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1968 HIGH ALTITUDE ADVENTURES

Five RRC, NY Association men got a taste of high altitude marathon racing this year. The scones: Denver, Pikes Peak, and Alamosa Marathons.

Millrose men Gary Muhrccke, Jim McDonagh and Norb Sander, fastest trio in the club's history, went to Alamosa for the Olympic high altitude training camp. The NYAC's Ed Winrow joined them. Besides training, they ran in races before the final Olympic trial.

DENVER MARATHON--Ed Winrow drifted thru this mile high race as a workout just two weeks after beginning altitude training. He even paced a 3:03:52 without pushing. He found Denver like sea level after 7,540' Alamosa, Colorado.

PIKES PEAK MARATHON--This race rumbles 13 miles up the face of Pikes Peak to the 14,110' summit and loops back down into Manitou Springs, Colorado. The distance is generously listed at 26.8 miles. Winrow (8th in 4:37), Muhrccke (9th in 4:39), along with Deines and Burfoot interrupted their altitude training 2 weeks before the Olympic trials to run this race for training purposes. Winrow ran non-stop to the top in 2:35:07. All Olympic prospects ran back down the burro trail with caution to avoid injury. Winrow rated the grade (incline) more of a stress factor than the high altitude. Al Meehan also did altitude training before running 5th in this race in 4:33.

ALAMOSA MARATHON--National AAU & Olympic Tryout Race

Norb Sander arrived at Alamosa 13 days before the race to begin his acclimatization 2 to 3 weeks behind other serious contenders. The next day Sander joined McDonagh and Jerry Smartt on a 35 mile run and in the process reached 100 miles for the first time in a week. Sander trained over the 5.2 mile course loop 2 to 3 times a day, pushing the first 3 miles. He felt that some men spent too much time on slow running and not enough on speedwork. Winrow felt that slow training was best for altitude training.

In the race Sander went through the first mile in 5:10 and felt as though he was jogging. He stayed in the fight for over 20 miles before troubles hit. He hung on for 34th place to help his team. Many favorites were unable to put out, others were victimized by such problems as stomach cramps, diarrhea, etc. Winrow streamed past the defused Sander at 22 miles and blitzed into 6th place. Muhrccke (16th) and McDonagh (20th) ran through the race at a sensible, hard pace. In the 7,540' terrain 63 of 129 starters survived.

Buddy Edelen predicted a 2:28:36 winner at Alamosa...Some felt that the Californians were a bit arrogant...Many considered this the most exciting marathon ever held in America...Graduate student Winrow began a research project while at Alamosa and went to Mexico City to continue same...Edelen, hero of the fantastic 1964 Yonkers Marathon, had been training around 100 miles a week but declined to join the combat.

Sander experienced cramps in the last lap and Winrow in the last 400 yards. McDonagh and Muhrccke got no cramps. Only Sander had to walk.

Sander felt that fatigue came on faster than at sea level.

On the subject of unusual feelings McDonagh said, "When I tried to run faster I couldn't pick up the pace. When I took drinks I had to almost come to a standstill, otherwise I was breathless."

Muhrccke said, "The feeling that I couldn't for any length of time push myself past the comfortable pace Jim and I were running. This was definitely a fallacy because I finished the race stronger than I have finished any other marathon in my life."

Asked if they felt they were acclimatized at race time they said:
Sander: "I don't think so."

Winrow felt very much acclimatized.

McDonagh: "I felt not at all acclimatized even though I was five weeks there."

Muhrccke: "I believe it would take about two months to get my training to the same level as at sea level. I believe that the most beneficial training would be very hard 3, 4 or 5 mile runs."

In a 13 team fight, defenders Millrose AA finished 4th.

The road runners were happy to see Minnesota Ron Daws make the Olympic team, as track men took the other two berths. On this subject Muhrccke said, "If we take a look at the record (in the trials and the championship), we'll see many very good shorter distance runners running very fast times for the marathon. Speed is definitely the most important asset to a future great marathon runner."

Is there a lesson in this? Why should marathoners let track men beat them at their own game?

MY OPINION by Bob Campbell, Vice Chairman, National AAU LDRC
"Too many runners are misled as to their ability due to 'short road courses.'" (1962)

NEWS--Finland's Eino Oksanen reportedly once ran 1000 miles ~~the~~ month preparing for the Boston Marathon...Lou White, former national champion, sent regards from Montreal recently...RRC treasurer Glenn McCarthy trained with Tom Coyne, RRC of America Communications Director this summer in Kalamazoo, Michigan...Roger Alcorn, top New Zealand ultramarathoner, second in 1967 London-Brighton, is now living in Australia and may retire...Ed Winrow traded shirts with Britain's Adcock, Hogan and Johnston, at Mexico City...Jose Dones and Gabe Petroni of Santa Barbara, California both ran in three of the six Olympic Marathon trials: Santa Rosa, Atlantic City and Detroit. Both ran in the Alamosa final. Dones is a former NY Pioneer and former Met. AAU Marathon Champion and currently working on his doctorate degree...Millrose John Kelly, Olympian for Ireland, found the altitude at Mexico City easier to tolerate this year. He went up to 10,000' every morning to take his long workout...Horace Wall, NYPC, and his wife joined the T&F News tour and found the Olympic Games "great"...Monty Montgomery, age 62, did 3:07:27 in the '68 Santa Barbara Marathon, his first marathon. He did a 5:05 mile this Spring...Arne Richards' 36th birthday sprinted by Oct. 18...Joe Yancey was at the Olympic Games with athletes from the Virgin Islands...Joe Paz and Dr. Sheehan also attended the Olympic Games...Buddy Edelen rates his 2:24 at Yonkers in '64 as worth 2:10 under ideal conditions...

Eric Segal, Yale University, wrote the script for the new Beatles movie, "the Yellow Submarine"...The Cherry Tree Marathon date may be changed to mid-March...A Joe Burns quote: "Don't give up the ship, sell it!" (the originator of the saying told his crew to sink the captured ship rather than give it up)...John Garlepp is still suffering the miseries but performing well when the spirit moves him...Earl Foster and Kurt Steiner competed in the U.S. Masters Track Meet in San Diego, California...The Pete McArdles have a new addition to the family--its a girl...It took 61 years for a BAA runner to win its famed classic...In some quarters Ron Clarke is regarded as a brilliant loser, or a record running machine and little else...Judy Pollock (had a baby) and Sin Kim Dan (politics) of Australia and North Korea respectively, missed the Mexico Olympics 800m...Ron Hopcroft told Australia's Geoff Watt that it takes 3 years to recover from an all out 100 mile race...

Oscar Moore was a spectator at the RRC 2-Man 10 Mile Relay. He is still suffering soreness in his operated leg. He hopes to graduate in 1969 and he is a cousin of 43.9 400m sprinter Larry James...Charles Robbins, MD, says, "As to altitude, all the reading I've done for years boils down to 'three' and 'three'. I mean it takes 3 weeks to get the conditioning at altitude and 3 days to lose it when you return. In all the hysteria about the Olympics the only new thing noted is that by going up and down several times, the body gets better at adjusting itself and may take less time."...Dr. George Sheehan who ran 4:41.1 (with 66s final 440) in the Masters Mile last winter says, "I think that this event is an exciting one and may provide the satisfaction of achievement you miss by not breaking 3 hours in the marathon. We should try to interest some of our really good runners from the past to come back to this."...Have you paid your dues?

R E A D:

- 1) The "Long Distance Log," 12 monthly issues \$4.00, from H.B. Ross 306 W. Center St., Woodbury, New Jersey 08096
- 2) "Distance Running News," 4 issues/year \$1.50 from Distance Running News, P.O. Box 1082, Manhattan, Kansas 66502

p.3 BOOK REPORT: MARATHON by Clarence DeMar
Stephan Daye Press: Brattleboro, Vermont 1937
Report by John Rhodes, NYPC

Clarence DeMar, the greatest marathon runner America ever produced, won the Boston Marathon seven times, and competed in three Olympic Games (taking a bronze medal in 1924). He won his first marathon in 1910 and was still a threat in 1939; that year he qualified for the Pan American Games Marathon Team. In 1954, at age 65, DeMar was still strong enough to break four hours at Boston. Amazingly, this was all achieved following nearly a decade's retirement from competition when he was at his peak.

DeMar's career was fascinating, but his ideas are the most important thing for today's athletes. Some of these are:

Early talent and aptitude are no real indication of success. Only enduring discipline will make for greatness. DeMar ran x-country in college, but showed no unusual ability.

As early as 1909 DeMar used training methods much like those used today. He ran to work (7.5 miles) and back every day at an easy 8 mph clip. He rarely recorded his times. Once every two weeks he would push harder to test himself; in the months before the Boston Marathon he'd put in 100 miles a week.

DeMar found that he absorbed more from reading than from coaches: he could learn at his own pace: coaches tended to instruct after racing when he was excited and unteachable.

DeMar experimented with several diets during the height of his career. In 1911, the year he won his first Boston Marathon, he went on a vegetarian diet for six months. He felt that it didn't contribute or detract from his success. Later on, in his mid 40's (1934) after he had begun to decline, he went on an alkaline diet. He concluded, "It seemed to have a positive effect; then it brought on a deep slump."

His negative experiences in the 1912 Olympics caused him to never listen to coaches or go along with "team policies." Used to training at his own pace, he was burned-out and finished 12th, walking the last mile, after the American coach forced the marathoners to work-out hard every day. The atmosphere generated was similar to today's idea of sports as politics. In the 1924 Games, DeMar swam, took days off to sightsee, trained as he pleased and took the Bronze medal; was close to a silver.

Between 1912 and 1917 DeMar retired from marathoning. Fear of heart trouble, his religious scruples against glory-seeking and working days while finishing college at night all contributed to his decision. He kept in shape with one mile in the morning and one mile at night. After being out of shape for three years he entered a 10 mile handicap and won; equalling the best time of his life. This indicates that the body can retain its powers years after hard training has ceased. In 1917, making his first attempt at Boston in six years; running only three times a week; he finished third in 2:30 for the 24.5 mile course. After this he entered the Army until 1919 and didn't run at all until 1921. In Nov. 1921 he began training again: 4.5 miles to work, then back again, four or five days a week. After years of inactivity he said, "I found I could stand more work and got less fatigued than ever before." He entered and won the 1922 BAA in record time. By 1924 DeMar had run 2:29 for the full 26 mile 385 yard distance.

DeMar didn't feel he was fading until he was 39. His decline was not total; but his performances became more erratic; like winning at Boston, then shortly afterwards finishing 28th in the 1928 Olympic marathon. Yet DeMar was still capable of winning seven marathons after he was 40. At 46 he beat Tarzan Brown with a 2:36 time. As he began slipping he noted that: A) Success didn't depend on the amount of practice. He said, "Frequently, rest and a little practice caused me to make a better showing." B) He often did better on five hours sleep than eight hours rest. Slow practice didn't always produce the best race. Speed work sometimes caused him to do better. C) "Not only are there individual differences, but the same individual has to change his methods of training over a period of years; as old people change their glasses."

NOTE--Word out of Boston indicates that as early as November the BAA had received over 100 letters of inquiry from runners all over the USA and the world asking about the '69 Boston Marathon. Remember the massive 1968 field?

A Suggestion by Sid Gendin, United AA

Lovers of really technical information may be interested in knowing about the Journal of Sports Medicine. This journal doesn't make for easy reading and I wouldn't dare try to summarize the articles in it. I do think that for those with a bent in this direction the hard effort demanded for these articles would be very rewarding. (Keep a medical and unabridged dictionary nearby.) In the April 1967 issue there is an article entitled "A Longitudinal Study of 16 Runners." As I said, I won't try to summarize the findings but I can give you some idea of what it is about. Sixteen runners were given intensive examinations while they were active competitors and, then, followup exams many years later after they had retired. These examinations covered the usual things but also included many specialized tests designed to throw light on what distinguishes the athlete from the non-athlete. Among the many athletes tested were Fenski, Cunningham, and Wilt. Get it from your library--the subscription price is absurd.

An OLYMPIC EFFORT--Millrose John Kelly trained very hard for the Olympic Walk but got sick two days before his event. He got out of bed with a fever to race but didn't last very long. He spent an additional two days in bed and was still too sick to leave the Olympic Village. He was happy to meet Elliott Denman, Ed Winrow and other New Yorkers in Mexico City. Kelly made lots of friends for one good memory. He now lives in Santa Monica, California.

"Race Walking" by Colin Young (ATHLETICS WEEKLY Dec.16,1967,Vol.21)

Mexican Training Methods: Coached by Poland's Jerry Hausleber, Mexican walkers are making their presence felt. Hausleber bases his success on the maxim "Resistance and Velocity." With repetitions on road and track, changing the training site constantly, emphasis is on resistance during the Jan-June period. Velocity is the keypoint from June thru the major competitions in August thru October. For example, a 3 x 4000m session in Feb. would be 4 x 300m by April, 5 x 240m in June and 6 x 200m in August. Only 5% of the Mexican's training consists of jogging/running as Hausleber feels too much of the latter is included in East European Walk schedules.

SCHOLAR RUNNER Clarence Richey is attending Harvard University Graduate School in a doctoral program in English language and literature. During an ultramarathon in his freshman year in college, Richey told another runner that he intended to get a straight "A" average. He did! He states that Harvard is one the few New England institutions which don't close for Patriot's Day. He isn't competing due to the pressure of studies but he still trains, and still has an "A" average.

A PLEA FOR WOMEN--Dr. George A. Sheehan recently urged the image makers to give status to women's sport and physical exercise. Physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual gains are to be had by girls and women engaged in organized athletics. There is no medical reason why women should be deprived of the opportunity to take part in athletics. Officials often use emotions rather than facts in refusing to open up athletics to more women. In conclusion, Dr. Sheehan said, "Now I ask you, is it natural, normal or even feminine to be out of shape?"

NEWS--Harry Abrams, who competed in both Transcontinental USA races (the C.C.Pyle cross-country derby) attends the 92nd St. YMHA gym regularly... Ted Suito, fighting for his health, competed in the Boston and Yonkers marathons for the first time in years... Teenagers between 15 and 20 eat more than anyone, even their dads, according to the Department of Agriculture... Seventy year old Fred Grace of California is training to run 50 miles non-stop. One of Grace's running buddies is 11 year old Mark Ruggles who ran a full length marathon in 3:38:48...

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