

Karen Kokesh
1224 Orchard Village Lane
Manchester, Missouri 63011

Re: NIKE/RRCA Rod Steele Memorial Award Nomination

Dear Ms. Kokesh:

As requested by unanimous vote of the Maine Track Club membership on October 9, 1985, I am formally nominating Charles Scribner, Maine Track Club's perennial Race Director, for the NIKE/RRCA Rod Steele Memorial Award. Charlie has, for the past five years, been the Club's most devoted, dedicated, hard-working volunteer. Following are some of Charlie's attributes which qualify him for this nomination.

- Charlie is unable to run and is therefore a volunteer in the truest sense of the word. Nearly every weekend of the year, Charlie organizes, manages, and directs road race activities at the finish line. He does this for all major races in Southern Maine and not just for the Maine Track Club. During 1985 he organized races for Ascanio, the Spring Point Festival, the Jackson Brook Institute, and is currently working on a race for the Maine Historical Society.

- Charlie coordinates the scheduling of all major races in Southern Maine, involving about a half dozen clubs. This includes marathons, 10Ks, four and five millers, as well as several fun runs. During 1985, he personally coordinated all finish line activities, including the timing, the chute, and the results for 46 races. He has averaged 40 races a year and has managed over 300 races since 1977. He is incredibly skilled at these tasks and has few, if any, peers.

- Additionally, Charlie faithfully attends all Maine Track Club functions and activities, all Newsletter and Board of Directors' meetings, and can be counted on consistently and faithfully. He provides road racing/directing consultation, guidance, and coordination throughout Maine; regularly recommends upgrades of equipment; studies race-related developments in computers and programming; emphasizes first and foremost safety and security during races; and attends road racing management workshops whenever possible, e.g., Third Annual Road Race Management Race Director's Meeting and Track Exhibit, November 15, 16 and 17, 1985, Washington, DC.

I hope you will give serious consideration to our nominee, Charles Scribner. He has truly made an immeasurable contribution to safe and sound road racing in Maine.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Holcomb
Robert H. Holcomb
Maine Track Club



Scribner keeping busy on sidelines

Bad knees sidelined Charlie Scribner a few years back, and he's been there ever since.

On the sidelines, stopwatch in hand.

Scribner, 43, of Portland, learned to ski when he learned to walk and worked in the ski industry after graduating from college. When Scribner took up running in the 1970s, he came to the sport with legs that had been broken and battered from his years on the slopes. And the legs said they'd had enough when Scribner entered his fourth marathon.

So Scribner, who never did get farther than 25 miles in any of his marathons, cut back to three to four miles a couple of times a week at an 8 1/2- to 9-minute mile pace and raced only occasionally.

But Scribner didn't give up the friends he'd made along the running circuit or his position as race committee chairman for the Maine Track Club. Scribner, now president of the 400-member track club as well as race chairman, has managed over 400 races in Maine since 1977.

The toughest part of the job, Scribner said, is the dollars and cents: coming up with sponsorship to finance the race numbers, applications, awards, T-shirts and the Police protection along the course.

There are no-frills races, like the Feb. 14 Mid-Winter Classic 10-miler. No T-shirts, no trophies, just a well-organized road race. That's fine for the experienced runner, Scribner said, but the novice runner wants his T-shirt. It's his trophy. It commemorates what was for him an extraordinary accomplishment.

Despite the loss of the Casco Bay and Maine Coast marathons, Scribner said road racing is alive and well in the state.

"In general, the participation in marathons except the mega-marathons like Chicago, Boston and New York — are down. The biggest races now are 5-milers and 10-Ks. It takes a lot of time and dedication to run a marathon."

It takes time and dedication to organize the races as well, but sometimes not all the bugs are out of the system before the starting gun sounds.

"I remember one time we delayed the start of the Falmouth Lions Club race because a train was scheduled to run across the course," Scribner said. "I don't know for sure, but I think the year before the train had come through during the middle of the race. And there's not much you can do when a train crosses in front of you."

Another time, also in Falmouth, a race was delayed when a patrol car pulled up to the starting line.

"Everyone was lined up when the cruiser showed up," Scribner said. "The officer said we weren't going to run the race on his road because he didn't know anything about it. We had to show him the letter from the town saying it was OK for the race."

Scribner remembers the 3-mile race on Portland's Eastern Promenade where the lead runners took a wrong turn and went down to Washington Avenue. The middle-of-the-packers went the right way,

Sara
Hobson

On Running



Charlie Scribner
...running on sidelines

taking the loop by Fort Allen Park. The middle runners technically won the race," he said.

And remember Rosie Ruiz, the woman who finished 24th in the New York City Marathon after taking the subway and who "won" the 1980 Boston Marathon after jumping in a half-mile from the finish? Portland had a Rosie, a man who finished in the top 10 at Casco Bay a few years back. The man took off his number and went home after race officials confronted him with the fact that none of the spotters along the 26.2-mile course had recorded his number in the pack of lead runners, but that he had been seen leaving his car on Park Avenue during the race.

"He had been caught before by the Maine Coast Road Runners," Scribner said.

At this level, with prize money more the exception than the rule, a runner who cheats is cheating no one but himself, Scribner said.

Scribner, whose next project is computerizing the finishes of Maine Track Club events, gets calls from as far away as California seeking advice on putting together road races. And, just as Kris Kringle in Maine on 44th Street received all the dead letters addressed to Santa Claus, for a while the U.S. Postal Service was directing any running mail to Maine to Charlie Scribner.

"This was in the days before the track club had a post office box," Scribner said. "All this mail just seemed to find itself to me, without my name on it."

You can't argue with the Post Office, Charlie Scribner is Maine's road racing authority.

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Next month, we'll be looking at several runners — people who've run every day for months or even years without missing a day. Send your streak story, along with your name and hometown, to Running, Maine Sunday Telegram, P.O. Box 1460, Portland, Maine 04104.

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Maine Sunday Telegram, February 25, 1986

03 1988



RRCA Convention in Indianapolis. Charlie received "Nike Rod Steele" award for outstanding Volunteer

06 1988



Maine Track Club

P.O. Box 8008, Portland, Maine 04104
...Run with a friend.

Maine Track Club
P.O. Box 8008
Portland, ME 04104

January 2, 1990

Dear Track Club:

Congratulations on your "Tenth Year Track Club Anniversary".

Lets hope the following decade is as, if not more, prosperous and fulfilling. Good Luck!

Sincerely,

Charlie Scribner

Charlie Scribner,
Past Pres. '88
Race Committee Chairman