

MEMBER PROFILE - Russ Bradley

For the tender, New Year, Russ Bradley, 62, has some ageless advice for runners: "You're only as good as what you practice."

Running was not what Russ used to practice. From grammar school until he was in his 40's, Russ was involved in music. His instrument was the Trumpet, and he was good! During the 18 years Russ lived in Bangor, he was a member of the Bangor Symphony, the Bangor Band, and several dance bands, one of which was his own. In 1966, Russ' employer transferred him out of Maine. Russ left the trumpet behind. Now Russ is a Maine runner, residing in Cape Elizabeth. He is an advertising and franchise manager. Russ' roots are in Ticonderoga, New York, but his alma mater is the University of Maine at Orono, Class of 1945.

Six years ago, Russ entered his first road race: Father's Day at Cheverus High School. And that was his last road race.. until three years ago: the April Amble. What happened to cause a three-year hiatus? At Cheverus that day, the temperature was 92°. Russ' son-in-law had thought it would be great fun if they signed up; neither one of them knew anything about road racing! Russ' son-in-law was smart enough to back out, but Russ had made the commitment so he raced. He had great difficulty keeping up with anyone! He alternately walked and ran, almost quitting before the first mile. Russ was determined to finish, and he did - next to last.

Although the Father's Day race at Cheverus was his first (and supposedly last) race, Russ had begun running in 1966 after having read Dr. Kenneth Cooper's *Aerobics*. He would run at the local high school track, and gradually he increased his distance. He rarely exceeded two or three miles. Because he was timid about running on the road, he stayed on the track for several years. He never entertained thoughts in regard to participating in road races until 1979: the Cheverus Bad Experience! Despite his determination never to race again, Russ did: the 1981 April Amble. This time, plenty of instruction and encouragement motivated Russ, and he enjoyed the race. Looking back, Russ wishes he had started both running and racing earlier in his life. Looking forward, Russ will keep running and competing as long as possible. Russ has no thoughts about stopping.

Before the 1981 April Amble, Russ was hospitalized three times during a six-month period (1980) - once for major surgery. He thought he might never be able to run again. Fortunately, he was running within a few months. That was the one time throughout his life that he experienced a serious illness. His family has been constantly concerned that running will cause Russ injury or illness. However, encouragement from Russ' many running friends balances this well-intended concern. Russ is hesitant about a marathon because of his age, but running friends assure him it can be done: "Who knows, may be, just maybe, someday or some year " One of the great joys of running is the camaraderie of other runners. Their message is clear: Yes you can; yes you can.

Russ ran the 1985 Portsmouth Artisan's Outlet 10K. Over 700 runners finished and several were 60+ years old. Russ finished with a time of 48: 29 - "My poorest 10K ever." When he learned that a 72 year old won the 60+ years old category with a 44-minute time, Russ felt great. "I still have a few years left to compete and a potential to improve my times." The Maine Track Club has the same confidence: they voted Russ a Most Improved Runner in 1985.

Russ finished the 1985 Kingfield 10K in 44: 57 - "My best 10K ever!"

What does it take to keep going? Russ advises runners to avoid injury.

"Older runners recover more slowly than younger ones. || Russ runs 25-30 miles a week. A few years ago, he got up to 40 miles per week and developed a foot problem. He was unable to run for several weeks. Now he wears runner's wedges in his shoes. Russ also advises this strategy: || Increase your mileage slowly, and if you get injured - rest. Don't try to run through it." To keep going, runners must be disciplined: "Once you slack off, it is very easy to do less and less. || To keep going, runners must be motivated: "Read running publications, talk to other runners, join a track club."

What about the running rut? Russ suggests running a variety of training courses. "Different terrain, as well as distances, prevent boredom." The same holds true for races: "Try new ones each year and repeat some of the more interesting ones." Is Russ in a rut? Will he keep going? You judge:

In 1981, he ran four races; in 1984, 32 races.

Running and racing are not Russ' only aerobic activities. He walks a lot too - UPHILL! "I'm a member of the 4,000 Footer Club. I qualified in 1979 after having climbed 47 mountains in New Hampshire over 4,000 feet high. ||

But running and racing are the main events. Russ enjoys showing people that he can still run at 62 years of age. "It's fun; it's great. I hope it encourages other older people to exercise." Currently the number of runners in the 60+ category is small. Russ believes the number is going to increase rapidly in the next few years. "And their times will improve dramatically." 1985 was Russ' best year ever. He ran longer training runs and longer races, too. Finishing with good times has motivated Russ to achieve these 1986 goals: interval training, longer and longer training runs, longer and longer races, and a sub 7-minute mile. Every year, Russ has improved. His "I think I can" attitude guarantees success in 1986.

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Congratulations to Russ Bradley and Lloyd Slocum for their induction into the New England 65+ Runners Club Hall of Fame. This took place on October 1st at the annual luncheon in Wakefield, MA.

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MEMBER PROFILE

RUSSELL BRADLEY

The other day at the Killarney 10k, Russ Bradley's new training program was paying off. He had a good one going. Nearing the finish he saw a familiar figure. Calling on that ferocious sprint, which has previously devastated runners such as the writer of this article, he nipped the legendary Carleton Mendell at the tape. First to congratulate him, Carleton said he had not been having a bad day. It was a good time for him. However witnesses differ as to whether Russ rode home in the trunk of Carleton's car, or in the seat he occupied going up. Russ would not have known the difference. He was walking on air.

Thus, a new star is born. Russ and Carleton's times of 46 minutes plus on a hilly course would have placed them in the middle of the 65+ age group in the World Veterans Championships last July on a flat course. And of course much higher in the USA National Championships.

So, in addition to the enormous depth and power of its age 50 runners, MTC has two World Class competitors in the 65s. Carlton, 68 and Russ, 66.

Russ started running in 1966, somewhat tentatively. He was hospitalized twice in 1980. Two years ago he broke his foot in the Killarney 10k on uneven terrain. Recovering after 8 weeks, he promptly broke it again three races later at Pat's Pizza. But, by then Russ had been bitten by the bug. The warm friendliness and encouragement of MTC members, plus his many friends gained from running all over the state, mean a great deal to him. Volunteering at MTC functions with his foot in a cast, he was always touched and elated by the number of friends who would greet him and ask about his recovery. The close fellowships running has brought mean more to him than competitive excellence.

So, two years ago, all healed, Russ started getting serious. He brought his weight down from 180 to 150 and increased the intensity of his training. Mileage was deliberately kept low to avoid injury. Now having just retired, he trains every day and is considering a gradual mileage increase from 40 a week to 45. Then, depending on how it goes, maybe to 50, but no more than 50 because that seems to be where the injury potential increases. A typical week's log shows a 4 mile race on Sunday, 6.2 miles easy on Monday, 5.3 fast on Tuesday, 10 easy Wednesday, 4 miles fast with fartlek or charging hills on Thursday, 5 easy Friday, and 6.2 on Saturday fast or easy depending on whether there will be a race on Sunday. Carleton told Russ that his training is around 7 1/2 miles per day, up from about 6. The last chapter in this titanic battle has not yet been written. Meanwhile they will both be bringing credit to all of us in MTC.

Russ started his working career in music. He played trumpet with the Bangor Symphony Orchestra, as well as with several dance bands, including his own. Shifting careers in his 40s, he became Manager of the Building Materials Store Program with Emery Waterhouse, retiring as Advertising Manager. He is a philatelist and an ardent Celtics fan. He is also an experienced hiker and backpacker.

Russ and Henrietta have three children. The baby (32) is with Emery Waterhouse. The older two are girls, one living in this area, the other in Middletown, NY. Asked about Russ' wish to make running #1 in his retirement, Henrietta's nose wrinkles ever so slightly, and a big smile comes over her face. She travels with him to many races. He ran 24 last year, 32 in 1984.

Russ was voted Most Improved 60+ Runner of the Year by MTC in 1985, and again in 1989. He was ranked 34th in New England last year, but his best races were not recorded. This problem will be solved now that MTC's Don Penta is Maine State Record Keeper for TAC.

We are indebted to David Horne, Warren Wilson, and Bob Cushman for data about Russ.

And, finally, a personal tale out of school. Your Member Profile Editor was running very well some 3 years ago in a race that ended with a lap around a school track. With a super effort, we pulled alongside Russ half way around the track. He turned and a look of horror came over his face. He kicked into a gear we did not have and left us wallowing in wake turbulence 50 yards back. Russ is a Competitor. We know whereof we speak.

by John Woods



MTC VOLUNTEERS FOR SUGARLOAF MARATHON/15K

We would like to offer Chip Carey and the Central Maine Striders help with the marathon and 15K. If you can be a volunteer, please call Susan Davenny as soon as possible at 772-1787. A list will be sent to Chip Carey.

BradleyRuss 05 1990