

October 11: "Searsport Woods Run": Captain Rob Paquette reports that this race featured a late course change due to some terrible trail conditions in the woods, so it ended up more of a road race than in past years. All who did it, especially John Belanger, commented on the hills - or rather the hill upon hill, upon hill!!! But, a good time was by all and our ever-smiling "Ozzie" Osborne represented the local Strider group.

- " 12: Portland: This year's "Casco Bay Marathon" saw 6 Striders crossing the finish line to keep our club colors well represented. We were led by the standout performance of Al Sproul, a simply sensational masters runner who came in well trained and ready. Al was 21st over-all in just over 2:50 and looked great. We must tell you that Al & Carlene live in Massachusetts during the winter, and Carlene was all smiles at having smashed her personal 10-K time in an out-of-state race earlier in the month. Two great people!

After Dave & Jo Comeau recovered from their shock at hearing that your President planned on running in this race, they informed us that Jo was ready to go, while husband Dave planned to trot along for a good 20 mile training run. Well, we know how those plans can go, and of course the thrill of completion outweighed the agony of defeat and Dave crossed the finish in just over 3:20 in a very good training run!! Meanwhile Jo was making us all proud with her 3:14:32, winning her age group and becoming the fastest lady marathoner in our club for 1986. Both Francis Preshong and Carl Bowen had strong efforts for 20 miles, but both said they slowed over the final 3 as the pace caught up to them. And why you may ask, did the old Saint stay out on that course for nearly 5 hours with his 180 lb body jiggling around - I think the word is stubborn! The van picking up walkers kept stopping beside me, the driver would open the door - and wait. Just the idea that I appeared to be dying to these race monitors made me decide to keep going. I really think a marathon is 50% mental and we all know I operate best at a 50% mental capacity!!!

- " 26: Saco: The "Great Pumpkin 10-K": We had Striders everywhere in this one, but are still waiting for results!

Nov. 11th: Augusta: The "Veteran's Day Half-Marathon" and 5-K saw our club in fine shape, with 2nd/3rd finishes in the 2 races. In the 13.1 mile challenge, Pete Lessard saw Bruce Ellis walk in to register and just smiled. Bruce is among the fastest long distance runners on the east coast and came up from New Hampshire to round out his Maine racing with a good hard training run. His 1:10 is simply awesome, with Pete's 1:12:27 bringing him runner-up honors. Dennis Croteau and Fred Karter had good late season efforts on a day that saw snow falling as the race ended, but the talk was all about Donna Davis finishing only 30 seconds behind a very tough Robin Emery-Rappa for runner-up in the women's division. This was Donna's only long distance race of the year and we wondered if she's hold up past the 5 to 6 mile mark - now we know!!! Smiling Tom McGuire followed Donna in with the rest of the Striders arriving steadily from there on. The congenial Geoff Hill finished with Nancy Lagin and your leader enjoyed touring the course with Donnajean and Debbie Curtis. A good hot lunch at the Augusta Elks club followed and Race Director Greg Nelson announced he was stepping down after handling duties at this event for many years, and doing a super job as always.

In the 5-K, our ever present Chris Bovie was a strong 3rd on this hilly course with the return of Jerry Allanach in 12th place bringing smiles to all our faces! Jerry's been troubled by a nagging leg injury and is coming back slowly and steadily. Dave Blair broke 20 minutes for a great effort on a course that is not exactly flat and Shawn Benn beat dad David in their father/son race, but by less than a minute. "Ozzie" Osborne trotted around like a young pup while Bill Yates ran with daughter Leah, who is a strong cross country force in the Wilton area, and smiling Sarah Roy made a rare appearance while Gene chased the kids around!!

November 23: Boston: The 2nd "Boston Peace Marathon" saw our club colors represented as Ron Paquette, Geoff Hill, Bill Seekins and your fearless President all completed the scenic and rolling 26.2 mile course. This race starts in Carlisle, passes through Lexington, Arlington and comes in along the Charles River before finally crossing a bridge to finish at the Faneuil Hall area. It was much warmer at the start than at the finish, as it was getting dark when some of us (not the leaders) finished!! A great run, one that anyone wanting to try a fairly flat course should consider doing. Times are being mailed to us later.

November 27: Augusta: The "Gasping Gobbler 10-K" & 2 Miler: What a great Thanksgiving Day tradition this race is, and the Maine Road Ramblers do an excellent job with it. Peter Lessard wound up his '86 season with a strong 2nd place finish behind Fairfield native Ralph Duquette who is now an outstanding runner in the Boston area. The hilly course slowed everyone, but the weather was beautiful, the crowd friendly and all who ran came in smiling. Fred Karter & Jeff Brown re-newed their rivalry, with only 6 seconds between them in this race, and Tom McGuire worked up an appetite for turkey in just over 40:30. Nice to have Harry Nasse on hand from New York for the holiday and Geoff Hill and I unwound from the Boston Peace Marathon run a few days earlier.

In the 2 Miler, Chris "Slow Motion" Bovie was 8 seconds behind the winner and Mike Bard joined him in the top 5! Gene Roy and Jerry Allanach gave us 2 more in the top 10 and it was great to see Jerry back after being sidelined much of the year with a persistent injury. Bill Yates brought the gang, and Leah tuned up for her cross-country efforts later on. And yes, the Clappers were with us!!

December 6: Madison: The "Season's Greeting's" 4.2 mile race, with Ron Paquette as Race Director is a wonderful and great way to end the year. This informal, low-key event saw 19 of the 24 finishers members of our club! Chris Bovie shook off Larry Deans just before the 1 mile mark and finished his year as he started it - with a win. There was some question of interference as Bovie veered towards several Masters runners as he passed them on the way back, undoubtedly costing them several precious seconds!!! However, he lost the title of wildest dressed runner in this event to a somewhat portly plodder who shall go un-named. Jerry Allanach was a strong 3rd place finisher, Gene Roy & Sam Mitchell ran together for a few miles before Sam stopped for doughnuts and coffee, and Nancy Lagin had a great finish to a fast year with another victory! Yes, the Clappers drove down from Bucksport, and Tim Holland came from Jackman - such is the drawing power of Ron & Donnajean. Great snacks after the race, a good time had by all!!!