

LONGBOAT
roadrunners



Wildfire

Official Newsletter of the Longboat Roadrunners

Editors: Bert de Vries, Peter de Vries, Kat Thompson

Photos: Doug Smith, John MacMillan

SPRING 2019

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Have you met your 2019 board?

<https://longboatroadrunners.com/about-longboat/2019-board/>

NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, this was unexpected. At the start of the year I stood for Vice President after being assured that it was the easiest job on the Executive Committee. But sometimes a race doesn't go as planned and you just have to adapt.

I count myself lucky to be part of Longboat. A lazy Google search in 2017 returned a club with a very purple webpage (later to be identified as Pantone 505C!) and lots of fast runners. Since my first Wednesday run I have poured liters of sweat into the Longboat singlet, run thousands of kilometers with friends (although my coach always thinks it should be more!), and become part of this community. I can't imagine living in Toronto without also thinking of Longboat. This club has already given me so much more than just blisters; I hope that as President I can give some back.

My focus in the next couple of months will be to investigate and support initiatives to make us a more inclusive club. We have a committee working on a code of conduct (thank you to those who volunteered) and we will have a 'town hall'-style meeting to discuss the club culture in June. This will guide any further actions. A big thank you to the rest of the Executive Committee who have kept the club running during this transition period.

See you on the MGT!

Martin

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday/Sunday, May 25-26: Cabot Trail Relay

Sunday, May 26: Toronto Women's Half Marathon 5K/10K/HM

Saturday, June 1: Streetsville Mile

Tuesday, June 4: Tom Longboat Run (5K/10K), opening ceremony 9:45am/run 10:30am, Six Nations of the Grand River

Saturday, June 8: Team Unbreakable 5K (Coronation Park)

Sunday, June 9, 9:00am: Longboat Track Day #1 (Road mile on rail trail + track 3000m)

Tuesday, June 11: Nutrition Seminar with Stephen Walter, University Settlement House (Further details TBD)

Saturday, June 15: Lululemon Toronto 10K

Saturday, June 22: Pride Run 5K (Team: "Longboat Roadrunners")

Saturday, July 6: Longboat Track Day #2 (2000m + 5000m)



NEW MEMBERS

Longboat Roadrunners would like to formally welcome all of our 2019 new members:

Yury Benyaminov

Geneva Calder

Chris James

Mary Liu

Laura-Lee Moran

Abhudaya Poudyai

Ian Ramsey

Maria Weber

Lily Wu

Peter Wu

We would also like to welcome back the following returning members:

Jose Tellez-Suazo

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STRAVA

Longboat Road Runners

COACH'S CORNER & RACE RESULTS

Spring has arrived in the GTA and with it a full roster of races to run. For Longboaters, winter training was not easy - January 2019 saw some of the heaviest snowfall in history with 33 centimetres falling over two days. By January 29 we had a full 38 centimetres covering our favourite running routes.

However - Longboat members are tough, and persevered through some of the roughest conditions, finding strength in numbers to get through the tough winter months. Boston is always the big race of the spring season, but 2019 got the kick of spring with WMA world championships. Three Longboat members (Sue Stone, Michelle Clarke and Maria Weber) joined over 50 other Canadians to race the 3000m and the half marathon bringing home a team silver medal for both Canada and Longboat. *(Read more on page 4!)*

The Boston Marathon is the most prestigious race for the marathon runner and this year we had 9 members take to the start line. Boston is difficult to qualify for and can be even more challenging to race. This year again, Boston was challenging, with conditions that some would call a roller coaster. Our Longboat members all finished the race and we even saw one amazing PB! Martina Cahill finished 2018 strong and has started 2019 even stronger.

Boston Marathon (Apr 15)

Robert Madej	2:58.19	
Martin Odendaal	3:05.52	
Jake Lopez	3:23.25	
Martina Cahill	3:26.50	(PB)
Lily Wu	3:31.18	
Heidi Mok	3:42.44	
Laura Lipcsei	3:48.30	
Kathryn Wehrle	3:49.56	
Tanya Johnson Anderson	4:43.09	

The first weekend in May is another big weekend for our club: the Toronto and Mississauga races happen to fall on the same weekend. Both are courses where many runners hope to get their Boston qualifiers.

In the Saturday 5K, two Longboat runners had great races: Deb Kobe got a PB with 29:31 and Gar Concannon ran a fantastic race with a time of 18:20, taking 10th overall and 2nd master.

In the 10K race we saw another PB from Edwin Alvarado in a great time of 36:14, 4th overall and 2nd master.

In the half marathon and marathon distances we had a great club showing, with a special PB. I would like to send a special congratulations to Kandace Ryckman, who not only PB'd in the marathon but she ran a Boston qualifier to boot. She joined the club less than a year ago and fell into a great group of women who trained together for their spring marathon races. This is what club running is all about - support and encouragement, not only on race day but all the days leading up to them. Congratulations again to everyone and enjoy the spring that is finally here.

Michelle



RACE RESULTS (CON'T)



Photo: Steve Blackburn



Photo: Alan Brookes

Bum Run 5K (Apr 28)

Zohrab Mawani	18:24.0	3rd M45-9 16th overall
Michelle Clarke	19:43.0	1st W40-4 8th woman
Maria Weber	20:43.0	1stW35-9 12th woman

Waterloo Marathon (Apr 28)

Marathon

Jim Rawling	3:36:02	2nd M60-4
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Mississauga Marathon Races (May 4-5)

5K

Gar Concannon	18:20.7	10th Overall 2nd M40-9
Debra Kobe	29:36.1	(PB)

10K

Edwin Alvarado	36:14.6	4th Overall 2nd M40-9 (PB)
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Half Marathon

Lucas Wilson	1:20:40.9	
Dermot Sullivan	1:27:46.9	
Jim Rawling	1:36:25.2	2nd M60-9
Susan Farquhar	2:11:19.4	
Allen Groome	2:58:05.2	Walking

Marathon

Jackson Kuntze	3:02:03.9	
Kandace Ryckman	3:26:56.8	(PB)
Laura-Lee Moran	4:03:59.0	

Toronto Marathon Races (May 5)

Half Marathon

Roger Moss	1:32:57.1	
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Marathon

Robert Madej	2:56:56.3	
JoJo Herrera	3:15:44.7	
Mary Liu	3:24:19.2	



Photos: Doug Smith



Three Longboat members: **Maria Weber**, **Michelle Clarke**, and **Susan Stone** decided to take part in the World Masters Indoor Championships in Torun, Poland in late 2018. Their motivations were quite different, but their performances on this international stage were a great credit on both their country and their club. Torun is one of the oldest and most picturesque cities of Poland and is a UNESCO-designated site; however, it is not big enough to house a large international contingent of athletes. Our threesome had to find Airbnb accommodations in the nearby larger city of Bydgoszcz, about an hour's drive away. Driving in Poland presents problems of language and road conventions (for example, no speed limits on major highways), and every trip seemed longer than advertised. Nevertheless, the people were friendly, and the food was good and inexpensive, as were the accommodations. Maria and Michelle were in one place and Susan in another.

Maria Weber has been running since 2013 when she ran 55 minutes at the Whitby Canada Day 10 km. In 2016, Michelle became her coach and she began to improve as a runner. When Michelle suggested that Maria come along with her to Torun she did not take the suggestion seriously, falling into the common misconception that the Masters Games are

only for the elite and not the likes of her. She had no idea that she was already among the elite in her age group. Finally, Michelle's persuasion prevailed and they both signed up for the 3000 m and the Half Marathon. Maria had been racking up a string of personal bests under Michelle's guidance as seen in her 3000 m results at OMA meets in January and February (11:48.18 followed by 11:38.15), so she was hoping for more progress in this race and to break 1:30 for a PB in the Half Marathon.

Michelle Clarke has already had a spectacular career not only as a track runner at many international and Canadian meets, but also as a marathoner. She was the overall women's winner in the Boston to Big Sur competition, in which results from these two-weeks-apart marathons are combined, in 2013. She ran Boston in 2:57:38 and Big Sur in 3:05:31 for a total of 6:03:09, substantially ahead of her closest competitor. She holds nine Longboat Records. When she turns 45 this year, she will take aim at many more. Her goal in Torun was to run a really solid 3000 m to set herself up competitively and then to win a medal in the Half Marathon, towards which her winter training was dedicated.



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Susan Stone had an epic decade in the 1980s when she set dozens of LB road and track records as a 20-29-year-old woman. In 1985, she won the Grandma's Marathon in Duluth, Minnesota in 2:39:46 and ran the Chicago marathon in 2:38:30. After taking years off to

raise a family and pursue her teaching career she has rejoined the club and has resumed her record-setting trail, being the first person in club history last year to score over 90 per cent in our annual WMA rankings. Her aim for Torun was "quantity rather than quality," as she puts it. This explains why she ran the 10 km road race between the 3000 m and the Half Marathon. She knew she wasn't going to get her very best results as she was suffering from a respiratory infection that required antibiotics. It is a tribute to her ferocious competitiveness that she even attempted these races, let alone be as good as she was.

The 3000 m race was held in AG groups, with at least a dozen in each five-year heat. Michelle ran a planned strategic race, staying with the pack and kicking to a PB of 10:55.04. Unlike politer Canadian races, there was lots of pushing, blocking and elbowing, but that is red meat to Michelle. Even though this race was not her target race, the PB was a product of serious training, and set her up for the Half Marathon which she was hoping to run in 1:22. At the start of the race she was warned that the nature of the course (rolling and windy) would cost her 2 minutes, and so it proved, as she finished second in 1:24:35. The time didn't matter to her as she was in this race to win a medal. She had researched her competition and wrote the bib numbers of her most likely rivals on the back of her hand. People around her assumed that these numbers were her projected splits, but they did not realize Michelle's predatory nature when she is in a championship race with a medal or money—and not a time—being the object. She ticked off the names

of her victims as she caught and passed them and was only 30 seconds behind the second-place woman when the race ended. Bronze medal: mission accomplished.

In the 3000 m Maria carried on from her winter indoor meets and ran a huge 21-second PB of 11:17.35. She hoped to go under 1:30 in the Half Marathon, but she fell afoul of the same two-minute jinx as Michelle. She wasn't feeling her best during the race but carried grittily on because of the team aspect of the race.



Her time of 1:30:42 was another PB, but it took a day or two for her to get over her disappointment in the time and gain some perspective. Two big PBs within a week! What's to be disappointed about?

Susan ran her three races despite the infection and was top-ten in all her events. None of her times were indicative of her real abilities, but all the WMA scores for her races were in the high 80s. A model of phenomenal consistency.

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The figures below show Michelle, Susan, and Maria's performance in Torun:

3000 m

Michelle Clarke	10:55.04	7th W40-4, PB
Maria Weber	11:17.35	12th W35-9, PB
Susan Stone	12:13.86	10th W55-9

10 km Road Race

Susan Stone	42:34	4th W55-9
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Half Marathon

Michelle Clarke	1:24:35	3rd W40-4
Maria Weber	1:30:42	6th W35-9, PB
Susan Stone	1:35:34	7th W55-9

Team Canada Half Marathon: Clarke, Weber, Stone: 2nd place

It was Michelle's idea to enter a three-woman team in the Half Marathon. There was another Canadian woman eligible for their team, but CMA official Vern Christensen did the research and concluded that Canada's best chance lay in the W35-9 division despite Michelle and Susan being in older divisions. All three say that being a member of a team representing not only Canada but also Longboat was a powerful motivator. This was especially so in the case of Maria, who would have backed off a bit from feeling under the weather, but instead powered through the bad patches for a PB and a key contribution to a thrilling team silver medal.

Susan, Maria, and Michelle all speak highly of participation in international events like Torun. For Susan, it's a chance to combine competition and travel to places where one might not ordinarily go. For Maria it's a door-opening experience, exposing her to the possibilities of her own talents. Michelle loves the competitive aspects and the chance to learn from other international athletes, some of them former Olympians, about how to deal with all the challenges of major competitions. All three women urge masters-age athletes to take part in these competitions not necessarily to win, but to participate, meet other athletes from everywhere, and set an example for younger athletes.



Photo: John MacMillan



When I joined Longboat in 2008, my goal was to improve my road race times. But with the encouragement of the trackies in the club, I started to run track as a tool to improve my road times, which definitely worked. But bit by bit, I was converted to viewing track as an end unto itself. I retained my love of road races, but I began to prefer the symmetry of the track to the unpredictability of cross-country. When I entered the M55 category in late 2017, my goal was to attack the club record book. Although I set a number of new road records in 2018, of which I am proud, for the first time ever I set aside a large part of the season to really focus on the track. As a result, I managed to set new club records in the 800m, 1500m, 2000m and 3000m. But the track Mile eluded me.

Even though most track events are measured in metric units, the Mile remains a classic distance and a formidable test for any runner. The Longboat M55 record was 5:23.06, set thirty years ago by Alan Blakey in 1989. For several years my time in the Mile had been stuck in the 5:35-5:36 range, but in 2018, I had a breakthrough, running a new PB of 5:27.3, which was respectably close to Blakey's record. I had also run a solid 800m that summer in 2:24.8, which worked out to 36.2 seconds per 200m. If I could do that, I thought, I could manage

40 seconds per 200m over eight laps on an indoor track for the mile (1609m). That would give me a time of 5:20, with three seconds in hand over the record. Winter training in 2018-19 on the indoor track at the UofT suggested that this was doable, but would I be able to pull it off in 2019?

My first chance to do so was February 17 in Mini-Meet Three at York University. Looking at the seedtimes, I saw that I would be in the same heat as running legend Jerry Kuymans (M63), who holds several formidable provincial records. Jerry has no idea who I am, of course, but his seedtime of 5:15 was just a bit faster than my goal time of 5:20. If I could tag along behind him, I could meet my objective.

As usual, it was with a certain degree of dread that I took the long subway ride to York University for Mini-Meet Three. Planning something and doing it are two very different things. I had missed Mini-Meet One because of a knee injury from a hockey puck, and Mini-Meet Two because of a conflict with the Robbie Burns 8k, so this was going to be my first track event of the year. Usually the first one is just a tune-up or measurement race. Last year it was a disaster when I collapsed 50m from the finish line in my first attempt at the club's M55 3000m record. I had pushed too hard, too soon. The big lessons from this setback were that I had to set realistic pacing goals and to manage my emotions while under intense physical stress.

We were scheduled to start the Mile just after 4 pm, so a sense of foreboding hung over my head all day like a dark grim cloud. Would I be able to do it? Could I endure the pain? Would I collapse again? Nothing was certain. To compound matters, the track meet was an hour behind schedule, so the anxiety was prolonged. I did my warm-up too early and was actually cold before the race, which was obviously not ideal. On the other hand, my dark thoughts were replaced by boredom, which might have been a good thing. I actually felt a sense of relief when we finally lined up at the starting line. Let's get this over with, I thought!

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My race plan fell apart right away because of a messy start. Right away, several speedy young girls cut me off on both sides. They looked like gazelles but ran like running backs. As a result, my first lap was my worst one (41.887 seconds). Jerry zoomed ahead of the pony-tailed blockers at a pace that was too quick for me, so I decided to be patient and to pass the girls when they tired out. If they ever tired out. After just two laps, I was working much harder than I expected to keep them in range. I was at the tail end of the pack, and thought about quitting. Those dark thoughts no doubt cost me a little time and energy. But the cheers from my Longboat teammates and other well-wishers kept me going. Having dropped out of other track races before, I definitely, definitely did NOT want the letters DNF to appear beside my name. Better to hang on and just try to finish. Any finish is better than not finishing.

As I completed lap three, I realized that I was actually right on the pace I needed, so that was heartening. And at the end of lap four I passed three of the young girls who had cut me off earlier. That was good. As I hit the midway mark, I realized that the record was still within reach if I could just grit it out for four more laps. I kept saying to myself: just give me one more good lap, one more good lap. If I could manage just three, I knew that I could bang out a fast, final one. I focused on being strong and smooth, thinking positive thoughts. Even though the lactic acid was building up in my legs, I got slightly faster with each lap, knowing that every step was bringing me closer to the finish line. I was motivated to stay ahead of the runners who I had passed and to catch the ones in front of me. Suddenly, Jerry was not that far away. I found out afterwards that my lap times were:

Lap 1: 41.887 (*messy start, with an extra nine meters*)

Lap 2: 38.546 (*in second last place, thinking of quitting*)

Lap 3: 40.697 (*realizing the game is on*)

Lap 4: 40.247 (*passed the girls*)

Lap 5: 40:707 (*realizing that the club record is within reach*)

Lap 6: 40.199 (*trying to finish strong*)

Lap 7: 40.119 (*gaining on Jerry*)

Lap 8: 39.301 (*the last push!*)

Adding up the numbers, I managed a very slight negative split, running the first half of the race in 2:41.337 seconds and the second half in 2:40.323, for an overall pace of exactly 3:20/km. As I started the last lap, I psyched myself up for the final all-out effort. I red-lined it, pushing so hard my vision got blurry as the blood drained from my head to my legs. I could feel the burn, but I closed in on Jerry, narrowing his lead on me to just 4.3 seconds. So my original race plan had been sound after all! I pushed across the finish line and collapsed to replenish my empty lungs. My final time was 5:21.7! Instead of a DNF, I had run a huge new PB, set a WMA score of 83.12, and broken a 30 year old club record!

Records were made to be challenged. Hopefully this one won't last as long as the old one!

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS!

We always welcome & encourage your submissions!

Past submissions have ranged from opinion pieces, book reviews, race reports, training tips, recipes, member profiles, photos, puzzles to hilarious email exchanges. There's no limit on your creativity!

Please contact: Bert

(vicepresident@longboatroadrunners.com) & Kat

(communications@longboatroadrunners.com) to

contribute to the next issue.

