

NOVA Newsletter



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Running In East Asia by Grant Pettrie

As we begin summer, it seemed like a good time to write an article on the winter/spring running season in Korea. Actually, Maria (la Presidente), harassed me for an article and I agreed since this allows me to easily communicate with a bunch of running friends.

Since many of you are new to NOVA, let me introduce myself. I'm NOVA's most distant member (yes, I still pay my dues). I live and run in Seoul, Korea where I work for the U.S. government. I've been here about 10 months and have run here almost every day. Running in a city of 10 million is always a challenge, but particularly where

there are few public parks or quiet streets as in Seoul. Holding races is even more difficult. I have read with interest the debate between Washington D.C. churches and the running community about where races should be conducted. Here the same debate is taking place. Seoul has few areas that are not heavily urbanized, so running venues are few. While many of us complain about Hains Point (the site of the dreaded MCM wall), in Seoul we would love a place that nice.

Back to the races. In mid-winter, I planned several 1/2 marathons. My plan was to reduce my times progressively. I didn't plan on the



weather factor very well. We had the coldest, snowiest, and iciest winter in 20 years. One race had ice 2 inches thick on the course, another held in mid-spring had 80 degree weather. Needless to say, my times increased not decreased. I ran a marathon in March that ran through most (Continued on page 2)

TRIATHLONS: Three Times the Running Fun! by Steve Teslik



Well fellow NOVA'ers (or my 'little Bambinis' as Maria, our beloved 'prez' would say), I've been asked to convey some of my experiences, mistakes and training tips related to my 15+ years of triathlon endeavors culminating this year in my qualifying for the Hawaiian Ironman. Given that this is tall task for such a short space, I'm going to briefly touch on many of the important aspects of triathlons and follow-up with an article

in a later NOVA newsletter. However, you are more than welcome to drop me a line if you need any details or encouragement. So here goes!!

Getting Started: As the commercial says; "Just Do It"! When I started I couldn't swim and what little I biked was on a two-ton orange Schwinn Varsity. But my running consisted of many 10K and marathon experiences! So with the help of a

friend I got the courage to join a Masters Swim program and started flailing away. It was intimidating and embarrassing at first (my gut was big, my times slow and it took about a year before I would wear Speedos), but then progress was quick and successes parlayed into enthusiasm for the triathlon. Ditto for the bike, as my first rides were a whopping 15 miles complete with a 20-pound knapsack of (continued on page 4)

Running In East Asia

(Continued from page 1)

of the city and was relatively flat. My finish time was nothing to write home about and for a couple of days I questioned whether I should ever run another one. Naturally that didn't last long and I'll run the Chunchon Marathon in the fall <http://marathon.chosun.com/eng/index.html>. It's a great marathon around a beautiful reservoir.

A typical race in Korea is worth describing. Sign up is often done on the web. Korea is very web oriented. Unfortunately for most foreigners, reading Korean is really tough so navigating your way through the web usually requires help. Once signed up, numbers, chips,

and t-shirts usually come in the mail. That part is very convenient. I ran a 10k race two weeks ago that was

5 Korean men working as volunteers strolled by and said in unison "Welcome to Korea".

great. The instructions asked everyone to wear the bright green singlet to the race. I took one look at the color (see above photo) and said "no way....." The other 5,000 runners all seemed to wear it. Boy did I stand out! Koreans organize running "events" and not just races. They usually start at 10 or 11:00 AM. Great in the winter, but beastly hot the rest of the year. This event included a 1/2 marathon, a 10k, and a 5k, had some singers and a clown announcer. Since I had a miserable time running 1/2s, I opted for the 10k. At the starting point, two foreigners (neither of us wore the green singlet) were singled out to come to the starter's stage. The lucky Canadian was asked to sing a song for the crowd (they love kari-oke here). I ducked for cover. I couldn't remember all the words to Born to Run.

The race started and finished in front of

the 1988 Olympic Stadium where U.S. sprinters won many a gold medal. The monuments to the medal winners are way cool. Names, times, countries, etc. Prior to the race, people were eating regular pre-race food here - bananas, chocolate Moon Pies, hot Ramyen noodles, kimchee (kimchee is defined in Webster's dictionary as a fermented vegetable, usually cabbage, laced with spices, particularly garlic) etc. The mid-race burps in Korea are far different and more odoriferous than Power Bar burps! The few women runners (less than 5 percent of all runners) were covering their bodies with sun screen and shaded facial visors they wear so their faces won't be exposed to the sun. The visors look like motorcycle helmet visors, so its quite a site. Freckles and suntans are considered very ugly on a women's skin here. The men were having their last cigarettes (I'm not making this up!). Women, to their credit, rarely smoke in Korea. Women also never wear a jobbra here. Not necessarily out of modesty concerns, but because of the sun.

Finally the 10k started. It was about 75 degrees. I had a good start and got off fairly fast. The race course map said there was water at 5k, but much to my surprise, the first water stop was at 1k. It was staffed with high school girls that all yelled out hello to me in English (a foreign face here really sticks out). The girl that passed me a cup of water even half bowed to me (oriental fashion). They then all giggled as I yelled out a gurgling "thank you".

Around back of the stadium, we entered the Olympic Expressway (Rt. 66 equivalent) for about 500 meters. We had one lane, and the heavy traffic had the other 3 lanes. We soon got off and the heavy fumes subsided. We then crossed under the freeway and headed to the Han River that divides Seoul into North and South. The race was basically an out and back on the river side. Don't for a moment think of the Mt. Vernon trail. Think of concrete, concrete and more concrete. The race course was virtually all con-

crete, the walls of the river edge are mostly concrete, and there are no trees planted. There are lots of flower gardens so there are some good parts.

I could feel I was having a good day with all pistons firing. My legs felt good, the heat didn't seem too bad, my heart rate on my monitor was right on target. For once, I wasn't going out too fast. As I approached the turnaround (about 7k) I started counting the leaders. I had counted 44 people a head of me. So I figured its going to be a great day and time to see if I could place in my age group. For old time NOVA folks, you know I don't do this often. Well I hammer it home, past the giggling girls at the water stops, and pass about 6-7 more runners. Only one passes me. I'm thrilled and feel great that my training has produced a solid effort. I can't wait to see my results on the Internet! After the race as I cooled down, drank water, and chatted with a visiting American professor from Cornell. As we chatted 5 Korean men working as volunteers strolled by and said in unison "Welcome to Korea". I saw the usual post race seen—more Moon Pies, kimchee and that savored post race favorite, a cigarette.

Two days later, with much help from a friend. I get the results off of the Internet. A 42:19 and 9th place overall out of 1,500 runners! Duh, I haven't run that fast in years. Not only that, my watch showed a time in the 43 minute range and I know I didn't finish that far up. The bottom line, the organizers were new at organizing a race and who knows what happened. My anticipatory joy of seeing my age group finish evaporated. In the long run though, its OK. I know I ran a great race. At 47 years old, I don't seem to have as many great races as I used to, so I'll take any good day I can and cherish it and let it motivate me to keep training. Kimchee and all, this is quite a place to run in. Most days are very good. Cheers to you all!

NOVA's Adopted Trail by Maria Bertacchi



While I'd love to take all the credit for it, I cannot. I did however mention that I'd like NOVA to get more involved in the community but couldn't quite figure out what we could do. It was NOVA's First Man, Andrew Smythe, who saw the article about Adopting a portion of the W & OD trail in the *Vienna Newsletter*, a small local newspaper, and showed me a copy, saying, "Here's something we could do!"

So armed with a phone number and an email address, I called the Parks Management office and got....an answering machine. I left a message and...never heard back. Undaunted, I tried again, this time sending an email explaining who I was, what NOVA was, and how we would be interested in adopting a portion of the trail. Several days passed, but this time, Paul McCray (a very nice, busy, overworked, and no doubtly underpaid, Manager of the W & OD Railroad Regional Park) responded! But the news was not what I had hoped. Mr. McCray informed me that his organization only adopted out the "far out" portions of the trail. This meant, at the time, Loudon County.

It did not matter to me where NOVA's portion of the trail was located, I figured I should put it to the club, to see what they thought. Club opinion overwhelmingly was to NOT adopt in Loudon County as most club members live in Arlington and Fairfax Counties. This is understandable, as we typically use the parts of the trail nearest to where we live.

So I emailed Mr. McCray my thanks, and told him that if any parts of the trail came up for adoption in Arlington or Fairfax Counties, to please let me know. A week or so went by, when I received another email from Mr. McCray. Well, he said, in the past, Arlington County Parks and Recreation had been the agency that maintained the trail adoptions in Arlington County. However, The W & OD organization and Arlington County parks had been talking. It was agreed by both groups that it made more sense for the W & OD folks to do the trail adoptions and the W & OD just got the go ahead from Arlington to take over; Would we be interested in a portion of trail that ran from Bluemont Junction to Columbia Pike, including the new "bypass" trail they were building in that area?!?!?

Would WE?!?! Would we EVER!! I was bursting with excitement over this turn of events. Really! I was. I'm such a dork that I called Paul McCray, who made the mistake of actually answering his phone and I gushed all over the place as to how exciting this was. He must of thought I should to get out of the house more often.

At any rate, the official application

was mailed to me, filled out returned, and an official letter of "adoption" was received. I also received a number of lovely, bright orange trash bags in the mail. NOVA is responsible for conducting at least four trash clean ups a year on the trail, and to alert the W & OD organization of any trail maintenance issues. The W & OD Railroad Regional Park also put up signs stating that Northern Virginia Runners Club has adopted the trail.

That said, a clean up will be scheduled for Saturday, September 29, 2001. Exact details to be worked out, but plan on showing up to clean up the length of the trail, check it out, and gaze lovingly on our signs (sounds like a good photo op to me as well!). While plans are still a wee sketchy, having snacks and drinks apres clean up will be a part of these plans.

Now, all our adopted trail needs is a name!

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Three Times the Fun

(continued from page 1)

food, water and other sundries. But again, being part of a group effort with friends helped educate me on riding technique and training regimes (it was also a year before I would ditch the running shorts and wear 'real' biking shorts – ouch!). Bottom line: Don't be intimidated or talk yourself into not getting started in triathlons because you don't know how to swim or you're a poor biker... or blah. Rather, look at this as an opportunity to develop your untapped talents and create venues for new competitive dimensions. Start with races where the distances of the individual events are about equal to what you're doing in your training. In almost all cases this would be a fun 'sprint' distance triathlon usually consisting of a half-mile swim, 15 mile bike and a 5K run. Most newbie tri-geeks are intimidated

look at this as an opportunity to develop your untapped talents

by the swim ("All those people! And the buoys look sooo far!"). Fear not! Swimming about twice a week and getting to the point where you can go the distance in the pool without stopping will translate to a successful swim in the race. The same applies for the bike where twice-a-week training rides at or slightly longer than the distance will do the trick. Being a "NOVA'er" you've got the running down so nothing new to add except give yourself the confidence that you will finish the race and with plenty to spare. True, the bike to run transition will feel "weird" but doing "bricks" (a workout consisting of a short bike immediately followed by a short run at slower than race pace) will condition you.

Trying to Finish: The other end of the spectrum is being competitive at the

Ironman distance. This requires many, many years of acclimating the body to training stresses, learning to program and follow a year-round training regime, and coming to the conclusion that results are obtained only from hard work and attention to details such as nutrition, stretching and rest. No magic drinks, powders, pills, voodoo or one-size-fits-all training programs. Just plain and simple hard work!! Whoa! This doesn't sound like fun anymore! Wrong! Actually, there is a huge dimension of self-discovery and rewards. First the training. Some women pros I know are putting in 14,000 meters of swimming, 350 miles on the bike and about 70 miles of running each week. To do this they need to be bio-mechanically efficient and have very short recovery times....not to mention and have a part-time job!! For mere mortals, about half this training distance will suffice but be forewarned, it will be difficult (read in: you hit the "wall" in the very first mile of the marathon). At the very least a 12-week building program consisting of three century length bike rides and about two long runs in the 20 mile range will do the trick. I've made two major mistakes during my initial Ironman endeavors. One was that I was not paying strict attention to my diet/nutrition and as a result my recovery would be modest and eventually my training went flat. Now I focus on getting my diet almost fat-free and at the same time high in nutritional value (sadly though, I given up alcohol as I've found this very detrimental. Snif). The second was not recognizing the power of "rest days." By taking a few days off every two weeks I usually find myself invigorated and on a new training plateau. These salient points become more critical the more your step up your training distances as you're always on the cutting edge of getting injured or stale. For anyone "tri-ing" the Ironman, you'll need at least two years of building a base and seasoning yourself at shorter distances such as the Olympic (1500 meter swim, 40 Km bike and 10K run) and Half-Ironman (1.2 mile swim, 56 mile bike and half mara-

thon). When you eventually toe the line at whatever Ironman you select, remember, just finish the damn thing and work on your time over the next couple of years! You'll find that the lessons learned from your first Ironman (actually, any distance) can be transposed to your next race.

Sex, Lies and Tri-training (anecdotes from the years): In closing, I'd like to pass along several thoughts I've found worthwhile that some may dispute, but what the hey.

1. Training for a major triathlon event will severely crimp your lifestyle. Your daily workout routine will be two-a-day's with any time in between devoted to eating, work, eating, laundry and eating – in that order. Make sure your significant other endorses your endeavors, and is a source of moral support over the training period (your lack of libido will be an occasional topic of conversation), and has the patience of a saint.
2. You are lying to yourself when you think that the cost of triathlons is mainly the application fee, time and some gas in the tank. Not!! Using the Wall St. business-school-approved full-cost accounting methodology, your costs will entail hotels, airfares, bikes, bike boxes, bike "make-me-faster" and training gizmos, energy and recovery concoctions, swimsuits, wetsuits, running shoes, racing shoes, membership fees, doctor fees, and buying the NOVA club "prez" an occasional beer.

The real "untold" reason for training and competing in the Ironman races is that you get to experience many countries and meet really great people from around the world. All your training time and sacrifice leading up to the event will have you thinking that you're a loony for doing this and lo' and behold, it's a veritable convention of loonies once you get there!! It's nice to be part of the lunacy.

Race of the Month Calendar:

NOVA encourages it's members to either run the following races, or sign up to volunteer.

September: Fairlakes 8K: September 9, 2001. After running ten miles in August, you'll like the break of an 8K in September. This race benefits the National Bone Marrow Donor Program. Go to <http://www.fairlakes.com/Events/8KRace.html> for an application and to read more about the race.

October: Army Ten Miler. October 14, 2001, 8 AM. Go to their website for more info <http://www.armytenmiler.com/home.html>. NOVA will have teams at this event. Talk to Karin, our VP for more details about team!

November: Nasdaq Veteran's Day 10K, November 11, 2001, 8 AM.

December: To be determined. There are not many races listed at this time for December. However you will be informed what that race will be.

Other Races:

This is a new segment, listing races that are organized by NOVA members that also deserve our support. If you can't come out for the race of the month, you may want to run and/or volunteer your time at one of these races!

September 15, 2001, The Women's Half Marathon Trail Race. Colleen Dulin is a co-director of this race. The race is open to 200 FEMALE runners (sorry guys!). For more info go to www.vhtrc.org for details, or chat up Colleen!

September 16, 2001, 9 a.m Vanguard Foundation's 6th Annual National RUN FOR RECOVERY® 5K. Jay Wind is the man behind this race.

November 18, 2001: Marathon In the Parks. At this writing the registration is still open. Go to www.marathonintheparks.com for more info. What more NOVA's very own, Fred "the Man" Carson is on the Steering Committee for this race.

Money Making Opportunity!

NOVA has the opportunity to make some cash by having its members volunteer at the Georgetown 10K on October 7, 2001. So far five folks have signed up to volunteer : Faye Pittman, Pat Hagan, Simon Stephenson, Cynthia Steubner, Suzie Kollaja. NOVA would love to have 12 folks total volunteers (as your prez, I like to lead by example, and would volunteer for this race. Unfortunately I am busy this day. I have to attend my wedding)

Lessons Learned

by Robert L. Cummings Jr.

I learned some important lessons for anyone thinking about Boston or other marathons (my learning curve is still pretty steep on this stuff).

Lesson 1: I pushed my training too fast, and there's no short cut to running fast marathons. 6 weeks before the race I read Galloway's book on running, and decided I'd try to jump into his schedule for those wanting to run about a 3 hour marathon, even though I hadn't quite done the previous workouts on

the long-run weekends. I'd done 18 milers the previous 2 weekends, but his schedule called for working up to a 26-28 mile run 3 weeks before the event, at a slow pace. Well, I thought I could rest a weekend, and then 3 weeks out do a 26 mile run. I figured I was already doing 45-50 miles a week, and by cutting back in the week and making that weekend run longer, I could fast forward through the weekends that built up to 26 miles (i.e. doing 20, taking a weekend off, then 22, etc). I

felt great after the 26 mile practice run, which I probably ran too fast at 3:27, but I think it contributed to the excessive fatigue I felt starting 1/2 way through the Boston.

Lesson 2 (specifically for Boston, or other marathons with hills): Practice hills, lots of them. I'd been given a heads up about the long downhill start, and tried to hang back, but my still smarting quads tell me that I needed more preparation for the gruelling hills.

Lesson 3: Wear earplugs by Wellesley

Cookie Runs by Maria Bertacchi

It was a dark and stormy night, but neither wind, nor rain, sleet nor hail, nor dead of night, will keep our Coach Chris from setting a trail so NOVA could hold a Cookie Run. I received a call at work from our ever vigilante VP, Karin. She had been trying to track down Chris, only to discover that he indeed was laying a trail for us to run that evening at Turkey Run Park. Neither of us wanted to be out done by our Coach, or accused of being weenies. We were determined to show up, lightning be damned!

The rain did trickle to a sprinkle as I headed to the park. A handful of hale and hardy NOVA'ers had already gathered at the parking area of Turkey Run. Chris was there, Colleen Dulin, Ted Poulos, Eliza Savage, Karin Kulinski, Mark Shaughnesy, myself (yes $\frac{3}{4}$'s of your managing officers turned out), a friend of Eliza's, and a few other young women who I believe know our coach from his other life as a trail runner.

After a few minutes of chit chat and to make sure all who were showing up, were there, we lis-



tened closely to our instructions- well everyone except Mark. Follow the yellow ribbons- two ribbons together mean a turn; the red ribbon is the turn around; and then sprinted off into the woods. The trees created a canopy for us, and we hardly felt the rain. The temperature was perfect, not too hot, not too cool. We were mostly wet from our effort, as running on trails is just a wee bit more work than running along the road, or on the track.

Our run took us through the woods and down to the Potomac and up a big killer hill. All of us

ran past it the red ribbon (because we wanted too, not because we missed it) down the hill and up the next big hill (we are gluttons for punishment) and then turned around and headed back. Back at the parking lot, we used the back of Colleen's truck to layout our bounty and snacked and socialized for a while longer. We even split the three beers Coach Chris brought between the 10 of us!

If you've not joined us for a Cookie Run, please do. They are great fun and a great way to liven up your routine.

Do you have a recent success story to share with your fellow runners? We can use it for the NOVA Newsletter which is published quarterly. Please email your articles to Mark & Cindy Anderson at marindy@earthlink.net!

Weekly Workouts

Tuesday Track Workouts

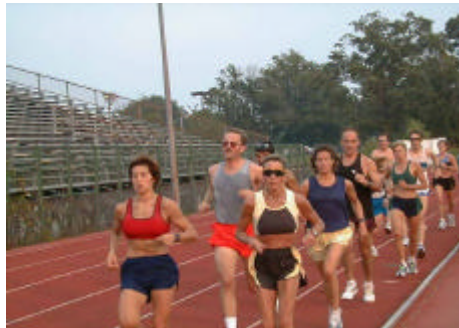
Speed intervals—designed, managed, and timed by a very experienced and knowledgeable coach—are held year-round on Tuesdays at 6:30p.m. (people arrive by 6:15 p.m. to warm up) at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, VA.

Workouts consist of varying distances from 200 meters to a mile or more, with runners separated into at least three different pace groups to accommodate everyone. The purpose of these workouts is to build speed and endurance for road races.

Afterwards, we reward ourselves with pizza and refreshments at Generous George's on Duke Street in Alexandria. Come enjoy the fun—everyone is invited.

Thursday Tempo Runs

Runs start at 6:30 p.m. at Bluemont Junction Park in Arlington (Wilson Blvd). These runs are about six miles. They are out and back along the W&OD Bike Trail towards Falls Church, starting out at a steady easy pace and returning at a progressively faster pace.



Weekend Long Runs

Most members run distances from 6 to 20 miles or more, usually on the Mount Vernon Trail, south of Old Town Alexandria. NOVA officially sponsors a long run on Sunday mornings from DesignCraft, 801 N. Royal Street (Royal & Madison) in Old Town, followed by brunch at the Panera Bakery on Duke St. across from Generous Gorges in the old Heckenger's shopping plaza about 11:00 A.M.

NOVA members also join unofficially with other runners in the north parking lot at Belle Haven Park on Saturday mornings. Contact any club officer to verify current specific times and locations. Check www.racepacket.com or www.washingtonrunfor for the latest in area races.

Here's a brief description of NOVA'S newest members!

By Karin Kulinski

(I ad-libbed a little for anyone who left their membership application blank.)

Please join me in welcoming:

Chris Campbell – Used to teach disabled skiing.

Steve Campbell – Not related to Chris Campbell.

Jacqueline Cooke – Ran Cross Country at UC Berkeley.

Norma Cunningham – Would like to buy a round of beers at the next club meeting.

Christopher Dean – Can't imagine any day without a run!

Robert DeGemms – Former avid hockey and soccer player.

John Eschmann – Collects masters degrees from UVA.

Sheryl Fahey – Would like to pet-sit for every club member, whenever they go on vacation, especially for anyone who has reptiles.

Shauna Hanisch – Played soccer for 20 years.

Heather & Jason Koczur – Jason is a classically trained French Horn musician.

Heather is a classically trained French Horn listener.

Laura LaFontaine – Just moved to DC last year.

Etienne Lefebvre – Will be holding a contest to see who can best pronounce his name.

Jeanine Matte – Loves the Cherry Blossom Ten Miler.

Chuck Regini – Been running for 15 years.

Gretchen Schlag – Enjoys the tranquility of long distance runs.

Seena Simon – Enjoys the 3 mile distance the most.

Rob Taylor – PR'd in the St Paddy's Day 10K by driving part of the race.

Paige Thomas – Training for her first marathon.

Judy Valdez – Would like to hear some good Air Force jokes.

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Coach's Corner



Coach's Confusing Cranial Contusions

We're slogging through the summer swelter, and although we've had individual days of reprieve, betting on an early shift to less humid, cooler Fall conditions isn't worth the effort. What *does* warrant your focus, however, is giving yourself credit for even working hard under adverse conditions, week to week, as foun-

dation for what you can accomplish in the Fall and Winter. Both the Belle Haven and Track workouts are designed for more middle and distance work in the summer months – on the corollary idea that sprint work in high heat/humidity invites all sorts of problems – to contribute to Club goals of half and full marathon events in the Fall and Winter. So, persevere through these humidified heat weeks, building a formidable pace “constitution” that will carry you into the next season.

In addition to the alternate Belle Haven grass workouts, we'll continue to have off-road/track runs (from “Cookie” to “Munchie”) through the summer and into the Fall. These venues can help build strong muscles and supportive tissues that don't get much action when running predominantly flat, solid surfaces. And it's just those “support role” parts that

can noticeably improve your performance late in a marathon when those muscles you've been abusing for 20 miles could use a little help.

Whichever venue you run in this summer, please remember to DRINK, DRINK, DRINK – and include a good complement of sodium/potassium – so that your muscles can be effectively well-fueled during the workout. Increasing your sweat quotient can only detract from performance if not countered with nourishing fluids, whether in an event or just in workouts. DRINK, DRINK, DRINK. Water first, beer later...?

Happy Feet, kids...

- Coach Chris Scott