps attempt snowshoeing for the first time. This season, in fact, the sheer numbers of runners who have requested loaners is simply astounding. Despite the fact that Bob Dion has added even more snowshoes to his fleet, the larger events where roughly one-third of the entrants are first-timers were hard-pressed to keep up with demand.

Jeff and I equate directing a snowshoe race to planning a family reunion for a couple hundred close friends. For athletes in the Dion Snowshoe Series, gathering afterwards around a pot of chili or a hot cup of cocoa is as much a part of the experience as churning up the snow. This year we were fortunate that the Wilton Preserve, under the direction of Larry Gordon and Linda and Paul Woschanko, worked long and hard to gut a former camp bunkhouse, install high-powered outlets, electric lighting and a functional gas stove. Bring on the food!

Many of the local Saratoga Stryders came armed with their specialties and we enjoyed an old-fashioned pot luck afterwards. Couple #1, seventy-eight year old Andy Keefe and his wife Peggy are traditionally in charge of the kitchen. Despite finally having a chance of beating seventy-nine year old Rich Busa who is recovering from an injury, Andy loyally stayed by Peggy's side, saying, "I just enjoy being around her." Beth and Brad Herder, Curley's Race Directors from Pittsfield, Mass, were also on hand. Six weeks into his New Year's resolution to make summiting a mountain a day as automatic as eating that apple, he was on the verge of untying his boots, when Beth helpfully suggested, "We'll just go and find a little mountain on the way home."

Taking lessons from these lovebirds were Abby Woods, first female, and her fiancé Tim Mahoney, second overall, of Holyoke, Mass, who double-dipped by celebrating their rehearsal dinner right here at Camp prior to their wedding the next day. One thing for sure, such a speedy couple would have

no trouble getting to the church on time! Looking on were Jenn Bernstein all the way from San Rafael, CA and her fiancé Ian Irmischer from Newburgh, NY. Jenn's registration was her secret Valentine gift to Ian, with the tease that they would be doing something new and exciting to celebrate. Fortunately, St Valentine smiled on the adventure planned by this thin-blooded California gal, providing the best weather we have had so far for any of the series races. Skies were sunny and the air was crisp, not too warm, not too cold, but just right.

The weather was so perfect that the party spilled out of the hut and into the sunlight, a prelude to those glorious spring snow days just ahead. True to tradition, the Racing City Chorus Barbershop Quartet made an appearance, and this time the snow was so crusty that they did not sink in over their dress shoes. Those enjoying the sun peeked in from the open doorway as they serenaded Jeff and I and all the other lovebirds and friends with a dash of old-fashioned romance. Afterwards, I noticed a few other promising couples link up and drive back to Saratoga to do proper justice to their free Ben & Jerry's ice cream cone coupons. Charles Petraske, whose wife was home with their young son, was torn between selecting a raffle T-shirt or making the correct Valentines Day move with a Spa City Cupcakes certificate. Romance won, and after helping haul stuff back to our house (back at the ranch, Jeff's car had refused to function) he returned to Spa City and his Valentine surprise.

Oh, yes, and we actually did have a snowshoe race, which was in fact a qualifier for the United States National Snowshoe Championship, held in the White River Snow Park on the flanks of Mt. Hood in Portland, Oregon. Our course, a mixture of groomed ski trails and single track was quite different this year. As a result of the maple sugar cold nights and 30ish days, the snow was quite crusty. Pieter Litchfield, a Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park board member saved the day, jockeying his grooming machine to eliminate every last indentation. The single track, however, presented a challenge, being pockmarked with frozen-over hiking boot postholes. Fortunately, Tim Van Orden, of Bennington, VT, first place finisher, saved his most dramatic fall for the trek back to the hot chili and roaring wood stove.

As Jeff and I listened to the Barbershop Quartet and gazed at the crowd of glowing, happy faces, we knew why we had spent countless hours of preparation and basically trashed our living room with race paraphernalia. This day was special, one that will stand out from the other satisfying days we have spent with our friends, enjoying the snow and the fine companionship.

laura clark

WMAC SNOWSHOE SERIES IS AGAIN POWERED BY



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WMAC**2009 DION Snowshoe Racing Series****WMAC****HOXIE - THUNDERBOLT 3.8 - MILE SNOWSHOE RACE****February 21, 2009****Greylock Glen****Adams, MA**

#	NAME	AGE	TIME	POINTS	#	NAME	AGE	TIME	POINTS
01.	Tim Van Orden	40	0:38:22	100.00	54.	Will Danecki	58	0:59:16	47.52
02.	Matt Cartier	33	0:39:37	99.01	55.	Bob Worsham	63	0:59:40	46.53
03.	Matt Westerlund	36	0:39:42	98.02	<u>56.</u>	<u>Darlene Buttrick</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>1:00:01</u>	<u>45.54</u>
04.	Brian Rusiecki	30	0:39:50	97.03	<u>57.</u>	<u>Denise Dion</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>1:00:24</u>	<u>44.55</u>
05.	Ethan Nedeau	36	0:39:55	96.04	58.	Bob Massero	65	1:00:27	43.56
06.	Peter Keeney	43	0:40:29	95.05	59.	London Niles	11	1:00:31	42.57
07.	Josh Merlis	27	0:41:46	94.06	60.	John Pelton	69	1:00:44	41.58
08.	Paul Bazanchuk	54	0:41:56	93.07	61.	Frank Gaval	62	1:00:47	40.59
09.	Edward Alibozek	46	0:42:39	92.08	<u>62.</u>	<u>Patty Duffy</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>1:00:56</u>	<u>39.60</u>
10.	Larry Dragon	48	0:43:47	91.09	<u>63.</u>	<u>Jody Lahey</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>1:01:36</u>	<u>38.61</u>
11.	Jay Kolodzinski	29	0:45:10	90.10	<u>64.</u>	<u>Laura Clark</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>1:02:08</u>	<u>37.62</u>
12.	Kenny Clark	46	0:45:25	89.11	<u>65.</u>	<u>Julie Ryan</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>1:02:59</u>	<u>36.63</u>
13.	Eddie Habeck	31	0:45:27	88.12	<u>66.</u>	<u>Laurel Shortell</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>1:03:25</u>	<u>35.64</u>
14.	Scott Brew	43	0:45:28	87.13	67.	Steve Cowan	47	1:04:54	34.65
15.	Richard Teal	31	0:45:41	86.14	68.	Paul Westcot	29	1:05:05	33.66
16.	Tim Rudin	38	0:46:37	85.15	<u>69.</u>	<u>Kathy Furlani</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>1:05:18</u>	<u>32.67</u>
17.	Bob Dion	54	0:46:38	84.16	<u>70.</u>	<u>Darlene Mccarthy</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>1:05:35</u>	<u>31.68</u>
18.	Russ Hoyer	48	0:46:59	83.17	71.	Dave Boles	62	1:06:38	30.69
19.	John Kinnicott	46	0:47:06	82.18	72.	Doug McBourne	50	1:07:21	29.70
20.	Peter Malinowski	54	0:47:26	81.19	73.	Chris Johnson	51	1:08:33	28.71
21.	Robert Mccarthy	41	0:47:29	80.20	<u>74.</u>	<u>Pat Rosier</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>1:10:17</u>	<u>27.72</u>
22.	Richard Chipman	48	0:48:04	79.21	75.	Brian Mccarthy	47	1:10:29	26.73
23.	Erik Wight	49	0:49:07	78.22	<u>76.</u>	<u>Barbara Sorrell</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>1:11:22</u>	<u>25.74</u>
24.	Glenn Tryson	55	0:49:22	77.23	<u>77.</u>	<u>Karen Michalski</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>1:14:47</u>	<u>24.75</u>
25.	Kevin Durgin	20	0:49:37	76.24	<u>78.</u>	<u>Marylou White</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>1:17:01</u>	<u>23.76</u>
26.	Thomas Hathaway	19	0:49:37	75.25	<u>79.</u>	<u>Holly Alexandre</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>1:19:01</u>	<u>22.77</u>
<u>27.</u>	<u>Jean Desrosiers</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>0:50:18</u>	<u>74.26</u>	<u>80.</u>	<u>Meirak Werbel</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>1:19:01</u>	<u>21.78</u>
28.	Tom Parent	32	0:50:24	73.27	81.	David Werbel	38	1:20:05	20.79
29.	Dan Valdo	19	0:50:31	72.28	82.	George Alexandre	51	1:20:06	19.80
30.	Michael Buttrick	23	0:50:32	71.29	83.	Bill Glendon	63	1:21:22	18.81
31.	Dan Buttrick	28	0:50:40	70.30	84.	Konrad Karolczuk	56	1:21:23	17.82
32.	Pat Mcgrath	44	0:50:54	69.31	85.	Richard Davis	38	1:22:41	16.83
33.	Matthew Soroka	31	0:51:51	68.32	<u>86.</u>	<u>Jamie Williams</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>1:23:16</u>	<u>15.84</u>
34.	David Dyson	40	0:51:58	67.33	87.	Walt Kolodzinski	66	1:25:01	14.85
35.	Jessica Hageman	33	0:52:35	66.34	88.	Larry Peleggi	51	1:28:46	13.86
36.	Nico Scibelli	46	0:52:41	65.35	89.	Paul Hartwig	54	1:30:00	12.87
37.	Jim Martin	28	0:52:57	64.36	90.	Ray Lee	66	1:34:00	11.88
38.	Mike Lahey	57	0:52:58	63.37	91.	Greg Taylor	62	1:34:44	10.89
39.	Norm Sheppard	51	0:54:13	62.38	92.	Richard Busa	79	1:35:20	9.90
<u>40.</u>	<u>Holly Atkinson</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>0:54:14</u>	<u>61.39</u>	<u>93.</u>	<u>Karen Bradley</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>1:36:03</u>	<u>8.91</u>
41.	Howard Bassett	48	0:54:37	60.40	94.	Don Lacharerite	77	1:37:16	7.92
<u>42.</u>	<u>Sheryl Wheeler</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>0:54:58</u>	<u>59.41</u>	<u>95.</u>	<u>Betty Lacharerite</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>1:37:16</u>	<u>6.93</u>
43.	Steven Legnard	32	0:54:58	58.42	96.	Bill Milkiewicz	54	1:42:44	5.94
44.	Ed Alibozek Jr	69	0:55:32	57.43	<u>97.</u>	<u>Rebecca Armstrong</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>1:45:29</u>	<u>4.95</u>
45.	Rick Friedrich	35	0:55:39	56.44	<u>98.</u>	<u>Mary Vasquez-Slack</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>1:45:30</u>	<u>3.96</u>
46.	Pete Lipka	57	0:56:02	55.45	99.	Jeff Clark	62	1:46:00	2.97
47.	John Marran	36	0:56:08	54.46	<u>100.</u>	<u>Jan Kurtz</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>2:15:01</u>	<u>1.98</u>
48.	John Butler	42	0:56:35	53.47	101.	Wayne Kurtz	41	2:15:01	0.99
49.	Mike Lacharerite	51	0:57:03	52.48					
50.	Jan Rancatti	48	0:57:19	51.49					
51.	Martin Glendon	62	0:57:28	50.50					
52.	Scott Bradley	54	0:57:41	49.50					
53.	Renate Fatkulin	20	0:58:32	48.51					

All Photos, other than page 1, are courtesy of Beth and Brad Herder, from their Berkshiresports.org website. Thank them as much as possible for all they provide to our snowshoe series!

GREYLOCK COVERED BRIDGE 12.5 - MILE SNOWSHOE RACE

February 21, 2009

Greylock Glen

Adams, MA

#	NAME	AGE	TIME	POINTS
01.	Brian Rusiecki	30	2:00:14	100.00
02.	Ethan Nedeau	36	2:08:02	97.14
03.	Matt Cartier	33	2:17:32	94.29
04.	Peter Keeney	43	2:17:44	91.43
05.	Jay Kolodzinski	29	2:22:11	88.57
06.	Bob Dion	54	2:24:46	85.71
07.	Edward Alibozek	46	2:25:09	82.86
08.	Russ Hoyer	48	2:28:04	80.00
09.	Nico Scibelli	46	2:38:21	77.14
10.	Dan Valdo	19	2:40:16	74.29
11.	Kenny Clark	46	2:41:35	71.43
12.	Tom Parent	32	2:42:42	68.57
13.	Steven Legnard	32	2:43:32	65.71
14.	Kevin Durgin	20	2:45:47	62.86
15.	Renate Fatkulin	20	2:47:39	60.00
16.	Tim Rudin	38	2:53:46	57.14
17.	Richard Chipman	48	2:54:16	54.29
18.	Mike Lahey	57	2:58:12	51.43
19.	Sheryl Wheeler	46	2:59:25	48.57
20.	Pete Lipka	57	3:01:09	45.71
21.	Matthew Soroka	31	3:02:54	42.86
22.	Will Danecki	58	3:06:36	40.00
23.	Norm Sheppard	51	3:06:42	37.14
24.	Mike Lacharerite	51	3:17:30	34.29
25.	Denise Dion	50	3:19:19	31.43
26.	Bob Worsham	63	3:22:23	28.57
27.	Laurel Shortell	42	3:24:51	25.71
28.	Patty Duffy	40	3:26:32	22.86
29.	Laura Clark	61	3:39:10	20.00
30.	Darlene McCarthy	46	3:45:25	17.14
31.	Thomas Hathaway	19	4:01:40	14.29
32.	Meirak Werbel	37	4:01:51	11.43
33.	Holly Alexandre	37	4:01:52	8.57
34.	Konrad Karolczuk	56	4:23:34	5.71
35.	Paul Hartwig	54	5:15:00	2.86



Frank Gaval followed by Jody Lahey on Thunderbolt



Jeff Clark negotiates the Thunderbolt



I CAN'T BELIEVE I DID THE WHOLE THING: BOOTY CALL

On Saturday February 21st Paul Hartwig and Farmer Ed put on two snowshoe races, one a four-miler, the Hoxie Brook Race, and one a 12.5 miler, the Covered Bridge Race. If you did the long race you also automatically participated in the short race. Upon arrival it was overcast and cold. You know it's cold when registration is not in the Gazebo, but in Beth Herder's van. We stood outside the van while they sat inside taking names.

The Hoxie Brook race went from the Greylock Glen Gazebo out toward and up part of the Thunderbolt Trail, then to the camping shelter, looping around it, and back down to the Gazebo for the finish. The uphill climb was long and brutal in soft shifting snow. At one point along the Thunderbolt we encountered two snowboarders also making the climb carrying their boards. Do people actually snowboard on the Thunderbolt?

Those doing the long race continued through the Hoxie Brook finish line, across Gould Road through the Meadow to the single-track trail with the Covered Bridge, then up a steep trail to a forest road known as the Cheshire Harbor Trail. Denise Dion passed me before getting there. Trying to be funny, I told her that when I finished the race I was going to tell Bob (Dion) that once she had gotten into the woods she switched to Atlas snowshoes. I don't think she got my weird sense of humor.

Peter Malinowski was coming down this trail, and he said that he decided to turn around at the 5.5 mark and go back to the Gazebo. I wonder why? When you emerged onto the Cheshire Harbor Trail you were treated to a cooler of bottled water with ice chips, pretzels, and fig newtons. This point was labeled 5.5 miles. It felt like we had done 10 at that point. Pressing on up the Cheshire Harbor Trail I saw another mile marker coming up in the distance. I was thinking to myself, "That's got to be the 7 mile mark." Imagine my surprise when I saw that it was really the 6 mile mark. Quickly in my head I began thinking, "I still have left in the race the distance that I've already covered and more. Should I turn back before getting too far into this loop? Can I really do 12.5 miles today? Did that runner going back to the Gazebo know something I didn't? Will I become dangerously cold and be in trouble, later requiring a rescue involving a helicopter?"

Ignoring these thoughts I kept just putting one foot in front of the other, and came to the junction where the course turned left onto Old Adams Road. I recognized this road as part of the older Greylock trail race which leads out to the Jones Nose area. I started thinking that after having done all this uphill, at some point not too far ahead we will be looping back into downhill running. That is what kept me going out Old Adams Rd for what seemed an interminably long distance. A good distance into this part my left foot started feeling pain at the toes. Could it be that the water-proof booties that I had crammed into my shoes over my socks had gotten out of place? What was I thinking when I did this? I had also worn shoes that I hadn't worn for months. So this required stopping and taking off my left snowshoe and running shoe to remove this booty, re-arrange my sock smoothly, and putting everything back together (minus the booty) while my hands were freezing in the wind on the side of the mountain. (This makes two stupid things I have done with those water-proof booties.)

As I was starting to put everything back on, my two friends Laura Clark and Laurel Shortell passed me running together. Being nice people they asked if I needed anything; however, they did not have a snowmobile to take me back to the Glen. Once I got my equipment back together I jogged to catch up with them and ran (walked, slow-jogged) with them a little while. Funny that all of us were too fatigued to chat with each other at that point; we seemed to be in survival mode just waiting for the place that we would be going downhill again. Neither responded to my usually funny comments.

Finally, we arrived at the place where the race turned left onto a downhill trail known as the Redgate Trail. At that point Laurel made me go past her, and not wanting to pass then die, I tried to pick up the pace on the downhill. What a downhill it was! All you had to do was put your feet out in front of you and let gravity do what it does naturally (no, not make you fall on your face). This let me recover quite a bit; however, the further I went, the more fatigued my quads became from the downhill pounding. Still, I preferred this to any steep uphill running (walking for me). Also, now that my feet were cold, I couldn't feel the pain from the remaining right booty.

Surprise! When the Redgate Trail ended we turned left at the lower end of the Cheshire Harbor Trail. I had assumed that we would run relatively level from that point back around to the Glen, but nooooooo. They were going to make us climb uphill out of that low spot to which we had descended. So, back to work. Reaching a plateau that I recognized from last year's Greylock Trail race and this year's Greylock Glen snowshoe race, I thought, okay, here's where we will run level or slightly downhill back to the Glen. Then I saw the trail marker flags that curved us around to the left, continuing on up the Cheshire Harbor Trail. Oh my God! Well, there was nothing to do but continue on in the face of more uphill, so might as well get to it and get it over with. I just put my head down and kept walking fast and jogging where I could, and finally the most beautiful sight appeared in front of me, the cooler!

I knew at this point I had a long downhill stretch on single-track in which I could make some good time, and then gut it out on the level part at the bottom to the finish. I downed an icy bottle of water, checked behind me seeing no one coming, then took off. I subsequently learned that one long-race runner did not make the right turn here and embarked on yet another loop up the Cheshire Harbor Trail. He thought nothing of the fact that he had just passed the 10.5 mile mark at the cooler and now was seeing the 6 mile mark for the second time. I guess in school he learned the kind of math that makes you "feel good" about numbers, but that doesn't teach you to actually calculate anything with numbers or do any numerical reasoning like, "The next mile marker after 10.5 should be larger than 10.5, not smaller than 10.5." Where's Poncho (math teacher) when you need him?

Once hitting the flat trails my numb legs were on autopilot and my calves started wanting to cramp up with every step. I had to change my stride to fight this off. Never was I so happy to emerge into the meadow in the final approach to the finish line. In my normal paranoid fashion I kept looking over my shoulder for anyone coming up behind.

THE WHOLE THING (CONTINUED)

Okay, so I finished 26th out of 35 for the 12.5 mile race! However, here's the way I look at it. A hundred and one people ran the short race; only 35 continued running the long race. So I also finished ahead of the 66 people who stopped at the short race finish line. So I really finished 26th out of 101. Consistent with this reasoning, I also beat Ben Nephew, because he didn't run the race today. If you know anything about cognitive behavior therapy, that's what's known as a "thinking error." But it's my way of adjusting to being a 63-year old runner with tired legs.

Although there weren't a lot of people around at the Gazebo after I changed and went to eat, I had a great day in the woods of Greylock Mountain and got some fantastic training time on my quads from uphill and downhill pounding. The sun had come out by this time and it had warmed up significantly. Farmer Ed cooked me a couple of veggie burgers with his big ole smile, and I had two hot chocolates while standing by the fire. Where else can you have this much fun for only 8 dollars? Thanks Paul and Ed for a great day of fun.

Worshamer



Denise Dion showing how it's done on the Thunderbolt.

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LONGEST RUN OF MY LIFE

Although not completely recovered from the Tahoe trip, I thought it was in my best interests to run a half-marathon... on snowshoes. The race was designed so that all of the racers had the option to do the full-distance or be content with a shorter 4 mile race. At any rate, all of the racers began together, and whether or not you chose to further your pain, you could continue on for the remaining 9 miles up and around close to the summit of Mt. Greylock ~ the highest point in the state.

Early on, I was challenged by the nature of the race... I was not content settling in, and allowing slower runners to be out in front. From a longevity standpoint, it was in my best interests to remain patient, and allow the 4 milers to pass and continue onward and upward. This mindset only lasted for about 2 miles... then I sped along to catch up with the pack. I am not guilty of pushing the threshold; however, I did amp it up to an extent. When I chose to move along faster, I could see Tim Van Orden and Josh Merlis out in front. At this point, the racers were very visible as they charged up the legendary Thunderbolt Ski Trail. At the halfway point of the 4 mile race, I was in second place. I had moved up 15 spots in those two miles... And for this move, I would inevitably suffer. On the descent, I did lose a snowshoe cleat, and this would also make for a challenge later in the race, especially on the groomed sections.

Eventually I would finish second. When I stopped to lose my IPOD, and grab my fuel belt for the remaining 9 miles I was passed by 3 other half-marathon racers... two of which I would never see again. Mile 6 was my first real challenge in the race, ultimately, forcing me to walk. It was a long, gradual pitch, but it proved itself a challenge. I was four deep in the field of racers at this point... and I knew I was being chased. I looked over my shoulder and saw nobody... Luckily.

After drinking several ounces of water, and chokin' down a GU shot, I was back in action. We were all blessed with a mile and a half section of beautiful, powdery, downhill singletrack before what would become the most difficult mile I have ever run... or walked. On the descent, I did manage to pass Pete Keeney and fall, almost literally, into the 3rd spot. And then, mile 10. I am not sure what the race director had in mind when he (aka lucifer) had the racers gain an estimated 700 vertical in that one mile. Pete passed me, as I walked the climb.

Fortunately, at the summit there was a 'food barrel' and Pete opted to stop. I had my supply on my person. On the run, I swigged some H2O, and did another GU shot. I looked over my shoulder and Pete had yet to begin running again. He admitted to being really fatigued. The last two miles were all down hill... and without a cleat on my right snowshoe I was certain I would be pulling a groin... but I made it happen anyway without suffering from an injury. I would finish the half marathon in a time of 2 hours and 17 minutes, and in the third spot. I was told 38 other racers were a part of the grueling, self-punishment.

It was the longest run of my life... and certainly provided for great mental preparation for this year's Lake Placid IronMan competition. Hopefully, I will have regained composure before then...

Thanks for reading – Matt Cartier

THE GRANDFATHER OF ALL DOUBLEHEADERS PLUS ONE

Featuring Insights into Laura Clark's Magical Mystery Tour

Towards the end of any sports season, folks wake up and realize if they want to prove anything they had better get with the program. WMACers are no different. With just three Dion Series races remaining after the February 21-22nd weekend, something special was called for. Used to be a doubleheader was pretty special, but not any more. Now, apparently, only a tripleheader weekend could fill the ticket: Greylock 3.8 miler and Covered Bridge Half Marathon on the same day followed by Hallockville Orchard for Sunday dessert.

The scoreboard says it all. Over 100 runners towed the line up the Thunderbolt Championship Ski Run, the most ever for a Mass race except for Curly's, which consistently attracts a loyal contingent of high school runners and team supporters. Of that group, 35 went full circle, racking up extra points with the Covered Bridge Half. Amazingly, from that exclusive group, 12 overachievers returned the next day to tackle Hallockville Orchard. What is even more astounding is the simple fact that they were able to unfold their legs and emerge intact from yet another long car ride!

Jeff and I immediately knew that Greylock Saturday would be an extraordinary day. We arrived over an hour ahead and were shocked to discover that our anticipated prime parking spot had been claimed eons earlier and that the local snowplow was busy at work, trying its best to bury all those tourists huddled in their vehicles. Just as coast was clear, Bob Dion emerged from his Official Dion Snowshoe Van wielding his trusty shovel and proceeded to throw a pathway of snow back onto the road so he wouldn't have to spend the rest of the week repairing broken cleats.

Most of us left fairly benign conditions at home, only to discover that Lady Greylock was in the midst of a full-blown temper tantrum. Apparently, she was determined to make us work for our Thunderbolt assault. The mountain-wise who had thrown warmer clothes into their bags promptly added an extra layer. This was a tactically important for those of us anticipating a three hour plus marathon.

Despite the snow, Green was again the order of the day as runners approached the registration car bearing favorite race bibs and rusty pins. If they were lucky, their number had not already been claimed by someone else. Bob Dion neatly solved that problem by producing his first corral Boston number signed by Bill Rogers himself – a number which in fact carried him to 6th place flanked by much younger competitors.

As we huddled together at the start, trying to shield each other from the blowing snow, we surreptitiously assessed the competition. For there is a great deal of strategy involved. Those intent solely on the Thunderbolt section would be going out faster than those in it for the long haul. Jeff's goal was to head out early and get in extra strength training by stomping down the knee-high snow. Mine was to stick behind Bob Massaro and eleven year-old London Niles and let them pull me up the mountain. I almost succeed until Bob began passing more people than I thought would be wise given my long distance aspirations. I did enjoy listening to Bob mentoring London, encouraging him and describing the lay of the land. At

times, London would lag, but when he noticed Bob passing someone he perked up and tagged along. While I hate running down the usually muddy springtime Thunderbolt Trail, snow-covered it was a glorious, freewheeling ride. As I touched bottom, I remember thinking that it would be enough to end the day right then and there. But there were still miles to go before I slept...

Fortunately, I hooked up with Laurel Shortell and later Bob Worsham, who helped me through that desolate stretch of snowmobile terrain on Old Adams Road. If it weren't for them I know I would have walked most of it. I don't mind uphill, but I like trickier uphill; sameness tends to make my mind zone out. Once we hit the two mile downhill, though, I perked up and passed both Laurel and Patty Duffy. Eventually, they both overtook me but I knew I was a stronger downhill runner so I remained complacent, forgetting that I always get lost on Gould Trail. The worst moment for me was finally encountering the 11 mile marker and not the promised descent. Fortunately, that came a few moments later. I really did appreciate the mile markers since the half was a new experience for most of us.

As usual, I got lost somewhere on Gould Trail, sliding into my own private Magical Mystery Tour alternate universe. Gleefully, I passed all the previous places where I had gone astray, thinking that this time I had it made. I was always in sight of either a pink ribbon or a yellow arrow, yet when I looked down at the trail I noticed that all the footprints were headed in the opposite direction. Needless to say, this was slightly disconcerting. Still, I passed through the Covered Bridge as instructed and onto the decorated white memorial bridge. Puzzled, I retraced my steps till I noticed a yellow arrow firmly pointing the way I had just come. So I reversed direction, this time triumphantly noticing at least one pair of Dions headed in the same direction. Fortunately, I was too tired to realize they were probably mine! So I dutifully went back through both bridges and on to the finish just as if the previous episode had never taken place. And who knows, maybe I just dreamed it.

Before the race Edward had asked me if I thought 12.5 miles was close enough to the half marathon distance to satisfy folks. I thought back to all the 14 mile half marathon trail races I had done and figured that most of us already had some time in the bank. But despite my overflowing account, I was the only one who managed to turn in a true 13 miler, though every fault of my own. Somehow, with Hallockville Orchard on the horizon I could have lived without this distinction.

Hallockville, as usual, was snowy and blowy and the twelve of us who were tripleheading were having our doubts. We were easy to spot: we were taking naps in our cars and hobbling to the start. Again, there was a lot of assessment going on as perkier competitors seeded themselves accordingly. Normally, I don't do well on Hallockville's wide trails, but this time I just wanted to get done. I surprised myself, pushing hard and even passing a few people. Which makes me wonder if those committed day-to-day streakers might not be on to something after all. But I guess I'll never find out. Tomorrow I am sleeping in!

2009 DION SNOWSHOE SERIES

2009 DION SNOWSHOE SERIES

HALLOCKVILLE ORCHARD / 3.6 MILE SNOWSHOE RACE

February 22, 2009

Dubuque State Forest

Hawley, Massachusetts

PL	NAME	TIME	POINTS	
01.	Ben Nephew	33	0:24:57	100.00
02.	Tim Van Orden	40	0:25:02	98.08
03.	Josh Merlis	27	0:27:16	96.15
04.	Ken Clark	46	0:27:38	94.23
05.	Paul Bazanchuk	54	0:27:25	92.31
06.	Bob Dion	53	0:30:02	90.38
07.	Richard Teal	31	0:30:10	88.46
08.	John Kinnicutt	46	0:30:42	86.54
09.	Richard Chipman	48	0:31:25	84.62
10.	Glen Tryson	55	0:32:25	82.69
11.	Jacque Shiffer	44	0:33:12	80.77
12.	Paul Hartwig	52	0:33:42	78.85
13.	John Pelton	69	0:34:04	76.92
14.	Bob Woodworth	59	0:34:16	75.00
<u>15.</u>	<u>Jessica Hagemen</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>0:34:20</u>	<u>73.08</u>
16.	John Butler	42	0:34:25	71.15
17.	Patrick McGrath	43	0:34:33	69.23
18.	Mike Lahey	57	0:34:45	67.31
19.	Jan Rancatti	48	0:35:02	65.38
20.	Elizabeth Bianchi	41	0:35:10	63.46
21.	Holly Atkinson	39	0:35:22	61.54
22.	Sarah Brenner	29	0:36:00	59.62
23.	Peggy Piwonka	37	0:36:05	57.69
24.	Ed Alibozek Jr	69	0:36:18	55.77
<u>25.</u>	<u>Christin Desilets</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>0:36:23</u>	<u>53.85</u>
<u>26.</u>	<u>Kate Best</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>0:36:44</u>	<u>51.92</u>
27.	Scott Bradley	54	0:37:03	50.00
28.	Gary Bendetti	63	0:37:22	48.08
29.	Martin Glendon	63	0:37:32	46.15
30.	Tom Henry	54	0:37:57	44.23
31.	Andy Rome	54	0:38:35	42.31
32.	Jaime Nieves	32	0:38:45	40.38
33.	Natalie Stollmeyer	26	0:39:08	38.46
34.	Will Danecki	58	0:39:12	36.54
<u>35.</u>	<u>Laurel Shortell</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>0:39:28</u>	<u>34.62</u>
36.	Bob Massaro	65	0:40:04	32.69
37.	Tom McCrumm	63	0:40:58	30.77
<u>38.</u>	<u>Jodie Lahey</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>0:41:03</u>	<u>28.85</u>
<u>39.</u>	<u>Laura Clark</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>0:41:10</u>	<u>26.92</u>
40.	Denise Dion	50	0:41:16	25.00
41.	Chris Johnson	51	0:41:52	23.08
<u>42.</u>	<u>Ann Vaughn</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>0:44:17</u>	<u>21.15</u>
43.	Janet Tryson	55	0:48:14	19.23
44.	Dave Boles	62	0:48:21	17.31
45.	Bill Glendon	63	0:54:15	15.38
46.	Konrad Karolczuk	56	0:54:16	13.46
47.	Art Gulliver	70	0:54:54	11.54
48.	Al Schultz	63	1:01:20	9.62
49.	Jeff Clark	62	1:04:03	7.69
50.	Edward Alibozek	46	1:15:00	5.77
<u>51.</u>	<u>Karen Michalski</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>1:16:27</u>	<u>3.85</u>
52.	Peter Lipka	57	1:16:30	1.92

Paul Bazanchuk penalized himself 15 seconds for looping the orchard in the wrong direction. Very nice gesture to give up a spot. Thanks!



Richard Teal & Will Danecki Raced Greylock & Hallockville

A SNOWSHOE HALF MARATHON

Running a half marathon on the roads can be a difficult endeavor. It takes proper training and self discipline. Step it up to the next level to running a half marathon on trails and you have just upped the ante by far. Now you don't just have to worry about a hill here or there like on the roads but trails can bring you all kinds of obstacles and challenges including mud, rocks, roots, branches, razor sharp shale, bears, getting lost, and quite possibly a serious injury with blood and broken bones. Sound fun???? Of course, that's why we do it. So now we know why when you go from running a road half marathon to a trail half marathon, the amount of people usually downsizes by quite a large proportion. Most of the time the people that you encounter at a trail half marathon are a different breed of people. These people can be categorized into many different adjectives, some unique and some cheerful expletives. However, once you have done a both a road and trail half marathon, what is next?

Well thirty five men and women answered that question on February 21st 2009. For it was this day those people conquered the first snowshoe half marathon at the Mount Greylock State Reservation in Adams MA. Actually the course measured out to be 12.5 miles, but for those of you saying that that isn't a true half marathon, strap on some snowshoes and run that distance over the terrain we embarked on and then you can talk. Those 12.5 miles truly equal a half marathon in this snowshoers head. So yes, a snowshoe half marathon definitely takes top honors when it comes to the world of half marathons.

The alarm was set the night before for six am. My plan was to leave my house in Agawam at 6:45 and drive to my father's house in Florence with an arrival time of 7:15. That would give us 15 minutes lee-way time and then Bill Milkiewicz would pick us up at 7:30 and we would make the hour long drive to Greylock Glen. Getting to the Glen an hour early would give us all the time we needed to prep for the race. I was doing the half marathon, where my father, Bill, and my mother who would meet us there were doing the shorter 3.8 mile race. My morning plans changed quickly but nothing to devastating. That morning Sheila's alarm went off at 5:45 like it usually does and I heard it but didn't move since I hadn't heard mine go off yet. I rolled over and planned on getting another 10 minutes of rest, as I knew I would need it. Then next thing I know as I rolled over and opened my eyes I saw the big red numbers on the alarm clock say 6:41. My exact words were, "Oh Crap" as I jumped out of bed ever so quickly. It was then I realized that the alarm was set but the "on" bottom wasn't on, so it never went off. After quickly putting on my clothes, which I habitually put out the night before a race I was down the stairs and out the door in 5 minutes. So much for a nice breakfast at home. I luckily had prepared everything the night before and was able to basically roll over and out of bed in minutes and be on my way north, only after a kiss goodbye to my wife. That alarm error could have been treacherous as this was the race I had been waiting three months for. However, leaving myself 15 minutes lee-way time as I always do, I didn't need to speed to my father's. After the 30 minute drive up I-91, I arrived at his house with enough time to get the eggs from the chicken coop, drink a cup of coffee, and read the previous days paper, all before Bill would arrive.

Once Bill arrived, my father and I jumped in and the one thing I found funny is the second my father got in the car, Bill switched the radio to the Polka channel. I was amazed, like Bill knew if he didn't change it he would hear my father complain the entire ride. The drive was great as we shared many laughs and we even hit some snow showers and bad roads as we passed 8A over Windsor Mountain. Before getting to the Glen we again made the best pre-race stop at the eatery that we never eat at, McDonalds. Once that business was taken care of, we ventured up Gould Rd to one of my favorite spots in the state, Greylock Glen.

Driving down Gould Road we immediately saw the same friendly and familiar faces we always see at these races. The registration was occurring in Beth Herder's car since it was quite windy and the snow was blowing around the field where the Gazebo is. After registering, I got my race gear on as well as my bib number and did the shortest warm-up I have ever done before a race. Not only was that something new for me, but this was the first time ever in a snowshoe race I was going to carry my camel pack. My plan was to not wear it for the first 3.8 miles (loop 1) and when we came back to the gazebo, I would pick it up. (start of loop 2). However, after thinking about that and not knowing exactly what the temperature was I figured it might be better to wear it so the water could slush around and not freeze as quickly as it might just sitting under the gazebo. Not knowing how a half marathon would be on snowshoes I jammed that thing full. It contained 2 power bars, 3 hammer gels, and a sandwich bag full of pumpkin chocolate chip cookies I made the day before. I wasn't going to be caught un-prepared for this race, I knew this wasn't going to be the easiest course.

Earlier that week Ed put the course map online and knowing that mountain quite well from all the other snowshoe races, trail races, and hiking I have done there I could tell this would be a challenging race course. Race Directors Paul and Ed had us running up Hoxie Brook and the Thunderbolt to the Bellows Pipe Shelter only to turn around and come right back to the Gazebo. That would be the first 3.8 miles. 1.9 miles up and 1.9 miles down. Not bad, if that was as far as you were going. However, I knew that was only the beginning. After returning to the Gazebo you would then run along Pecks Brook, cross the covered bridge and run the single track trail to the Cheshire Harbor Trail. At this point instead of going downhill like we normally do we would go right, continue uphill towards Old Adams Rd. Run Old Adams Road till you reached the Red Gate Trail. This section would be snowmobile trail but it would also be all uphill. Not till you reached Red Gate trail would you be fortunate to have a long two mile descent. Having run Old Adams Road in the half marathon before, I knew it was a doozy of a hill. After you reached the bottom of the Red Gate Trail you would turn left on Cheshire Harbor Trail and run that puppy uphill for two miles until you reached the Pecks Brook Trail again where you would then run along the same trail you ran out and finish with a mile and a half of downhill. Well with that trail description I knew it wouldn't be easy so I prepared for the worst and hoped for the best.

At 9:25 that morning Paul Hartwig started giving out race instructions for everybody and at 9:30 the crowd of racers was

A SNOWSHOE HALF MARATHON (CONTINUED)

off. 100 people were doing the 3.8 mile race, the first loop of the longer course, while only 35 out of that 100, continued to run the entire half marathon. I started off slow because I didn't want to burn out early as I have bonked on much shorter courses than this one. Settling in to about 18th place as we started to make the climb up Thunderbolt I was feeling very good. Five guys were in front of me and they were both power walking and slowly running. I found a power walk was just as good as a slow run because no one was pulling away from anyone. As we were ascending, I was feeling energized so I decided to get ahead of the five guys by passing on the left. That meant I would have to go in unbroken snow, however, the snow was fluffy powder and was very easy to run through compared to the Sidehiller and Hoot Toot and Whistle snow conditions of past races.

After passing those guys, I could see my next nearest competitors, Ed A., Larry D., and Ken C. They were all quite a bit ahead of me and I knew I couldn't catch them on the uphill. I decided it wasn't that big a deal to catch them, even though I felt good, I still had a long ways to go. As I was approaching the Bellows Pipe Shelter the leaders were making their way downhill past me. They were flying and so was the snow kicking up from their snowshoes. When I finally saw the shelter is when Ed, Larry, and Ken passed me going back downhill. They were about a minute ahead of me. After rounding the shelter I saw a large pack of guys behind me and knew I would have to let it loose on the downhill so no one would catch me.

Now let me tell you, running down Thunderbolt on snowshoes is a blast!!! The powdery snow made it ideal for an all out let yourself go nuts feeling. I was only at mile 2 of 12.5, and I seemed to forget about the bonking part I was so worried earlier because this was one of those rare occasions where you just want to have fun. So I did and ran down Thunderbolt in about 7 minutes. Nearing the bottom I did catch Ken but couldn't see Ed or Larry. After turning off the Hoxie trail, back onto the snowmobile trail, I ran the next ½ mile to the Gazebo very comfortably. Once there I grabbed a power bar that was offered and continued the trek onto the other side of Gould Road and the much longer course. I was also told that 5 people were ahead of me that had decided to run the half.

Once I left the Gazebo I knew that the worst was not over and that the next hour plus would be the deciding factor on how I would do. I slowly munched on the power bar I grabbed, which was frozen. It took me the next 4 miles to consume it because I had to stick it in my glove, use the sweat coming off my hand to warm it up so I could break off a piece to eat. Miles 4 to 8 went by pretty good though. Besides trying to eat the power bar and sip on some water, I caught up to Ed at about mile 5 and we ran the entire section of Old Adams Road together. We chatted the whole time which really helped the time fly by. When we were nearing the Red Gate Trail, I started really feeling good and pulled away from him. Upon hitting the Red Gate trail, a trail I had never been on before, I could see that it was completely unbroken except for 4 other snowshoe tracks. It had about 4-6 inches of nice fluffy snow on it and with those conditions and feeling as well as I did, I knew it was time to fly and maybe catch the next person in front of me, whoever, and however far ahead they might be.

Running down the Red Gate was awesome!! So far in one race, we had two amazing downhill sections to fly on. I was going so fast at some points I nearly hit my head on some over hanging branches. I also was kicking snow up from my snowshoes that flew in front of my head and directly over the top of me. This Red Gate trail section was approximately two miles long and my mile 8-9 split was my fastest, 7:10. After turning off Red Gate, we rejoined the Cheshire Harbor and I knew this would be a relentless uphill climb. It was also at this point I was able to glance back over the brook and see the next snowshoer behind me. I knew it wasn't Ed by the clothing, and also not Ken because he always wears yellow, so I guessed it may be Bob Dion. This got me moving a little faster, even though they were a ways behind me because I saw them across the gully.

However it didn't get me moving fast enough, not only was this my slowest mile, 16:25, and I kept having problems with my right snowshoe cleat balling up full of snow. That occurred because the only water on the course, which was near the bottom of the Red Gate Trail, just happened to be right where I positioned my foot. 12 and a half miles and with only 25 feet of water on the course, you guessed it, I stepped in it. So not only was the climb tough on Cheshire Harbor but every 100 feet I had to bang my right snowshoe against a tree to loosen up the ball of snow that had formed underneath. It was also on this section I was feeling a tad lonely. It would have been nice to have someone to chat with while making the long ascent, as it had been earlier in the race, but this time it wasn't happening. Every now and then I gazed back to see if I could see Bob, but every time, nothing. After hitting mile 11 on the Cheshire Harbor I could see the cooler that was placed on the course. The cooler would be the sign I was looking for, that the rest is all downhill. For aid, the cooler was placed at the location where you would pass it twice. For the return trip, it meant almost home and all downhill. The remaining mile and a half took me 14 minutes. I felt surprisingly awesome as I didn't expect to feel as good as I was feeling.

I crossed the finish line in 2:22:13. I was psyched. I went into the race with no expectations except to finish and not bonk out in the middle of a forest. I hadn't placed any time constraints on myself which made my finish time feel all the better. I finished 5th overall and loved hearing the cheers from my father and friends at the finish. I then quickly grabbed two hot dogs and changed up quick, as my clothes were soaking wet full of sweat. As I devoured the hot dogs I realized I didn't even dip into my pack of food reserves. I felt better in this snowshoe half marathon than I have felt in some road or trail half marathons. Today's race was all about pacing one's self. I ran a comfortable pace and it showed by how I felt after and my time. I must congratulate everyone who ran the half marathon, a job well done!!! It was a challenging course and the race directors and volunteers did an excellent job putting this race on!!! Maybe next year we can have a full marathon! I must also say that this day was a day for many personal accomplishments! Everyone who raced did their best and should be proud of themselves!! I just hope everyone celebrated when they got home!!

Jay Kolodzinski

WMAC

2009 DION SNOWSHOE SERIES

WMAC

12th ANNUAL HAWLEY KILN "NOTCH" 4.6 MILE SNOWSHOE RACE**February 28, 2009****Dubuque State Forest****Hawley, Massachusetts**

PL	NAME		TIME	POINTS	PL	NAME		TIME	POINTS
01.	Dave Dunham	44	0:38:32	100.00	54.	Jacque Lemioux	42	1:08:20	27.40
02.	Matt Cartier	33	0:39:56	98.63	55.	Jamie Howard	43	1:09:23	26.03
03.	Tim Van Orden	40	0:41:20	97.26	56.	Mary Lou White	53	1:12:02	24.66
04.	Tim Mahoney	29	0:42:18	95.89	57.	Stephen Obermayer	47	1:12:14	23.29
05.	Peter Lagoy	49	0:43:05	94.52	58.	Ken Fairman	65	1:12:30	21.92
06.	Steve Wolfe	44	0:43:32	93.15	59.	Michael Maguire	52	1:17:55	20.55
07.	Brian Northan	34	0:44:12	91.78	60.	Art Gulliver	70	1:18:27	19.18
08.	Larry Dragon	48	0:44:56	90.41	61.	Kathleen Tersigni	38	1:20:10	17.81
09.	Ken Clark	46	0:45:40	89.04	62.	Ray Lee	67	1:23:30	16.44
10.	Amy Lane	29	0:46:48	87.67	63.	Walt Kolodzinski	66	1:23:41	15.07
11.	Richard Teal	31	0:47:09	86.30	64.	Sheila Kolodzinski	27	1:23:42	13.70
12.	Bob Dion	53	0:47:48	84.93	65.	Bill Glendon	63	1:24:20	12.33
13.	Erik Wight	49	0:47:58	83.56	66.	Konrad Karolczuk	56	1:24:21	10.96
14.	Jay Kolodzinski	29	0:49:42	82.19	67.	Richard White	53	1:30:25	9.59
15.	Peter Malinowski	54	0:50:14	80.82	68.	Juicebox Cox	16	1:31:20	8.22
16.	Jay Curry	37	0:50:28	79.45	69.	Taylor Dwyer	17	1:31:45	6.85
17.	Richard Chipman	48	0:50:40	78.08	70.	Jessica Lemioux	17	1:37:39	5.48
18.	Chelynn Tetreault	33	0:50:46	76.71	71.	Ashley Bryant	18	1:37:40	4.11
19.	Glen Tryson	55	0:50:50	75.34	72.	Jeff Clark	62	1:41:27	2.74
20.	Pat McGrath	43	0:51:53	73.97	73.	Bill Milkiewicz	54	1:47:52	1.37
21.	Paul Hartwig	52	0:53:24	72.60	74.	Beth Herder	50	sweep	1.00
22.	Mike Lahey	57	0:53:41	71.23	75.	Richard Busa	79	sweep	1.00
23.	Steven Legbard	32	0:53:50	69.86	76.	Richard Godin	53	sweep	1.00
24.	Jessica Hageman	33	0:55:26	68.49	77.	Ed Alibozek Jr	69	sweep	1.00
25.	Bob Woodworth	59	0:55:28	67.12					
26.	Holly Atkinson	39	0:55:42	65.75					
27.	Bill Morse	57	0:55:59	64.38					
28.	Peter Lipka	57	0:56:51	63.01					
29.	Elizabeth Bianchi	41	0:57:05	61.64					
30.	Bob Worsham	63	0:57:26	60.27					
31.	Will Danecki	58	0:57:29	58.90					
32.	Jan Rancatti	48	0:58:04	57.53					
33.	Martin Glendon	62	0:59:16	56.16					
34.	Frank McDonald	57	0:59:40	54.79					
35.	Laurel Shortell	42	1:00:09	53.42					
36.	Gery Benedetti	63	1:00:50	52.05					
37.	Denise Dion	50	1:01:18	50.68					
38.	Jaime Nieves	32	1:01:40	49.32					
39.	Karl Molitoris	53	1:01:46	47.95					
40.	Laura Clark	61	1:02:30	46.58					
41.	Ernie Alleva	57	1:02:34	45.21					
42.	Jeff Hattem	57	1:02:50	43.84					
43.	Bruce Marvonek	55	1:02:55	42.47					
44.	London Niles	11	1:03:14	41.10					
45.	Bob Massaro	65	1:03:15	39.73					
46.	Darlene McCarthy	46	1:03:34	38.36					
47.	John Pelton	69	1:04:28	36.99					
48.	Jodie Lahey	30	1:05:32	35.62					
49.	Dave Boles	62	1:05:52	34.25					
50.	Dave McBournie	50	1:06:09	32.88					
51.	Kathy Fulani	60	1:06:33	31.51					
52.	Chris Johnson	51	1:07:30	30.14					
53.	Brad Herder	51	1:07:37	28.77					



Dave Dunham coming out of the single track for the final blast to 1st

MAPLE SUGAR DAYS AND FROSTY NIGHTS AHEAD

After five sets of weekend doubleheaders, WMACers were finally ready for some spring relaxation with only Hawley Kiln scheduled to usher in the month of March. But to ease the transition for folks accustomed to climbing into their cars and heading to yet another destination, this single day was a two-parter, featuring a short drive to a sit-down celebration in a heated restaurant. Considerably easier to take, yet one that nevertheless did demand the customary stiff-legged, shambling gait associated with the very infirm or with those attempting to unfold race-weary legs after yet another car ride..

The first weekend in March signals a subtle sea-change from serious point accumulation to a relaxed attitude worthy of the spring snow. Traditionally, this is the weekend that Tom McCrumm, owner of the South Face Farm Sugarhouse, invites us to cap our race with a visit to his restaurant to enjoy pancakes, waffles French toast and corn fritters topped off with *justmade* maple syrup. His business (not Tom) has been in operation for 150 years and some of the more impressive maples are at least that old. Tom first met Edward Alibozek when Edward was scouting the area on his snowshoes and has since become a fixture at our races, spending hours mapping our Hawley excursions.

This year, after the area was devastated by the ice storm of the century, many club members, spearheaded by Martin Glendon and Tom McCrumm, spent countless hours clearing trails so we could enjoy this day and Tom could produce his maple syrup. This hundred year storm ignored Robert Frost's "swinger of birches" and instead of merely arching the snow-white beauties, ruthless snapped them in half. Pines and maples became stunted, pencil-sharpened sentinels, looking as if a family of giants had been roaming the woods in search of after-dinner toothpicks. Short of being stuck in a house during a lashing hurricane or a roaring tornado, I can imagine few things worse than cowering in those isolated homesteads as limbs gunshot to the ground.

Jeff and I got an advance tour of this humbled forest as we arrived early, claimed #1 and #2 invitations to the Sugarhouse and then decided upon the optional porta pottie tour. We started out speedily and confidently but were soon covered by the Ashfield dirt road, a dreadful combination of slushy ice and emerging mud. Wondering how anyone could function there on a daily basis, we found ourselves checking driveways for pick up trucks and SUVs and feeling overwhelming pity for the local school bus driver. On our initial journey to the Hawley Firehouse we were laughing at the fact that that the Hawley Road pathway was a designated state highway. Now we discovered why: the alternative was so much worse! On the trek to the Sugarhouse after the race we encountered a huge monster plow trying to impact the ice formations on the side of the road. I bet the driver was surprised to see a veritable wedding party procession of cars!

Like Greylock, the Hawley Firehouse Parking Lot is normally the coldest place on earth, but today it was fairly mild and if you squinted into the sun, you could almost see the male robins in flight formation, preparing the way for their springtime mates. While the ice cube cover on the snowmobile trail bore witness to warm days and frosty nights, there was still plenty of snow

left as anyone who attempted to pass on the single track can attest to. This has always been my problem, as I am not a speedy runner but do better on the technical stuff. So everyone blows by me on the wide trail and I get frustrated on the narrow passageways when I want to advance to the head of the conga line. Although Jim Carlson counsels me to bide my time, it is only so long before I ignore his advice echoing in my head and get bogged down in knee-deep snow. Oh well. Perhaps someday I'll learn.

This time I fared slightly better than usual. London Niles was just ahead of me and because of his slight frame, he was able to sneak handily by. All I had to do was follow in his wake. When we left Bob Massaro slightly behind, I found myself in the role of mentor, trying to describe what lay ahead. At least this time I didn't get lost as the turns toward the end of the route were punctuated by several of our Wounded in Action.

Rich Busa and his friend Richard Godin were suffering from the normal ankle/leg complaints, but Old Farmer Ed outdid himself with a truly unique injury. Seems he was herding the female cows back into the barn and one stubborn lady decided she preferred the décor in her neighbor's stall and proceeded to make herself at home. This caused a chain reaction of misplaced and disgruntled cows. In an attempt to set things right, Farmer Ed shooed out the instigator, only to be repaid as 700+ pounds of irate beef come crashing down on his foot. Ouch!

Contrary to January expectations, we were once again able to enjoy the Hawley trails and our maple sugar reward. According to Karl Moltoris' crash course in biology, however, we are not out of the woods yet. This summer will be a crucial time for the damaged trees as they strive to put out new shoots to replace the leafy canopy that was blown away. Remember your classroom sketches of the photosynthesis process? Those trees unable to produce the necessary nutrients will be prey to the next windstorm. As the seasons shift, look for Martin Glendon to organize some trail blazing parties as he readies the Savoy course for our August rendezvous. And remember Farmer Ed when you vote for the 2009 Barnyard Awards!

laura clark



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TEN YEARS SINCE MY FIRST SNOWSHOE RACE, WHICH WAS AT HAWLEY ('99)

I've been getting mentally prepared for Hawley for a few weeks now. I feel like I'm finally starting to round into shape. Back in August when I stress-fractured my sacrum I figured it would be April (at best) before I was back in pre-injury shape. I'm not quite there but I feel like I'm ahead of schedule.

I picked up Dan Verington at 6 AM and we head West. Dan was tagging along as I was going to be his transport and housing at the US 50KM road championships that would be held on Long Island on Sunday. We got to the Hawley fire department right on schedule and were surprised to see TiVO already in the parking lot. He usually shows up late and seems to do very little warm-up. He also drips of positive vibes. Dan and I hoofed it to the Kiln. Word is that there may be some mystical properties to the Kiln and I could use all the help I can get.

Dan joined me and Tim Mahoney for a three mile road run warm-up. It was a bit chilly and windy and I felt like crap on the way back as Tim and Dan buried me on the uphill. I was doing a lot of mental imagery of the course and I had read over Ed's course description a number of times. If not physically ready I was mentally in the game.

I changed into racing gear, put on my snowshoes and headed out for another mile. The snowmobile trail was firm (even a bit icy) and seemed to be pretty fast going. I also heard that the single track might be tough with post-holing being a problem. That was fine with me, slower and tougher means better for me. I figured my best bet was to hammer the first .7 on the snowmobile trail and get the lead by the single-track. I haven't had a great start this year (my best start was Northfield) and seem to get left a bit flat footed at the beginning of the race. I did a couple of strides and headed to the line.

Ed gave us some final instructions and the field of about 75 was off. I put it on the line from the start. I was hurting within the first 100m and tried to keep the pressure on. The first .7 has a bit of climb and I was huffing and puffing heading up the little rise. I could see TiVO off to my left and knew by sound that Tim Mahoney and Matt Cartier were right behind me. I pushed really hard when I saw we were coming up on the turn and hit the single-track in first.

TiVO was a step behind and Matt was behind him. Tim took a spill right away as he post-holed. I was doing pretty good with staying on top of the snow but it was a bit rough as you never knew which footfall would land you 12" deeper than the last one. I was a little worried about crashing through on a downhill and having my momentum break a leg or tear a knee. I also could hear that the footfalls behind me were falling back, so I threw caution to the wind and hammered the downhill.

I love the section of the race from 1m to 2m which is twisty and turny and has a fair amount of run-able downhill. Ed had also put up markers every half-mile which is great as you get some feedback as you move along. My knowledge of the course was also helpful as I knew the topography pretty well. Just before 2 miles I exited the woods and hit snowmobile trail for about 50m then a sharp left brought me back into the woods. I glanced back but didn't see anyone. That didn't cause me to ease up, just the opposite.... I tried to work harder.

The next mile plus was a bear. It seemed like every fourth step was a post-hole and I kept coming to a complete stop to extract my leg and get going again. Each time I did that I imagined that the chasers were closing in. I didn't panic but I was worried. The next section on the snowmobile trail would have been fast (the footing was) but there is a fair amount of climb. There was also a good long straight stretch where I glanced back to see if anyone was close. I didn't see anyone and pushed harder. I didn't want anyone catching sight of me and then reeling me in.

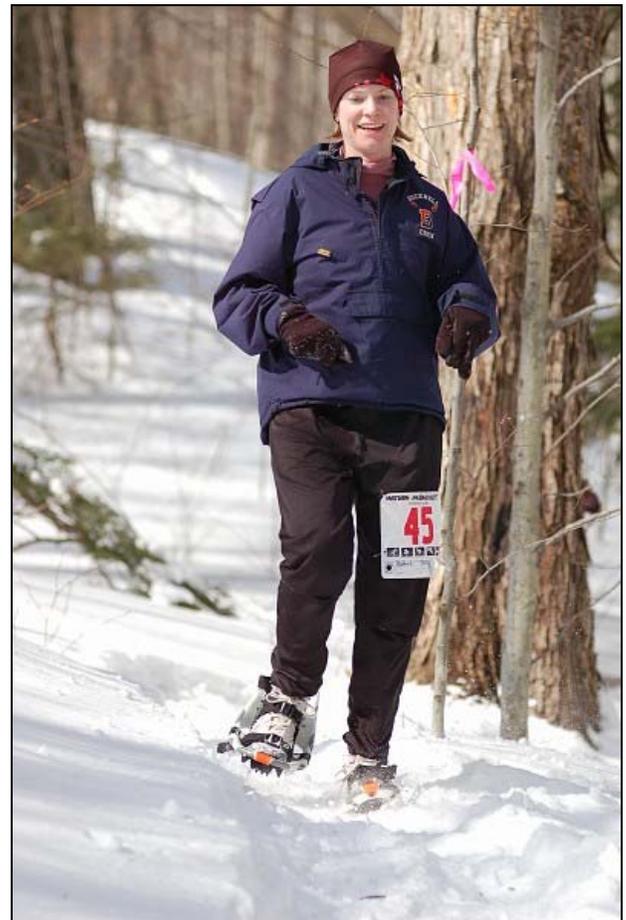
The last stretch of single-track wasn't bad, the footing was pretty good but it was a fairly tough climb. I just kept thinking "get to 3.9 then it is all downhill". I got to the top and turned on the snowmobile trail. I didn't ease up, I really wanted to make sure I had this one.

I was surprised and happy to get the win by a little over a minute with Matt taking second and TiVO third and Tim rounding out the top four.

Dan and I headed out for a quick warm-down and cheered on the racers coming in. I saw Jay Kolodzinski had a broken shoe and had run in the last 2.6 mile with only one shoe. He must have post-holed like mad!

It has been ten years since my first snowshoe race which was at Hawley and it is still as much fun as the first time out!

Dave Dunham



Darlene Buttrick is enjoying a solid season on snowshoes.

SNOWSHOE RACING AT SIXTY

Once again, I am doing something that I never thought I would do. Thanks to my son Jay Kolodzinski, I find myself not only participating in snowshoe races but also doing my daily runs on snowshoes. Jay lent me his old snowshoes in the beginning of January and kept encouraging me to try a few races. After a few weeks of practicing and getting used to a different kind of run, I decided to try the Greylock Glen 3.9 mile snowshoe race on January 17, 2009. It was mighty cold as Bob Masaro, Jay and I ventured to Adams, MA for a challenging race.

As a runner, I always train in the winter so being outside in the cold is not new. What is new, however, is running on snowshoes. Now all of my winter running and training that had been on the roads has turned into running on snowshoes. Fortunately, I have a very big back yard and I even have my own forest. There is plenty of up and down and the woods are great for creating trails. I have only to go out back to get all the training I need for this new winter sport. I am hoping though that my snowshoe training will do something for my road racing times once I hit the road again in March and April.

Normal training takes about one hour. First I warm up on a pretty well broken trail with a little bit of hill work. One complete loop out back is almost ½ mile and I do that three to six times trying to make the time faster with each loop. Then I go into the woods and either go over already made trails or try making new ones. Making new trails is great for endurance as it requires more energy and push.

The Hoot, Toot and Whistle Snowshoe Race in Readsboro, VT, on January 24, 2009, was a great lesson in how a flat course can turn out to be very difficult due to the type of snow that has fallen. Jay kept assuring me that the course would be flat. I associated a flat course with a faster time but that was not the case. The flat course was hard and once again proved how important training can be. We were fortunate to have Bob at the wheel as the driving was a bit tricky on those secondary roads to Readsboro, VT. I could not believe how far out we were!

My training prepared me well for Northfield Mountain on January 31, 2009. Two miles of straight uphill would ordinarily be very difficult in a road race; however, I was ready for this. Those downhills can be just as challenging as those uphill but with greater risk of falling. Luckily, I did not fall.

It looks as though I will be investing in a pair of new snowshoes at some point. Jay's old ones are really taped but have held up exceedingly well for me. I must inspect them each time I go out just to make sure that something is not going to let go.

Since I entered a new age category last August, I feel especially challenged and even more so as I attempt to do snowshoe races. Road racing has been a huge part of my life for almost twenty-two years now. Although I have moved from the middle of the pack to the back, I still enjoy the challenge. While always hoping to get faster, maybe this new winter sport will give me a little more push. Those of us who

run know how important it is to feel well and keep fit. As we grow older, things begin to happen to our bodies and we really do become more responsible for our own health. We must strive for good health because it is the key. We who have it are truly blessed.

Kathy Furlani



Kathy Furlani flying down the Thunderbolt Ski Trail!



Sheryl Wheeler 8-miles before winning the Half Marathon.

BRAD HERDER ASK... WHO'S YOUR MUDDER?

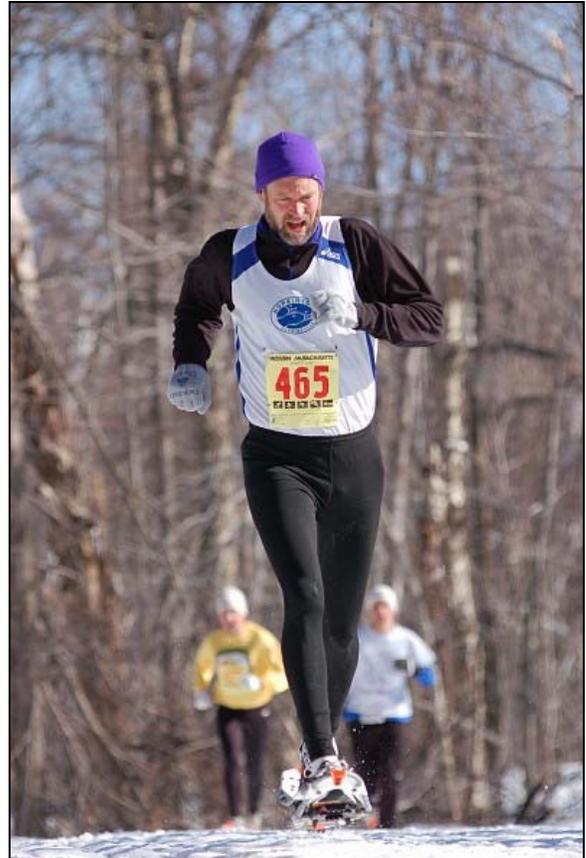
I did a half-dozen races this year and conditions ranged from superfast hard packed snow to very slow deep sugar-like snow with crust on the edges. My best races, with the exception of Hoot Toot and Whistle where I ran in Jessica Hageman's footprints the entire way, were on fast courses. Hawley Kiln was the worst for me. I was really struggling with the narrow trail which almost necessitated running with one foot directly in front of the other or I'd post-hole off the side. Part way through the race, I was running with Chris Johnson and we were commiserating on how these conditions were hampering us more than the lighter runners. Then, after the race, I was talking with Laurel Shortell and she said she didn't know what to make of the wide variation there is in the results from week to week either, where one week she'd beat me and the next we'd reverse.

So, that got me to thinking... There's a term in horse racing called a "mudder". A mudder is a racehorse that runs well on a muddy track. Who are the mudders on the snowshoe circuit? I asked Ed Alibozek to send me the complete results (just the points) for all the races this year. Due to the way points are calculated, it's a perfect indication of how well you ran from week to week relative to others. I picked the slow condition races: Hoot Toot and Whistle, Northfield, Hawley Kiln and Sidehillier (as I understand) and the fast condition ones: Woodford, Turner, Greylock, Curly's, Moody, W-Fest, Orchard, Camp Saratoga. I then calculated your average points at slow condition races and compared them to your average at the fast ones and came up with some kind of indication of which people are the "mudders"!

And... drum roll please... here are the cold powdery facts... out of the 66 people who did at least one fast and one slow race, our top 10 mudders are:

1. Laura Clark
2. Denise Dion
3. London Niles
4. Peter Lagoy
5. Jessica Hageman
6. Darlene McCarthy
7. Richard Teal
8. Bob Worsham
9. Jodie Lahey
10. Chris Johnson

On "fast" courses, Laura averaged 35 points, but on miserable courses, Laura averaged a whopping 53 points! The real surprise though is #10. Yes, the man who was complaining about the bad conditions is one of those who really get going when the going gets tough. In case you're wondering, I truly am not a mudder (#61), but Laurel isn't really either, but she's much better than me coming in at #42 on the list.



Jessica Hageman and Peter Lagoy, top 5 "Mudders" during the 2009 WMAC DION Snowshoe Series.