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November 19, 1994

The Cumberland Valley Athletic Club

Proudly Presents

The 32st Annual John F. Kennedy 50 Mile

America's Oldest Ultramarathon Since 1963

The Tradition Continues



March 30, 1974 — The lead pack passes through Boonsboro. Brutal weather (freezing rain and temperatures that never climbed out of the 30's) would allow only 225 of the 1,355 starters to finish this day. Amongst the leaders are pictured (from right to left) 1972 Champ Park Barner, 1976 Winner Pat Gill, the legendary Max White—the 1973 & '74 victor who's 5:55:30 is still number two on the All-time JFK 50 list—and Bill Jackson (CVAC Jacket) who's 7:07:59 50-and-over record has stood since 1977.

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THE CUMBERLAND VALLEY ATHLETIC CLUB
PROUDLY PRESENTS:

THE 32ND ANNUAL JOHN F. KENNEDY 50 MILE

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AS WELL AS ALL THE MANY UNSELFISH PRIVATE CITIZENS WHO
VOLUNTEER THEIR TIME YEAR AFTER YEAR TO MAKE THE GREAT
TRADITION OF "AMERICA'S OLDEST ULTRAMARATHON" POSSIBLE

"AVERAGE JOE" MAKES THE JFK A SPECIAL ANNUAL

WILLIAMSPORT--Standing in the dark and cold last Saturday evening at the 31st Annual JFK 50 Mile Ultramarathon, I had the pleasure to witness the amazing feats of your basic "Average Joe's" (and Jolina's) covering their final steps to the finish line of the traditional local endurance contest.

Traveling 50.2 miles of difficult terrain on foot in a 14 hour time limit is something less than .1 of 1% of the human population will ever accomplish. You'd expect the profile of these elite human beings to in the very-least include youth, "oodles" of God-Given physical abilities as well as the assistance of the latest technological innovations that have been applied to sports performance footwear.

Logically, that's what you'd expect. But what you get in reality are just ordinary folks who, for whatever their particular reason may be, accept the offered annual challenge and try to do something that has to be considered extraordinary by normal human standards.

There are the old, but don't be fooled by the gray, because these individuals are living proof of what the aging human body is actually capable of. Then there are the physiques, frames less than statuesque that you'd more often than not expect to find in the bleachers of an athletic gathering instead of in the arena itself. And the footwear of choice on some isn't exactly the what I'd describe as spaceage, that is unless you consider your basic Converse "Chucks" the latest in high-tech.

For sure they do not exactly fit the image that would form in most peoples minds if asked to imagine the type of human species members capable of traversing nearly double the standard marathon distance in a period of time around or just over half-a-day.

What makes these "Ordinary, Average Guys" (and Gals) unique is something that is undetectable to the eye. My theory is that it comes from in their souls, something from deep inside that makes the "impossible" possible. Something that makes the ridiculous necessary. Something that makes the challenge created by a 50 mile foot race too irresistible to ignore.

Whatever these individuals have as their motives for returning to the starting line in Boonsboro on the morning of the third Saturday in November each year is probably as varied as the colors of the rainbow. But as the annual JFK day progresses and eventually turns to night those still in search of Mecca (actually Springfield M.S. in Williamsport) the motivating theme appears to become more central, something along the lines of..."Because I must".

Most will accomplish their day's goal (this year 89% of the 373 starters -hailing from 27 different states, Washington, D.C. as well as Canada- finished within the 14 hour required time limit). Many will answer questions of themselves that the average person will never dare ask.

But why do they continue year after year to do it? The competition, the challenge, a love of the outdoors and simply moving through it? For some yes, but for others we will never truly know. Maybe we aren't capable of understanding it in the first place and in a way it's probably better left unknown.

Whatever the reasoning for this flocking to the area of these annual JFK'ers I hope they continue the yearly migration. For in a society where madness, mayhem and random violence are unfortunately almost daily occurrences it's refreshing at least one day a year to see on the front page news, a large mob of people "running wild" through our County's streets with feet -not bullets or bricks- a flyin' and our local men in blue on hand to control traffic instead of making arrests.

--Written by Mike Spinnler 11/23/93 (Reprinted by permission of the Herald-Mail Company)

JFK 50 MILE RECORDS

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|------------------------|---------|
| JFK 50 MILE RECORD: | 5:53:05 | Michael Spinnler | 1982 |
| JFK 50 MILE WOMEN'S RECORD: | 6:50:56 | Teri Gerber | 1984 |
| HIGH SCHOOL RECORD: | 6:16:25 | Karsten Schulz | 1977 |
| AGE 70 & OVER RECORD: | 10:22:21 | Bob Boal (70) | 1982 |
| AGE 60 & OVER RECORD: | 8:18:42 | Roland Anspach (65) | 1991 |
| AGE 60 & OVER WOMEN'S RECORD: | 11:50:03 | Burnis Hicks (62) | 1991 |
| AGE 50 & OVER RECORD: | 7:07:59 | Bill Jackson (50) | 1977 |
| AGE 50 & OVER WOMEN'S RECORD: | 8:54:53 | Pat Botts (50) | 1990 |
| AGE 40 & OVER RECORD: | 6:16:39 | David Horton (40) | 1990 |
| AGE 40 & OVER WOMEN'S RECORD: | 7:41:13 | Sue Medaglia (44) | 1979 |
| AGE 15 & UNDER RECORD: | 7:46:54 | Brad Vaughn (15) | 1975 |
| AGE 15 & UNDER WOMEN'S RECORD: | 9:49:58 | Valerie Hardin (11) | 1973 |
| ELDEST FINISHER: | AGE 77 | Carl Llewellyn | 1992 |
| MOST FINISHES: | 25 | Mike Adams & Kim Byron | |
| MOST FINISHES BY WOMAN: | 15 | Carolyn Showalter | |
| LONGEST FINISHER STREAK: | 24 | Cal Mahaney | 1970-93 |
| LONGEST WOMAN'S FINISHER STREAK: | 12 | Carolyn Showalter | 1982-93 |
| MOST VICTORIES | 5 | James Ebberts | |
| MOST WOMEN'S VICTORIES: | 6 | Donna Aycoth | |
| WASHINGTON COUNTY RECORD: | 5:53:05 | Michael Spinnler | 1982 |
| WASHINGTON COUNTY WOMEN'S RECORD: | 7:08:29 | Laura Nelson | 1992 |
| FREDERICK COUNTY RECORD: | 6:49:51 | David Lieb | 1993 |
| FREDERICK COUNTY WOMEN'S RECORD: | 9:46:06 | Barry Salisbury | 1990 |
| CANADIAN RECORD: | 6:48:04 | Chris Kelk | 1989 |
| CANADIAN WOMAN'S RECORD: | 7:51:53 | Ashley Evans | 1992 |

