

LONGBOAT roadrunners



Wildfire

Official Newsletter of the Longboat Roadrunners

Editors: Kat Thompson, Bert de Vries

SUMMER 2019

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NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We've had a busy second quarter! The weather improved (albeit a bit slowly) and it was finally possible to get the Longboat singlet out on the road. For many, spring was a chance to race after the hard winter work (except for Rob Madej, who never stopped racing – an incredible feat with even more incredible results). As usual we have produced a long list of top finishes and PBs. Longboat teams also flew the feather at the Cabot Trail Relay Race and the Ekiden Longest Day Relay Race. Well done in particular to the Cabot team (and the team organizers) who competed in tough circumstances – many running two legs – but still had great results and, more importantly, a lot of fun.

The Executive Committee has also been busy. The focus is still on supporting initiatives to review and improve the club culture. Thank you to the club members who have put in so much effort on these issues, particularly through the town hall and code of conduct discussions. We've also organized several events, including two successful track days (with Bert insisting on managing the first event despite still recovering from major surgery!), the first women's brunch, and a nutrition talk by Stephen Walter. We also had a group attend the Tom Longboat Run at the Brantford Six Nations. Coming up in the next quarter: many more races (to run or to volunteer at), the Women's Summer Social, and of course our very own Sunset Shuffle and Longboat Toronto Island Run - both great events that we can always be proud of.

Happy running and working on your singlet tan,
Martin

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, July 18-Sunday, July 21: NCCWMA 2019 Masters Track Meet

Saturday, July 27: Women's Summer Social (SUP + Brunch)

Sunday, July 28: Beaches Jazz Run (*contact Martin for discount code*)

Thursday, August 8: Sunset Shuffle

Saturday, August 17: Shakespeare Runs the Night 5/15/30K (*contact Martin for discount code*)

Sunday, August 18: Open Streets Toronto

Saturday, August 24: Toronto Women's 5K/10K

Sunday, September 8: Longboat Toronto Island Run

Wednesday, September 11: Longboat Cross Country (5K)



NEW MEMBERS

Longboat Roadrunners would like to welcome back the following returning members:

Nils Blondon

2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT

Martin Odendaal

VICE PRESIDENT

Bert de Vries

SECRETARY

John MacMillan

TREASURER

Bill Prest

COMMUNICATIONS

Kat Thompson

SOCIAL COORDINATOR

Stephen Word

COACHING COORDINATOR

Michelle Clarke

RACE COORDINATOR

George Hubbard

PAST PRESIDENT

Rob Hanks

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RACE RESULTS

Streetsville Mile (June 1)

Lucas Wilson	4:58	3rd M35-59	LB record
Jean-Emile Paraiso	5:22	M45-59	LB record
Maria Weber	5:39	2nd W35-59	
Michelle Clarke	5:47	2nd W40-44	
Monica Lee	5:49	1st W45-59	
Jay Yakabowich	6:25		

Thunder Bay June Classic 10K (June 1)

Paige Kobe	39:12	1st woman, 3rd overall
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12 Mile Creek Trail Half Marathon (June 1)

Jim Rawling	1:47:56	1st M60-69
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Barrie 10K (June 2)

Martin Odendaal	36:21	3rd overall
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Muskoka Band on the Run 10K (June 8)

Susan Stone	45:11	1st W50-59	2nd woman
Julia Barnes	52:54		

Niagara Ultra (June 15)

10K

Heidi Sobol	1:08:17
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Half Marathon

Monica Lee	1:34:34	1st woman
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Lululemon 10K (June 15)

Paige Kobe	40:53.6	
Michelle Clarke	40:56.4	2nd W45-49
Bon Gazalle	41:10.4	
Trevor Kobe	41:23.3	2nd M55-59
Maria Weber	42:35.5	
Susan Stone	42:53.1	2nd W55-59
Erik Lopenen	45:02.6	
Debra Kobe	63:57.7	

Manitoba Half Marathon (June 16)

Jojo Herrera	1:25:50.3	1st M40-44
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Pride & Remembrance 5K (June 22)

Susan Stone	21:07
Jim Rawling	23:18
Claire Prest	38:35



LONGBOAT ROAD MILE

Photo: John MacMillan



**EKIDEN RELAY****Photo:** Andre Morgan**RACE RESULTS (CON'T)****Grandma's Marathon (June 22)**

Rob Madej 3:00:23

Roger Moss 3:19:15

MEC Toronto Race #4 5K (June 23)

Andrei Ordine 19:08.8

Brooklin Canada Day Races (July 1)**5K**

Jojo Herrera 18:44 2nd overall

Limberlost Challenge (July 6)**28K**

Martin Odendaal 2:42:06 2nd M30-39 3rd overall

Lucas Wilson 2:53:03 3rd M30-39

Edwin Alvarado 3:05:59

**LONGBOAT TRACK DAY #1 WITH TRS****Photo:** Richard Bailey**2019 Ekiden Toronto Longest Day Marathon Relay
OPEN**

Place	Team Name	Category	Time	Var	Pace
1	BLACKTOE MEN	OPEN	2:21:41	0:00:00	0:03:21
2	PACE & MIND - MEN	OPEN	2:25:26	0:03:45	0:03:27
3	MAGENTA-LMEN	OPEN	2:34:55	0:13:14	0:03:40
4	OHANA	OPEN	2:36:56	0:15:15	0:03:43
5	LONGBOAT MEN'S	OPEN	2:37:02	0:15:21	0:03:43
6	BEER LEGS	OPEN	2:38:36	0:16:55	0:03:46
7	UNLEASHED RUNNING VOL 2	OPEN	2:39:40	0:17:59	0:03:47
8	MANIC RC - TEAM ESPRESSO	OPEN	2:40:18	0:18:37	0:03:48
9	RUN LIKE HELL.	OPEN	2:41:37	0:19:56	0:03:50
10	PACE & MIND - HOMME	OPEN	2:41:47	0:20:06	0:03:50
11	AJAX WANNABES	OPEN	2:41:53	0:20:12	0:03:50
12	BLACKTOE RUNNING - MEN'S 2	OPEN	2:43:29	0:21:48	0:03:52
13	PORTLAND RUNNERS	OPEN	2:45:58	0:24:17	0:03:56
14	NOVEMBER PROJECT	OPEN	2:48:31	0:26:50	0:04:00
15	UNLEASHED RACING	OPEN	2:51:19	0:29:38	0:04:04
16	TRIBE ALCOHOLIGANS	OPEN	2:51:51	0:30:10	0:04:04
17	STRIDEWISE	OPEN	2:58:58	0:37:17	0:04:14
18	BUCK-A-BEER	OPEN	2:59:10	0:37:29	0:04:15
19	SPITBUSTERS	OPEN	3:01:13	0:39:32	0:04:18
20	THE GETAWAY STICKS	OPEN	3:02:19	0:40:38	0:04:19
21	LOW-KEY CHEETAH	OPEN	3:07:09	0:45:28	0:04:26
22	TORONTO HARRIERS	OPEN	3:09:40	0:47:59	0:04:30
23	PORTLAND RUNNERS	OPEN	3:20:01	0:58:20	0:04:44

Longboat Team: Lucas Wilson, Tony McIsaac, Jojo Herrera, Jake Lopez, Rob Hanks, Dermot Sullivan**MIXED**

Place	Team Name	Category	Time	Var	Pace
1	LONGBOAT MIXED	MIXED	2:46:12	0:00:00	0:03:56
2	COTTON SHORTS	MIXED	2:46:16	0:00:04	0:03:56
3	PURPLE REIGN	MIXED	2:51:06	0:04:54	0:04:03
4	MANIC RC - TEAM SQUIRREL	MIXED	3:06:12	0:20:00	0:04:25
5	BIKES ON SHOES	MIXED	3:13:20	0:27:08	0:04:35

Longboat Team: Martin Odendaal, Chris James, Ken Wong, Heidi Mok, LBF's Emily, Kenty

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) or Kat (communications@longboatroadrunners.com) if you would like to contribute to an upcoming issue.

ATHENA & CLYDESDALE - COMING IN 2020!

Author: Heidi Sobol



When we ask members why they run, there are a range of answers that typically centre on fitness, competition and fellowship. For many of us, we get a little thrill waking up on race morning, with the potential of hitting the podium. However, that thrill is absent for a number of runners who, despite all their efforts, are impeded by their body weight. Higher than normal body weight is not always a result of a love of Ben & Jerry's: genetic disposition, food addiction and relative height can compromise a runner's performance.

In the late 1980s, a Baltimore-area accountant analyzed running race results and found that men who weighed over 170 pounds were performing less favourably than men of the same age who had a slighter build. Subsequent research validated these observations, which essentially say the same thing: supporting your body weight is to blame for much of the energetic cost of running. Shortly thereafter, North American running and triathlon organizations began offering weight divisions, in addition to the gender, age and elite categories.

These weight divisions are called Athena for women and Clydesdale for men. Athena class typically welcomes women over 150 pounds, while Clydesdale is for men over 200 pounds (note that these weights can vary). To qualify you must identify whether you will race as gender/age OR gender/weight ... and you have to self-identify (that means no public weigh-in, which is mercifully no longer used!). You cannot race in both age and weight categories.

Starting in 2020, Longboat's running races, The Sunset Shuffle and The Island Race, will offer Athena and Clydesdale divisions. By offering these divisions we aim to:

- Increase accessibility to runners who may not feel they belong in a race environment. Racing in a weight division is seen as a fun challenge for racers who have always felt inhibited racing against those of slighter build;
- Challenging the stigma associated with weight, which can have little correlation with fitness levels;
- Longboat will be the premier race organization in Toronto to offer these categories, making it uniquely attractive to people building their race calendars;
- This is part of our heritage! Longboat used to offer these designations (\$5 to anyone who can remember when we used to do this!).



WEDNESDAY NIGHT AT THE SETTLEMENT

Photo: Steve Blackburn

Through the rest of 2019, look for initiatives to establish this new opportunity and please contact Heidi Sobol if you are interested in helping out.



Photos: Richard Bailey, John MacMillan



ROB IN FINE RACING FORM!

Rob Madej grew up in a family of four boys with only four years separating oldest from youngest. He remembers a childhood filled with sports involving his brothers. He started running laps at the age of 10 on a dirt track in Montreal, starting a long history of feeling comfortable running considerable distances with only himself for company. By Grade 6 he was the best middle distance runner in his school. At the age of 16 he entered the Montreal Marathon, having reached the qualifying age by a week. Not expertly prepared, he had to drop out at 36 km, but he was not at all disappointed with himself, starting another personal history of not being hard on himself when a result was not ideal. He feels that excessive self-criticism is counter-productive and leads to more unfavourable results. In his late twenties he tried another marathon, finishing this time in the 4-hour range.

Running took a back seat when he got married and concentrated on family and the development of his business, and his weight ballooned to 195 lb. One day he wanted to play in a sandbox with his young son, and found there was not enough room for the two of them. It was time to start running again. His wife contributed by changing his poor dietary habits, cutting back on junk foods and adding vegetables. His wife's employer was planning to run the Toronto half marathon and Rob decided to train with him and ran a respectable 1:45 with only 4 weeks of training.

Things improved from there. In 2013 Rob's paternal grandfather, who had largely filled the role vacated by his absent father, passed away, and Rob delivered the eulogy at the funeral. Only a couple of weeks later he ran the Sporting Life 10 km. He describes this as his first really excellent race: he was fast, free and easy, filled with the spirit of his beloved grandfather. When he speaks of it now you can still sense the euphoria of that day.

Around this time Rob had been running our island Race on a regular basis. I first met him when he was picking up race kits for his whole family. I got into a conversation with him and encouraged him to join Longboat, persuading him that some training companionship might do his performances some good. And so it proved. He immediately found kindred talents in the club such as Lucas Wilson, Noel Guy, Rob Hanks and Steve Metzger to run and improve with. He became a regular at track and cross country meets and starting making noise in his age group at many races.

When he turned 40, Rob decided to mark the occasion with something special: he ran the Haliburton Forest 50-miler. It's fair to say that not many of us would have chosen such celebration, but he did. When he turned 50, having successfully competed in the World Masters Outdoor Games in Spain, it was time for a new kind of celebration. Rob decided, starting in September of 2018, to run a marathon every month of his 51st year. The first one was the Wineglass Marathon in Corning, NY. It was a brilliant start: he ran 2:50:52, was first in his AG and won \$400.00, not to mention an engraved glass memento. He reports a beautiful course, spectacular scenery, and first-rate organization.

The next stop on the tour was the Scotiabank Toronto Marathon where he ran his fastest time: 2:49:03.5, finishing 2nd in his AG. He feels that running in a hometown races offers great advantages. You sleep in your own bed, you know every step of the course, so there are no surprises, and you get all kinds of support on the course from friends and especially Longboat members.

The next marathon was close to home as well, the Road 2 Hope in Hamilton. Rob ran a large part of the race with Noel Guy, and this helped him through a race which he says was particularly hard on his legs. His time was 2:53:55. The next race, in December, saw him head south to the Rehoboth



Seashore Marathon in Delaware where he ran 2:59:11. This is a great place to visit in summer, says Rob, leaving much unsaid about its winter character.

January saw Rob heading for the Georgia Sea Islands for the Jekyll Island Marathon Which he describes as flat and extremely well organized. The day he ran was very windy but he prevailed brilliantly and finished 2nd overall in 2:56:53. His prize was a beautiful artistic plate.

Rob's string of sub-3 hour times came to an end in February at the Hyannis, MA Marathon. There were high winds and torrential rains. Traditionally in cold-weather marathons, the runners wear a garbage bag to stay dry and relatively warm until the gun. Rob never took the garbage bag off as he ran with a group of runners which gradually wore down to one fellow competitor with whom he ran for some time. Moral support is essential in a race like that. He finished in the top ten in a time of 3:02:10.

The next stop, in March, couldn't have been more different. It was the Hilo Marathon in Hawaii. This race presented its own challenges. The first 8 miles was out-and-back and extremely hilly. The weather was hot and humid, and Rob even went off course for a distance. The result – a 3:12:09 which was still good for 3rd overall.

The weather forecasts for the Boston Marathon were very poor, and the prospects for a good time were questionable. However, the weather proved much better than expected, and Rob feels that his Hilo experience was beneficial in terms of acclimatization as he seemed to struggle less than other competitors in the conditions that day. He returned to sub-3 hour territory with a time of 2:58:19.

Rob returned home to do the Toronto Marathon in May. He surprised himself with a good early pace which allowed him to finish in 2:56:56.3. All the same advantages he enjoyed in the Scotiabank Marathon came to his aid again, especially the terrific support he got from Club members along the course.

For Grandma's Marathon in Duluth, Minnesota, Rob had to drive himself all the way the day before, since two of his children were graduating from their respective schools. And he was without Karen, his wife and rock. Nonetheless, he persevered with a

time of 3:00:23 (514th and 8th in his AG) in an amazingly high-quality field that featured 509 sub-3-hour times and a winning time of 2:11:56. Everything about this race, he says, was first-rate: the organization, the course and the weather.

How does one keep up one's training with such an exhausting calendar of long races? Rob says he goes mostly by feel, listening carefully to the messages his body is sending. After a marathon he spends a week doing very easy runs. I know what his "easy" means because two days after Boston he ran 6 km with me at 6 minutes per km pace on the Wednesday evening Longboat run. When he says easy he means easy. Then, under the guidance of his coach Roger Moss, the mileage will typically build up for a couple of weeks to 90-120 km/week, with 2 or 3 workouts involving longer accelerations of, say 1000 m, 1200 m, and 800 m. The Sunday long run might include stretches at 3:30 – 4:00 min/km pace, or a 5 km stretch at 18:20. This is how Rob maintains not only his endurance but also the speed needed to consistently go under 3 hours. He likes to wear compression gear on his legs to minimize the danger of injury when he is in full training mode. To supplement the running he maintains his core strength with exercises such as planks and pushups. When the next marathon looms, he starts tapering about a week and a half before, making sure he is fully rested.



ROB USES THE RAIL TRAIL MILE AS MARATHON SPEEDWORK

The campaign is beginning to wind down now. In July Rob plans to run the Friendly Massey Marathon, which he won outright a couple of years ago, and which he knows well. In August his 12th marathon will be the one in Grand Rapids, MI. We wish him well in his last two marathons of the campaign, and look forward to seeing what his next challenge will be.



Photos: Jojo Herrera, Gerardo Reyes



FIRST ROW: Gerardo Reyes, Claire Cram, JoJo Herrera, Nadine Finlay

SECOND ROW: Mike Durocher, Diane Marrow, Zohrab Mawani, John Sacco, Roger Moss, Jim Rawling

THIRD ROW: Dermot Sullivan

Team Longboat arrived at the Halifax Airport on Friday afternoon, rented our vehicles, and headed to Baddeck. Our digs for the weekend were the Telegraph Resort in Baddeck. Gerardo Reyes and Jojo Herrera hosted dinner in their command central cottage, where we discussed rules, regulations and strategy. Zohrab Mawani, along with Mike Durocher as sous chef, prepared a delicious pasta dinner for us, which was greatly appreciated.



Nadine Finlay, Longboat Friend (Legs 1 & 16)

Leg 1 was an exhilarating start to the race. The clear, sunny morning made for some amazing views across the 17 km route filled with rolling hills, soaring eagles, and a really unique root formation reaching towards a small cliff on either side. The leg flew by as I was aided by the enthusiasm and cheers of the wonderful Longboat team!

Leg 16 is uncharacteristically the flattest portion of the trail; with gorgeous lakeside views, with fields extending to the forests edge on either side. While the pavement became rough, my ankles rose to the challenge and carried me safely for the 15.42 km. As a happy surprise, the leg ended at a church named for my family's clan. Fighting off sleepiness, several Longboat members



The 31st annual Cabot Trail Relay Race took place on May 25-26, 2019 along the scenic coastline of Cape Breton, NS. The relay course is comprised of 276 kilometers throughout the rugged Cape Breton Highlands National Park and Cape Breton Island.

This popular event provides 70 teams the opportunity to compete on some of the most grueling hills on Canada's east coast. It is extremely well organized, with strict rules for participants to ensure a high level of safety. It is now the only race available in Nova Scotia that allows night time running. The event concludes on Sunday with an awards banquet in the Baddeck Arena, catered by the Lions Club.

Eight brave Longboaters and three Longboat friends picked up the torch to achieve 17th place overall out of 70 teams. Six of our runners were required to run two legs each in order to complete all 17 legs of the course.

Here are their stories.



cheerily saw me off and celebrated my finish for this leg. My first time running this race, the Longboat team made me feel so supported and welcomed! The energy of the race is palpable, and I am so thankful for the opportunity to be a part of not just one, but two legs for such a dedicated team!

Zohrab Mawani (Legs 2 & 15)

I had heard about the Cabot Trail Relay over the years and I knew it would be fun, but you can never know how great it will be until you actually do it. It was amazing to witness the achievement; the people (*open, welcoming*); the friendly competition; the team work (*everyone contributed in their own way, even Jimmy*); the effort (*Night legs! Doubles!*); and the leadership (*Jojo! Gerardo!*). There were many challenges, but I don't recall hearing anyone complain; except maybe John Sacco. Constantly. (*Ha! Just joking John!*) The crew was there to support runners with water along the way (*Dermot!*). They forgot me on Leg 2, but that's ok, it was only 18 km! Knowing they were out there, somewhere, I was able to keep going. With the support and encouragement of the team, I could give it my all during my two legs. While apprehensive about doing two legs in 24 hours, I was up for the challenge and pleasantly surprised with how things turned out. Who knew I'd find some kick in my legs in the last 500 meters of my second leg and be able to pass the guy I'd been hanging on to for about 6 km! The Cabot experience really made me realize how lucky we are as a club that we have a little bit of this team experience every week back at home. Longboat - a club that survives and thrives. This is our running club!



Diane Marrow (Leg 3)

Leg 3 is one of the easiest legs on the course, so naturally I claimed it early in the planning stage. This being my first experience at the relay, I was worried about not finishing before they lifted the mat at the other end. I was surprised how hot it was at 10:00am, and was grateful I carried water with me. At 13.45 km long, Leg 3 is rated 2 on the difficulty scale, but somehow the hills, described as rolling, were such that I was required to slow my pace dramatically. This felt discouraging, but when I saw what other runners had to face, I stopped complaining. The cheering and support of everyone on the course was so great. Runners are seldom on their own as participants from other teams cheer you on as well. I am unable to describe the beauty of Leg 3, as I tend to trip in potholes when I try to enjoy the scenery. Suffice it to say, the entire Cabot Trail is stunning and I look forward to running another leg in the future.

Jojo Herrera (Legs 4 & 11)



Cabot never disappoints. Since the day I said yes to Kevin Gallagher (after years to convincing me to join), I have been addicted to Cabot. This is my fourth Cabot and it was a surprising treat to do doubles this year! Leg 4 is what they call Cape Smokey with a 2.7

km plus steep incline. That leg was epic because after you climb the 3.75 km incline you literally sweep down. It felt like riding a roller coaster.

Leg 11 was epic as well, pure downhill in the dark - just me, the pavement, the stars and the wind. Mmmmmmm. It was beautiful - just like all our runners this year. Thank you for the experience of a lifetime.



Roger Moss (Legs 5 & 10)

This year was my eleventh year running the Cabot Trail Relay. I started in 2006 with the team Cardio Arrest, put together by Lynn Bourque, and ran all but two years until the team was disbanded after the 2016 race. Over the years numerous Longboat members had joined team Cardio Arrest for the annual outing to Cape Breton and realized just how much fun it is. So perhaps it was not surprising that Jojo, Gerardo and Laura McLean organized a Longboat team for our official Cabot Trail debut in 2018. Jojo and Gerardo again organized a team for Cabot this year, but it was a much harder sell and we ended up going with just 11 runners, out of a maximum of 17. Several runners, including two of the women, gamely stepped up to run two legs each. The weather on race day was surprisingly warm; too warm for running around midday, as I prepared to get ready to run Leg 5. Jojo had just done a great job running Leg 4 up Smokey Mountain and he looked hot at the end! Fortunately, during Leg 5, which is a beautifully scenic leg running along the coast, a breeze picked up and while people normally complain about a headwind, I don't think anyone did so on this leg.

With my first leg done it was time to rest up for my assault on MacKenzie Mountain in 5 hours' time. It seemed like a good idea to run two legs while back in Toronto, but it was altogether another story recovering from a hot race and contemplating running up a 7% incline for 6 km followed by rolling hills for another 9! But this is Cabot, and it is all about the team, so I pulled on the safety vest, donned the headlamp and started hauling ass uphill. Fortunately it was dark and I couldn't see what lay ahead so I just kept putting one foot in front of the other from one switchback to the next and tried to maintain contact with the runner in front of me. I remember watching this leg in years past and the procession of lights strung out along the mountain is something to see. The climb was brutal but I was happy when it was over, and enjoyed a spirited race over the rest of the leg with two other runners – who I pulled along for a while before I ran out of gas about a kilometer before the finish and they dropped me like the battered old man I felt.

Cabot can beat you up pretty good, but most people emerge with a smile on their face. It was another fun year with adventures and misadventures and the seemingly obligatory funny photo. This year it

was taken by Jojo and the subject being Jimmy's obvious excitement while running his first leg. With only a few more legs to do to reach all 17, I know I will be back to run the Cabot Trail for a few more years yet.

Claire Cram, Longboat Friend (Legs 7 & 17)

The Cabot Trail relay has always been on my bucket list, so when Jojo needed runners I was there! I ended up running two legs - the 7th (apparently this little mountain is just a "moderate" leg) and the 17th – a.k.a. the glory leg, or anchor. A scenic, fairly brutal 18 km, after roughly 26

hours of sitting in a car, running, eating junk food and cheering wildly at the side of the road. I think the most memorable moment of the 17th leg was when I got to a water station and a volunteer said "only one hill to go and 5 km." He forgot to mention that the hill was about 4 km long and that last kilometer downhill would be the best run EVER.

First I started downhill, then I heard the cheering and then I saw the loooonnnngggg line of runners forming the high-five tunnel to the finish line. Best Feeling EVER! Thanks Jojo and Longboat. Wouldn't have missed it for the world!!

Mike Durocher (Leg 8)

The ups & downs of Leg 8 consisted of sometimes gently rolling, sometimes long and moderate hills. Easy rolling turned into a few short hills, followed by a steep climb. Just when you think you're coming to some flatter ground you encounter a couple more hills and more challenging hills. Finally very steep hills, maximum elevation and steep downhill, falling quickly. A flat stretch. Falls. Levels off. Coasts down. Descends. Downhill. I don't think I'll ever come down from the experience. What an amazing group of ATHLETES!



Dermot Sullivan (Leg 9)



Leg 9 a.k.a. North Mountain features an epic 385m climb in the last of the daylight over Cape Breton. This gradient ramps in intensity from the start line all the way up to the 6 km marker. Snow banks on either side of the course signal the start of the 2 km plateau. The other side then feels like free fall. I tumble down the mountain and follow the rolling hills to complete darkness at the finish line. It was a roller coaster of a leg, which seems fitting for the weekend. An incredible experience with an even more incredible team. It's set the bar high for my first Cabot, and I'm sure I'll be back soon. Thank you Team Longboat!

Gerardo Reyes (Leg 12)

For some reason I always end up with a late night or early morning leg, and this time wasn't the exception. Leg 12 started at 12:35am. Having run four other legs in the past I find each leg has its own charm. Well, Leg 12 didn't disappoint. It started with a very steep long downhill followed by steep rolling hills in total darkness. The first ten kilometers of this leg were in Cape Breton Highlands National Park so the chances of running into a moose were high but unfortunately (maybe luckily) it didn't occur. I was literally running in the middle of nowhere and it was pitch black for most of the first half of the leg.

Quite the experience! The last few kilometers were in the village of Cheticamp so that part was very illuminated. That was my fifth leg and I am looking forward to coming back with my Longboat family to find the charm of the next one.

John Sacco (Leg 13) [Account by Diane Marrow]

"I found him! I found him!" shouted Dermot upon discovering John in the Med Services tent. John claimed he was kidnapped, but the medics suggested otherwise.

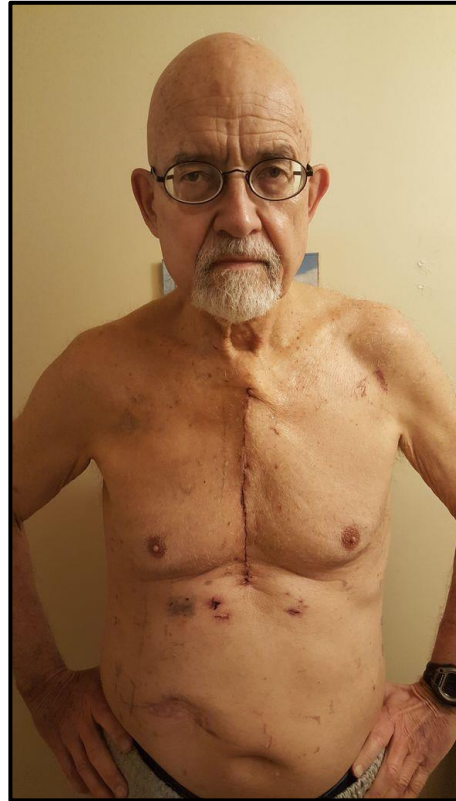
John is our Longboat friend, who hoped to accomplish 100 km during the weekend. As ultra-runners know: more distance, less speed, is the order of the day. When John was faced with a faster pace for the Longboat leg, he was pressured into increasing his pace, which ultimately was his undoing. It was a nighttime leg and the temperature had dropped. At the end of his leg he was unable to find the support team van. Someone suggested they were sleeping elsewhere on the course, and John became physically distressed and was taken off to the tent for recovery. When Jimmy Rawling finished the subsequent leg, he was approached by the event coordinators, who asked if he was part of Team 34. Worried that there was about to be some infraction laid upon Team Longboat, he searched for a way to deny his team number. But since it showed prominently on his bib, he had to concur. That was when he was told that one of his team members was in the medical tent. Thankfully, it wasn't too serious and the group was reunited.



On Sunday April 28 I ran 11.5 km, more than half of it with the Sunday morning group from the University Settlement House. I felt fine and had brunch as usual at the Queen Mother Café with my fellow runners. On Monday, a day I don't usually run, I rowed 10,000 m on my Concept 2 rowing machine in about 46 minutes. Felt fine. On Tuesday morning I cycled home from my partner Kathleen's place and decided to take a nap on my couch. When I woke up I had a sharp pain starting on the left side of my head running down to my neck and upper chest. I briefly thought about going for my Tuesday run to see if it would go away, but I felt too uncomfortable. So I packed my backpack with essentials and decided to take the streetcar to the hospital. I just missed one because I couldn't run to catch it. I hailed a taxi which took me to Mt. Sinai Emergency. I went through the usual triage process but it was accelerated when the triage nurses suspected something serious. The Emergency doctor, Dr. Johnson, ordered an X-Ray. She didn't like what she saw and ordered a CT scan. She liked that even less and contacted the Cardiac Unit at Toronto General. When they saw the pictures they told Dr. Johnson to get me over to them immediately. So the porters trundled me through the warren of tunnels under University Ave. to Toronto General. A team of surgeons led by Dr. Ouzounian was waiting for me. I signed a surgical waiver and then Dr. Ouzounian explained that I was undergoing a dissecting aorta. The lining of my aorta was literally tearing and leaking blood. My headache and neck pain were the result of blood leaking into my carotid artery. She told me that the surgery she planned was essential: the alternative was death. Furthermore the failure rate for this surgery was in the 20% range. She was holding my hand while she was telling me all this. I told her to do what she had to do and they put me under.

When I woke up my first thought was "Where the hell am I?" and my second was "Hey, I'm not dead!". The operation had gone on for 6 hours ending just after midnight on Wednesday morning. Dr. Ouzounian came out and explained the successful outcome of the surgery to Kathleen and my daughter Beth, but warned that I was not out of the woods for another 48 hours. After the lining of the aorta was repaired with synthetic fabric and a stent placed in the artery supplying my left kidney,

my heart had to be cooled down to be restarted when I was taken off the heart-lung machine. All of this went well, she said, because I was in such good physical shape. Kathleen and Beth overheard Dr. Chan, the surgical resident, saying the same thing to a group of medical students a bit later.



WELCOME TO THE ZIPPER CLUB!

I spent 5 days in the hospital and was sent home the following Monday. They had me walking around the ward almost immediately after I left the ICU. I was covered in tubes, needles, drains, catheters and bandages, but these were all gradually eliminated before Monday. I had a huge list of medications

that I had to take, a couple of which gave me diarrhoea for the first week home. I had breathing exercises to do and daily walks to take. Throughout all this I was tended to with the best and most loving care from Beth and Kathleen. Longboat members came to the hospital and to my home to see me and visit – all great morale-boosters. The healing of my sawed-through sternum will take till the end of June. Because I can't do the back exercises that many of you have seen me do after my runs I've had trouble sleeping because of upper-back stiffness and spasms, but this issue will diminish with alternative exercises and heat pads.

(con't: next page)



I was the victim, in a way, of a genetic ambush. My father in his sixties had an aneurysm in the artery running from his lower abdomen to his leg. It was successfully treated because the aneurysm was diagnosed before it could rupture or dissect. So I guess I was in the firing line for a similar event. The thing about my attack is that it was not predictable and came on in a flash.

None of us runners will live forever, but I have seen through my own example and those of Richard Bailey, Mike Bedley and Tony Fletcher that being in really good shape will help us to survive health crises and live longer lives than others not so lucky. Speaking of luck, I am wildly fortunate that I live in a country where health care is not a commodity, that I live a cab ride away from the best doctors that there are, that I was treated in a cardiac unit where the care is of the most professional and compassionate, rated the best in Canada and seventh in the world and that I am surrounded by loving family and friends. Whether I will be running any time soon is up in the air, but I sure will be out walking and doing other exercise that the professionals tell me I can do.

