



W O R D f r o m = t h e B I R D

BCRR MONTHLY NEWS

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30th Anniversary Edition!

A Brief (Yet Not Entirely Inaccurate) History of BCRR

by John Wieser - Reprint from 2004 and 2009 newsletters.

(Message from the January 2009 editor – We enjoy being members of BCRR, but most of us are relatively new members. Very few of us have been members for even five years. This reprint gives an amusing and insightful look back at the club to its very earliest years. Read and enjoy!)

If my fuzzy memory serves me correctly, BCRR has its roots in a club that was started by **Scott Demaree** and another runner, whose name escapes me. This probably occurred in the mid-to-late 70s and was called the Getty Oil Running Club. Obviously, the members all worked at Getty Oil and other early members were **Ray Hodges, Phil Smith, Larry Jensen, Harold Kaufman** and **Richard Zirn**. I became a member in about 1983 or 1984, as I recall. In those days, the intra-city club competition was totally dominated by the Houston Harriers, coached by **Jim McClatchie** and **Al Lawrence**. We were not particularly well organized and only ran an occasional race. Often, when we did compete, we would not have enough runners to form a single team! However, retro-singlets with Getty Oil Running Club have become quite collectable and I still have a few available, on a first come - first serve basis, for only \$49.99 plus S&H.

Shortly after I became active in the club, Scott decided to change the name. The co-founder had moved out of town and Scott

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The Birkie Ski Race



Andrew Young

On the third Saturday in February each year, thousands of athletes converge on the town of Hayward in northwest Wisconsin for one of the most unique sporting events I have found. The American Birkebeiner, the "Birkie" for short, is the largest and oldest Nordic ski marathon in North America, a sort of Boston Marathon of skiing. The race is inspired by the epic rescue of Prince Haakon of Norway in 1206, when loyal Birkebeiner (birch leggings) warriors carried the baby prince to safety by skiing

across a mountain pass. The modern Birkie was founded in 1973, and has



grown into a race with 10,000 participants from 48 states and 21 countries. The race winds for 50km through the woods and hills between Cable and Hayward. Perhaps inspired by the heroic Birkebeiners, or perhaps addled another long summer run in Houston, **Tom Wille** and I decided last June that we would par-

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Word from the Bird

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Has your contact info changed recently? Send any updates to bayou_city_road_runners@tabourne.com.

From the President



Photo Credit: Rosie Schmandt

BCRR is 30 Years Young!!

The BCRR Annual Awards Banquet is tonight (May 28th) at St. Arnold's Brewery.

This year, along with the usual festivities, we will be toasting 30 years of BCRR!! We know for sure that some BCRR founding members will be in attendance and we look forward to reminiscing with them! If you have any photos you want to share, especially those of the "oldie but goodie" variety, please bring them with you tonight. We'd love to see your changes in running style (fashion, form and figure) in the 80's, 90's and beyond!

This time of year also means elections for the BCRR Board. Time to choose the folks who do all the work to make BCRR such a fun club to be a part of. Mini biographies of our nominees are included in this issue. It's not too late to vote! Ballots will be available at the banquet tonight. Barring an unexpected coup, our new president and board won't be a huge surprise to anyone; some carryover from last year and several new members, all of who are familiar faces and who are very active with the club already. All of them are super!! If you feel you were overlooked during nominations, please volunteer! I'm sure ad hoc board members will be welcomed!! I'm looking forward to their plans for BCRR next year, both socially and running events. BARC has become a very competitive club and we're going to have to work hard to regain/retain our number one status.

It has been fun to serve on the board over the past two years but I'm also looking forward to stepping back into a 'second-banana' support position for the club. That's the place I like best and think I can do the most good. BCRR is

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REPORT YOUR RACE RESULTS

We want to know what our members are doing on the roads and/or trails. Send all your results to us at bcrr.results@gmail.com and we'll make sure they hit the next newsletter!

ADVERTISING INFO

How would you like to see your own ad in the Bayou City Road Runners Newsletter? For all personal or business advertising inquiries, please send an email to the Treasurer at susancita.bcrr@gmail.com.

WORD FROM THE BIRD

Birkie Race

(Continued from page 1)

ticipate in the 2014 race.

Training—How, you might ask, does one train for a cross country ski marathon while living in a city that sees snow once per decade? The answer is, opportunistically. We knew that our running would provide an excellent cardiovascular endurance base. Over Christmas, we both visited family in Minnesota and took the opportunity to log some kilometers on the only real snow either of us would see before race day. Lastly, in the final months leading up to the race, we terrorized the streets of Houston with rollerskis, which simulate skiing. Imagine rollerblades, only with no brakes and far less control, and with sharp sticks strapped to your hands.

The Course—The Birkie trail is a marvel. Unlike a running marathon, the Birkie has a dedicated trail, 20 feet wide, for its entire 50km distance. The trail is groomed and maintained for skiing in winter and biking and hiking in summer. The trail runs north to south, crossing two counties, several county highways, and one frozen lake, and ending on Main Street in Hayward. Overall the elevation drops 50m, however the total vertical climb is 1400m—the trail is best described as unrelentingly hilly. The course record is 1:56, and the average skier crosses the finish line with a time of 3:45 most years. Skiers may choose to compete in skating or classical technique; skating is generally faster while classic is the more traditional style.



Andrew Young with Tom Wille at the Birkie in Hayward, Wisconsin

The Race—We traveled to Hayward a day in advance, staying with friends in a cabin. Our travels were complicated from the start by a massive winter storm that dumped more than a foot of snow across Wisconsin Thursday night. Ironically, snow before a ski race is actually undesirable. Without enough time to properly groom the course and pack the loose snow, the surface of the trail becomes very soft, conditions skiers refer to as “mashed potatoes.” Furthermore, behind the storm arrived a cold front, so we were greeted at the start with a temperature of 0°F. We lined up anyway with Norwegian warrior-like determination, desperately hoping to

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Word from the Prez

(Continued from page 2)

like family to me. We had a hard working board this year whom deserve kudos. Special thanks to **Bob Thompson**, who has been a phenomenal VP; **Susan Cita**, our current treasurer who has kept our books in ship-shape; **Sam McMurtrey**, our lovely secretary and a big shout out to our at large members,

Andrew Young,
Heidi Zimmerman,
Andrew Kenworthy and
Patrick Flaherty.

Thanks so much to **Lisa Thompson**, who is an awesome ad-hoc member and who has hosted all of our board meetings this year (not to mention other club events).

Other behind the scenes people who deserve thanks and recognition include **Joe Lengfellner**, our newsletter editor who did a great job in revamping our BCRR website; **Mike Mangan** and **Heather Hofstetter**, our *Footprints* columnists, and **Kathi Mahon**, who not only helped with the website, but also serves on the HARRA board, and looks out for our best interests there. I’m sure I’m forgetting someone...it takes a village to keep our club running (pun intended).

See you at the banquet!!

Rosie



Birkie Race

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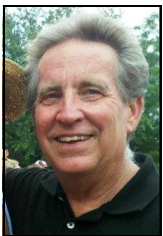


Andrew Young competing at the Birkie

reach the finish with the same number of toes we started with. As promised it was a rugged race—the winning time was the slowest since 2001, and the average time was an hour slower than past years. Tom felt he was not sufficiently challenged, however, so he suffered an equipment malfunction at 8km that essentially doubled his effort on every hill he climbed. He persevered and finished the race in 5:50, his first ski marathon in 15 years. I raced well, skiing one of my slowest times for this race at 3:05 but placing higher than I ever have before and feeling strong throughout. As usual, the atmosphere of this race made the event special. Thousands of spectators throng the woods of rural Wisconsin, building fires, playing music, and cheering the racers. The town of Hayward, population 2318, is one giant party. The sense of community and support from your fellow skiers is remarkable. It is no wonder that many skiers return each year from far and wide to reunite with old friends and challenge themselves on the trail. That certainly describes Tom

and me—we'll see you there in 2015!

Training Tips



Terry Fanning

There are two separate problems that often cause morning runs to be missed. While these are most often found on Saturday or Sunday mornings, they can occur on any day of the week.

Bed Gravity - This is a problem that can be beaten, but often requires a serious effort. The individual can get up a little, but is pulled back into the bed. There are various levels of "bed gravity" with the worst being almost as bad as "bed Velcro." Believed to be related to motivation.

Bed Velcro - A more serious issue is when the individual can't even get up a little. It is pretty much useless to fight it. Unlike "bed gravity," even the highest level of motivation is not going to work. The cause is most often related to nutritional issues (often alcohol related) and/or lack of sleep.

Both are legitimate reasons to avoid getting up for the workout. If it happens too often, a serious look has to be given to the root cause.

Having either problem occasionally is not a bad thing. People who do not occasionally suffer from either problem are people who just don't have their priorities straight. Don't beat yourself up for missing a run because you can't get out of bed. And if your running buddy doesn't show up to meet you for a morning run for either reason - don't give them any crap. Be happy for them and enjoy your workout alone.



NBAD Half-Marathon



Joel DuBois, *BCCR Foreign Correspondent Extraordinaire*

The National Bank of Abu Dhabi (NBAD) Half-Marathon

March 7, 2014

Photo credit:
Joel DuBois

A youngster at work (25), has talked to me about running for 2+ years since he heard I was running the 2012 Dubai Marathon. He ran the 10k associated with that marathon and was a bit disappointed when the 1st 10k of my marathon was faster than his 10k. He had started too fast and faded. We started running occasionally, and he always seemed to easily run my pace, but never wanted to run more than 3-5 miles, his comfort zone.

Shortly after the 2014 Dubai Marathon (January 24th), where he ran his 3rd 10k and beat my 1st 10k time, he was talking about wanting to run a half-marathon, as he had done for quite a while, but never acted on it. I think I surprised him by mentioning there was one coming up in ~6 weeks that I would be willing to run with him if he signed up, and that he would have just enough time to train for the extra miles.

To my surprise, he signed up, so I made up a short training plan to prepare him. We ran every Friday morning, starting with 7 miles, adding a mile each week. I also kept telling him he needed to run during the week, not



Photo credit: NBAD report

quite what he wanted to hear. He definitely believes in minimalism, when it comes to running. He finally agreed to run Mondays and Wednesdays, but wasn't really happy about it. He kept asking if I thought we could break 2 hours, but kept saying he would be happy with anything under 2:15. I knew he could break 2:00 if he kept a proper pace, so my plan was to pace him to a 1:59, if the

temps were such that I could hold the pace for the whole race.

As he got to the end of his long runs, he kept dropping his head down, so I counseled him on running form and the importance of keeping good form as you tire. We ran a 10-miler (his first) on the morning I left for the States (Feb19) to visit my mother for her 85th birthday. It was a work day and he did well, as we averaged just under a 9 min mile. The real test would be the next week when he was to run another 10-miler on his own. I didn't think he'd to it. When I returned to Dubai a week before the race, he informed me he had run 9.5 miles, and walked the last half mile, much better than I had expected.



Most mornings we ran we were experiencing low-mid 60s. The day before we had HEAVY fog, so weren't sure what we'd have for race day. The race started at 6:15am (daybreak), and I woke up to 70 degrees and clear, meaning it would just get warmer from there. I hate running in warm temps and do not run well in them either. With this, my plans changed in that I would pace him as long as I could hold a ~8:45 pace, but didn't say a word to him about this.

We started and were averaging just under 8:40s for the first 5 miles, then mile 6 was run in an even 9:00. I ran with him to the halfway point and told him to run the rest on his own, trying to hold the same pace for as long as he could, and keep thinking about his form. He took off and left my sorry butt behind, as I faded in the warm sunny day. I struggled as is my norm in warm temps, but was glad I never saw him until I finished. He was waiting for me with his medal around his neck and a great big smile on his face. He had finished his first half-marathon, and his longest ever run, in just over 1:55. We both celebrated with a very nice breakfast at the post-race party, he celebrated his run and time, I celebrated my coaching...

The race started and ended at the Emirates Hills Golf Club, running along the course a short while, then around the Emirates Hills lake and through the neighborhood. It was a small race, the packet pickup was poorly organized, but the race course and race day organization was pretty good. If you are ever in Dubai when this race is held, I would recommend it, as long as you don't mind warm temps.

In the beginning...

(Continued from page 1)

did not want to have to consult with this individual every time he wanted to do something. The new club was the Galaxy Track Team. How we got stuck with this moniker, I haven't a clue. However, Galaxy Track Team retro-singlets have become quite the latest rage and I still have a few available, on a first come - first serve basis, for only \$59.99 plus S&H.

No one liked that name very much, so we decided to select a new name by member voting. Four or five names were proposed. Among them:

- Bayou City Road Runners,
- Space City Road Runners,
- and my favorite... Wieser's Wonderful Waddling Warthogs or W4 for short.

All ten or fifteen of us voted and, in a close contest, BCRR was born. [In my mind, this is proof that Florida was not the first election to experience chad problems.] Ray Hodges' wife, **Terry**, a graphic artist, drew the roadrunner and Ray selected gray and white for the original colors. These old retro-singlets have become very hot and, luckily, I still have a few available, on a first come - first serve basis, for only \$69.99 plus S&H.

In the next few years, the club grew slowly, mostly by word of mouth. New members included: **Paul Holzhauer, David Harvey, Jim Holt, Richard Verm, Grover Watkins, Ted Bidwell, David Gaughan, John Phillips, the Feniellos, Terry Zirn** and my wife, **Lynn**. About this time, Scott moved to Kansas and Ray became president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, statistician and social planner for the Club. Everything was "Call Ray." If you planned to run a race - "Call Ray." If you were not going to run a race - "Call Ray." If you were coming to a party - "Call Ray." If you were bringing something to the party - "Call Ray" and on and on.

In the late 80s and early 90s, BCRR membership started to mushroom. Looking back, there were a number of factors that

contributed to the growth.

There was a schism in the Houston Harriers and the Al Lawrence Running Club was born. This made the club championship more competitive and club spirit soared.

BCRR and the evil Terlinguas started to compete for the overall championship every year.

Some of us started hashing and, on occasion, we could find a hasher who passed our stringent BCRR qualifications, i.e., could run past a bar without stopping, stay in a straight line most of the



time and not up-chuck on every other street corner.

The club MVR competition was established. This is an idea that came to Ray and myself independently, yet almost simultaneously. Like the club competition, the MVR standings were very spirited.

Then there was **John Phillips** and his "I built it in my spare time from scrap aluminum" projects. John made all kinds of contraptions from left over aluminum stock and these brought attention to BCRR. Start lines, finish lines, bulletin boards, tents, propane heaters, port-o-cans (which attracted a large number of weak bladdered runners) and the Williams Tower were all put together by John in his spare time. After lugging all of that stuff around for all those years, I can honestly say that I was always happy as hell John did not work with steel structures!

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A Look Back



A Look Back





In the beginning...

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The social aspect of BCRR started to increase. As **David Gaughan** recounted recently in the newsletter, we started re-hydrating at Valhalla on Wednesday nights. [Most of what David said was right on, with one glaring error that I feel compelled to mention. Never did my wife restrict her ramblings to only the free world.] Originally, these get togethers were little more than women-bashing sessions as practically all the regulars were either recently divorced or going through one. Soon, however, their love lives improved, women were put on an equal plane and other social events followed.

The addition of **April Enos** - and I am taking full credit for this one! After a couple of years of Wednesday night hiatus, a young and shy (that was a long time ago!) April showed up at Valhalla. No one welcomed her with open arms and she was

about to walk away. I thought to myself that April would one day be a top-notch runner, newsletter editor, Club President and ideal mate for **Tim Murphy**, whom I had not yet met. So I ran after her and persuaded her to return. So, if it were not for my keen eye and near photographic memory, she would not be the pillar that she is today.

There are many aspects about Houston that we miss. One comes with a head in a brown 12-oz bottle. However, the friends we made in BCRR and the associated activities are definitely at the top of the list. We have many, many fond memories to keep us warm on cold and snowy July nights.

I could go on and on, but the pizza in getting cold and the beer warm. But, in my mind's eye, this is the way things used to be. If there are any doubters regarding my recollections - "Call Ray."

A Look Back





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>
5/31	Houston, TX (First City Tower)	ALA Fight for Air Climb
6/14	Katy, TX	No Label Brewery 5K
7/4	Baytown, TX	Baytown Bud Heat Wave 5 Mile Run
7/4	Lake Jackson, TX	Firecracker 4
9/6	Galveston, TX	Galveston Sand Crab Night Beach Run
9/20	Kemah, TX	Toughest 10K Kemah
10/18	Galveston, TX	Toughest 10K Galveston
11/9	Houston, TX (Clear Lake area)	Clear Lake City Half Marathon

*Official HARRA race series event. FYI—We are currently seeking volunteers for most events.



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