



Melrose Running Times

The Official Newsletter of the Melrose Running Club ~ January 2012



75,000 MILES !

That's right, since January 1st, 2000 there have been 1390 MRC members running (almost) 75,000 miles! We're inside 200 miles. Will you be the one to vault MRC over this significant milestone?

15th ANNUAL

melrose RUNforWOMEN

Sunday, May 13, 2012



MOTHER'S DAY

15 Years:

The 15th Annual Melrose Run For Women is just around the corner. Will you be running the race or volunteering?

ForeRunners:

Four of our Club members have written about their experiences running and training. Read about Diana and Alicia and Mike and Kaj, their thoughts about how running affects our lives and forms our goals. Running is the best. These four runners are the best.



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Diana Mirabello:

I first decided I wanted to run a marathon about three years ago, but I was out of shape and didn't really know where to start with training. I joined MRC two years ago at the suggestion of a co-worker who was training for a marathon and had told me about the long runs and the wonderful support. With two half-marathons under my belt, I am - currently training for my first full marathon for the second time. I originally trained to do last year's Philly, my hometown, but I got pneumonia two weeks prior and couldn't do it.

I thought about signing up for a winter marathon but I didn't like the prospect of having to run it in the snow (definitely wouldn't have been a problem this year!). I decided to do the Vermont City Marathon because I had heard good things about it from other club members. The timing of the race works pretty well with the MRC winter long run schedule. I couldn't imagine doing 15+ mile runs every weekend without the support and company of others. Though I was extremely disappointed that I missed Philly, this time around I am finding the long runs much easier to get through, and I feel much more confident about my upcoming race.

-Diana



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Alicia Furbush:

As a child, I remember watching the Boston Marathon on TV, and thinking how amazing it was. At the time, I was significantly overweight, and never imaged in a million years I would have this opportunity to run it. It was only a dream (so I thought).

Weight has always been a struggle for me. I tried all of the diets out there, and eventually got myself into an exercise program. I taught group exercise, but eventually gave it up due to a busy work schedule. What was I thinking? ?

Years went by, and I continued to struggle. On and off with exercise. Up and down on the scales. I got sick a lot (suffered with chronic bronchitis and asthma) and was constantly tired. Bottom line was I just wanted to be healthy and feel good.

I always wanted to run; I just never got around to actually “doing it”. One of my best friends in the entire world, “Rose,” said to me one day, “stop talking about it and just do it”. That is where it all started. Thank you Rose Ryan! I did some research (with her help), and took the plunge. I eventually joined two running clubs (Melrose and Mystic Running Clubs). Two great clubs with some awesome people. I met some really good friends. I started off a few miles a week. Not at all that consistent at first. Eventually, I got there. I started going every Tuesday and Wednesday, and started to run races. I remember my first 5K being 32 mins. My goal was to eventually get under 30. Well, I did it. My PR is around 24 mins. I was determined, and I was motivated. I lost about 35 lbs. I was awarded the most improved runner from the Mystic Running Club in December of 2011. “Wow, this feels good”, I thought. There is no feeling in the world like a “runner’s high”.



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About 2 months ago, we all learned about the sad news about John Kelly's passing. For those of you that didn't know John, he was not only a special person, but an amazing athlete and runner. His uncle, Pat McMahon (who placed #2 in the Boston Marathon in 1971, and was also in the Olympics), gave the Mystic Runners an invitation to run Boston this year. I was the next alternate to get in. When I was presented with this opportunity, I thought, "no way. I can't do this". I was also a little bit behind the game with training at this point. But how could I say no. What an opportunity. More importantly, I wanted to run this with John in my heart. I can do this. So, with that being said, I said, "YES".

With the help of some wonderful friends, I quickly put together a training program. I put the rubber to the road, and I started to train. I continued to teach spin on Sunday mornings, and did some cross training. I was faithful to my long runs on Saturday mornings. I have also attended a few Sunday Long Runs with the Melrose Club (what a great program). I have already done one 18, two 19, and one 20 mile run. A little sore afterwards, but what a wonderful feeling. Boy, what your body can do with some rest and proper fueling.

I know my parents would be proud as they look down upon me and provide me with all the support that I need. I also couldn't have done this without a GREAT group of friends and two wonderful clubs.

I am now fully energized, and am down 110 lbs since high school. What a feeling!

Boston HERE I COME!!!!!!!!!!

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Kaj Kandler: *"How is your training going?"*

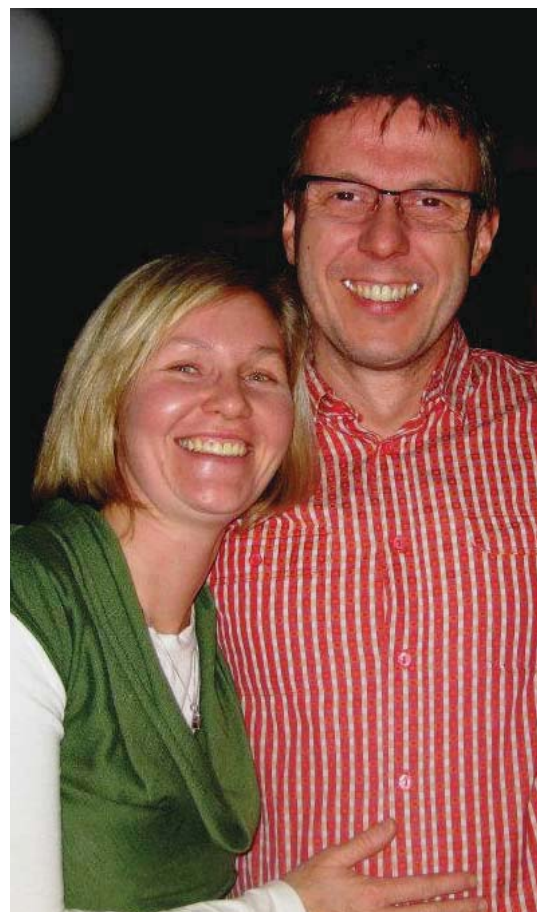
"How is your training going?" is lately the question I'm asked most. I have been endowed by the club with one of the three numbers for Boston Marathon, April 16th 2012. So its a fair question.

For years, I was not interested in running "Boston." But last spring, when everybody did so well at the race, I experienced marathon envy and started to prepare myself to run my first spring marathon. After I was comfortable running half marathon distances in the fall, I applied for the number and so far my training is going well. I set myself two goals for the training.

First, I want to stay ahead of the curve. That means I participate in the Sunday Long Runs but I add a 3-4 miles run before 8 AM. My target is to run at least twice the full marathon distance before the race. I don't experience much of a race effect over training, so I want to make sure my body is ready to take the pounding of a full marathon and my mind can endure the 4h+ focus on the finish line.

Second, I plan to run 12 miles every week in addition to the long runs. This has been an elusive goal so far. I found it harder than I thought to take the time to do the shorter runs. With our two young kids I want to spend quality time with them. It should not be their sacrifice that allows me to reach my running goals. But running late at night is really tough in the dark cold winter. So this week is actually the first week that I have achieved this goal. I guess the longer days, the milder temperatures help, but mostly it is the panic that has set in with me. It is only 7 weeks of training left and to do the 20 and more miles on Sundays becomes increasingly hard if you are not doing also lighter runs during the week. So I do what I have to do.

A third goal has been introduced into my conscious. It's actually a bit of advice that Jim Carson, our fearless leader at the long runs, dispenses quite often "Don't do anything stupid!" For me that means avoid any sort of infection, stay warm, don't run in the dark w/o safety vest, don't run when you are tired and exhausted, and rest after the long run to avoid injury.



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Kaj, continued.

Preparing for a Marathon is no simple task for most of us. However, representing "my club" at one of the most famous Marathons has made me more disciplined than ever, and I'm sure it will pay off. My greatest help comes from the volunteers that organize and support the club runs and such programs as the Sunday Long Run. I'm deeply in debt to the runners that donate their time to do water stops, write the blog, plot the routes and encourage all to be motivated and have fun. I look forward to the long run every Sunday and the camaraderie of all that show up fuels my running more than GU and Gatorade. Thanks MRC!

My Experiments with running 2010-2011.

Michael Urquiola

I have a long history with running starting at the age of 14 when my father told me “You’re going out for the track team.” There was no further discussion. This turned out to change my life permanently, for the better. On and off for 30 years I’ve been running and not running, but always considering myself a runner.

This last year has been different for me. I’ve had a certain focus that was lacking in my previous running spurts. Where did it come from?

In 2009-2010 I trained pretty seriously for 6 months and had some good results, until a disastrous Marathon at Providence in 85 degree weather. What I took from that experience was that I was capable of training harder and longer than I had previously. My old notions that 50 miles was about the max I could do without getting injured, that I had to have one day off a week, I disregarded and opened my mind to pushing my limits. After Providence I lost my focus and became a recreational runner for nearly a year, but my memory of the training I had done stuck with me.



March 1, 2011 - May 31, 2011 Building blocks.

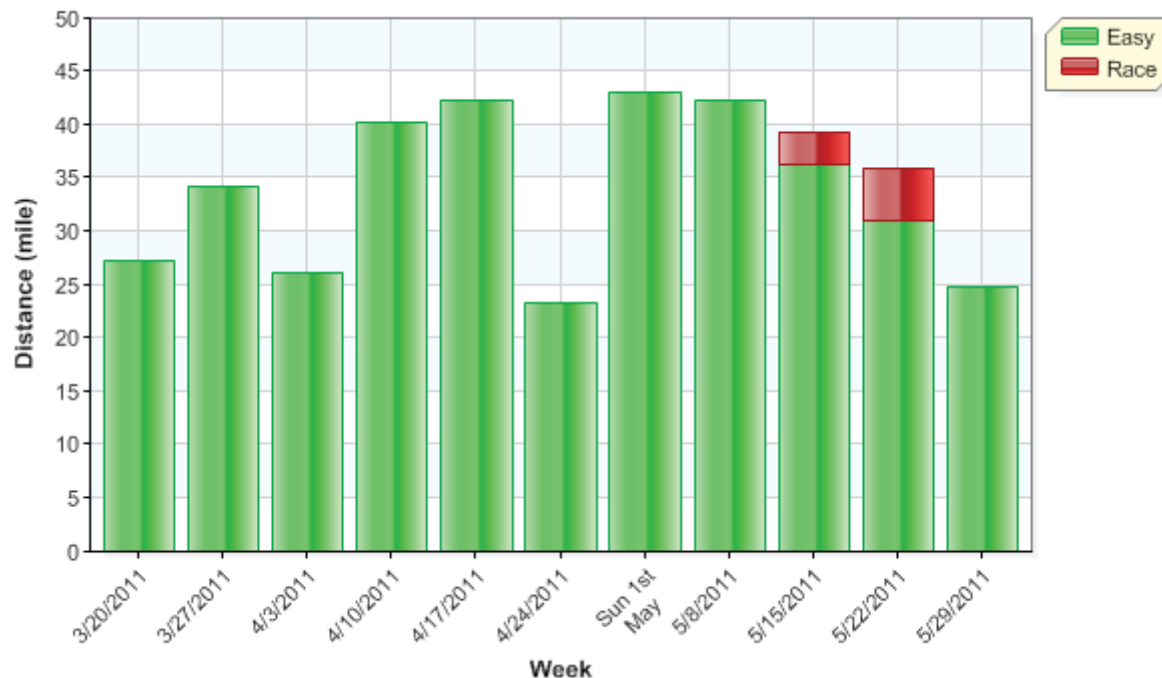
My psyche is the most fragile in the early part of training build up. My training logs have numerous 3-5 week periods where I start training only to inexplicably stop. A closer investigation shows that the stop is usually preceded by a run or runs where I over did it, got fatigued and discouraged. Typically this was a bad race, excessively difficult interval workout or a run of 16 miles when I really was only ready to do 10.

Mindset is important in training. My mindset was to not put pressure on myself. Don’t think of the past, and remember how easy this pace use to feel. Don’t think of the future and imagine the great things I’ll accomplish. Focus on now, today, tomorrow and that is it. If I had a bad run I didn’t get upset. It was information about my fitness, not a reflection on my failures as a person. In short, try to relax. I promised to give myself credit every day I laced up the sneakers and got out the door, even if I only ran a mile. Every day out the door was a victory.

I learned the name Desi Davila on a cool day in April. I was up off my couch screaming at the TV willing Desi to victory, and even though she was a few yards short. Her determination stuck with me. I got slightly obsessed, and read everything I could. She had an unremarkable college career, and in a leap of faith dedicated herself to training for 6 years in Detroit with the Hansons. The focus and patience that must have taken to train for that long without accolade inspired me.

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Key takeaways from this period. I kept an accurate log, so I couldn't lie to myself. I was pretty consistent. My weeks were between 25 and 45 miles. I got to the end of May feeling encouraged. I was trying to enjoy just the process of running without obsessing about the results.



June 1, 2011 - August 31, 2011 Be cautious...but don't be a wimp.

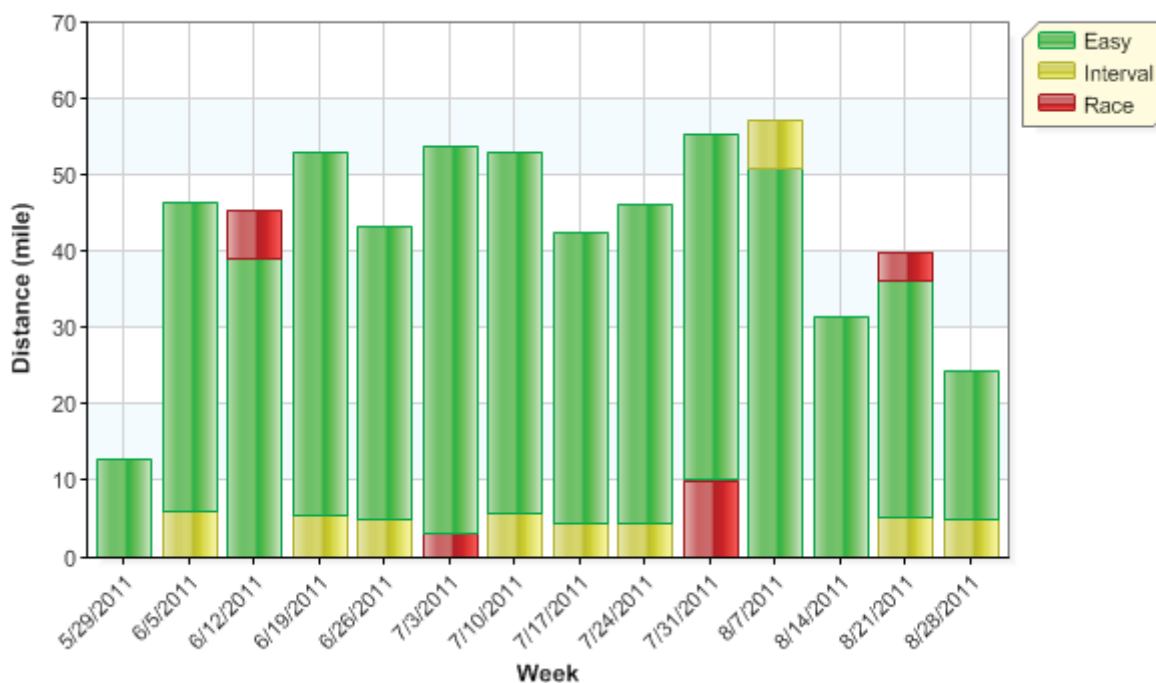
I was over the danger period for me, when it is easy to drop my running to a minor hobby rather than a central passion.

My goals during this period were to increase my mileage, add some quality runs, intervals, tempo etc... Most importantly, I needed to lose some weight. I was pushing 205 pounds which is a high. You can't race well carrying extra weight. I changed my diet, and tried but mostly failed, to reduce the beer intake. Slowly I started to shed the pounds. It took getting my mileage into the 50's and not doing any unhealthy snacking.

My leap of faith was to sign up for the Mount Desert Island Marathon. Really I had no business signing up. My fitness didn't support running a marathon. I did it to give my training some focus, and a bit of desperation. Whereas the last 3 months were about not putting pressure on myself, this 3 months I needed some pressure. My mileage was mostly in the upper 40's, with 5 weeks over 50.

Key race(s): Newburyport 10 Miler 1:08:54 6:54 per mile. This was a confidence building result, not as fast as I have been in the past, but I felt stronger, and my lighter body moved better.

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September 1, 2011 - November 31, 2011 A Marathon, and a sleepless night.

Even though I had signed up for the MDI Marathon, I was not convinced that I would do it. I didn't really believe my fitness would allow me to. After Providence, I promised not to enter another one with anything other than excellent preparation. I had extended my long runs to 16 miles, but didn't feel like I was really ready.

My decision would come at the Cape Ann 25k. It was a hot 80+ degrees, and it is a hilly course. I had one goal, make my first mile the slowest I would run. If I finished feeling strong, I'd continue training to do MDI, if not I'd abandon it and maybe try for one in the winter or spring. I felt like I had a good race, and most importantly I felt like I was racing, and not just running hard. I got the old aggressive feeling I get when I focus on beating other competitors rather than my own internal pain. I saw one competitor ahead of me, his accessories branded him a triathlete, Visor, compression socks, sunglasses, water belt, and a shirt so tight it could qualify as control top. I decided I hated him. I out kicked him to the finish, and smiled when I found out he was 23. Marathon here I come.

MDI was a study in extremes, beauty, elevation change, pain, fun, camaraderie. To pick my pace I inputted my recent race times into the <http://mcmillanrunning.com/calculator> depending on the race it suggested I could do 3:10-13. I picked 3:11, and maintained that through mile 20, until the old familiar friend the wall appeared. I dropped 90 seconds a mile over the final 6 finishing in 3:20, not a great result, but not terrible. It did not crush me like Providence, it inspired me to train.

The end of October through November ended up being one of my best training periods yet, with 6 weeks out of 7 in the 50's.

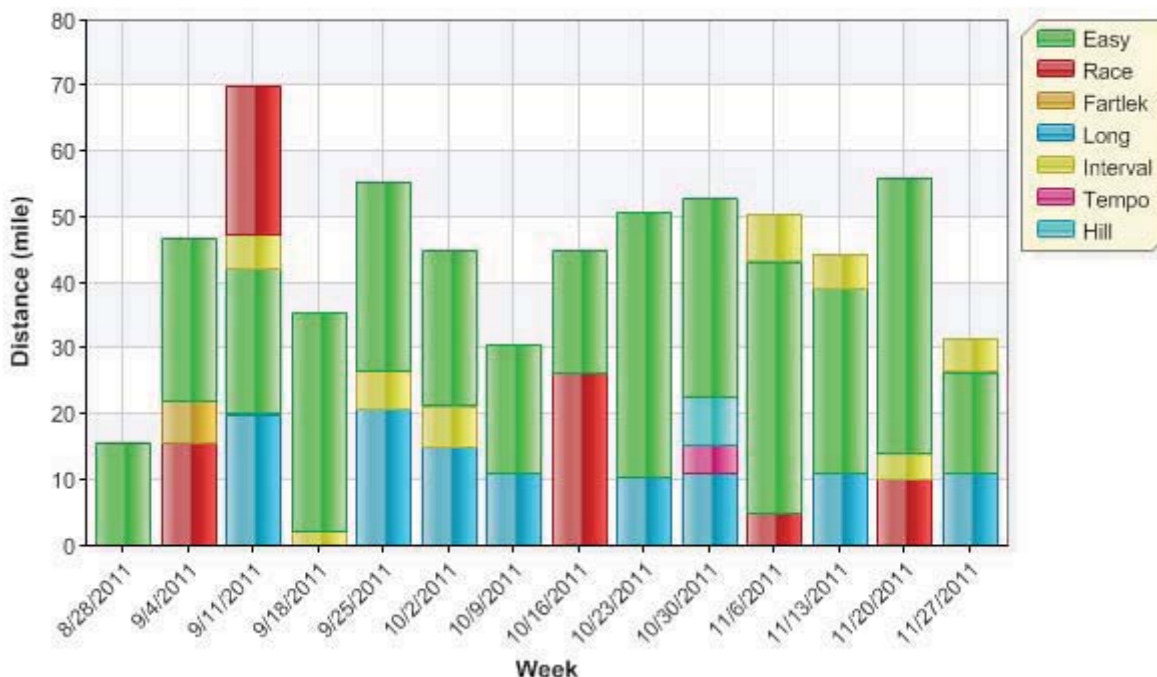
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Key Races:

Cape Ann 25k: 1:50:41 – 7:08

Reach the beach: 23 miles over 3 legs in 24 hours, including a hellacious 9.5 leg at 4 in the morning.

MDI: 3:20:08 – 7:39



December 1, 2011 - February 29, 2012 Breakthrough.

After MDI I started to re-evaluate what would push my running forward. I had a good base with 9 months of pretty successful training. I read various training plans obsessively. Weirdly most marathon plans topped out at lower mileage than I was already doing, but I wanted to do more. I spent a lot of time on LetsRun.com, if you're not familiar with the site; it is dedicate to some pretty serious runners. An often heard comment "If you're not doing 70 a week, you're not in the game". While I was not where they were, I liked hearing from people that took this activity seriously, and didn't think the idea that I wanted to run more than 50 a week was crazy.

I had two goals, get my average training week from the 50's into the 60's and add a second quality day of training to my week. I was already consistently doing 1 interval workout. I decided to add a second day of marathon paced work to my schedule.

My issues were becoming logistical rather than physical. How to get the extra miles in? I decided to try something I'd never done for an extended period of time, and run doubles two days a week of 4-5 miles each. This would allow me to do the extra distance and not increase any run very much. Initially it was fatiguing and I didn't think it would last, but after a few weeks I began to adjust, and actually look forward to my double days. I had to make sure my second run was extra easy. I made it a game to see how slow I could go without going insane. The Marathon paced run was a bit more difficult, and I've done some of them, but not consistently.

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Fitness gains never come in a linear fashion, for me at least my performance plateaus and makes jumps at unexpected times. This happened for me at the Mill Cities relay. 9.5 mile leg in 1:00:54 or 6:25 a mile, no race up to that point would really support that kind of pace, Newburyport was 6:54 a mile a whole 30 seconds a mile difference. I didn't really believe it, I still think it was probably a little short, the course was mostly downhill and with the wind. I made many notes in my training log denying what I had just done.

Then I ran Mount Hood. And though it is impossible to judge that course on a minutes per mile basis, I knew many of the competitors I was racing, and I was much closer to people faster than me, and far ahead of people I train with. It was getting harder to deny.

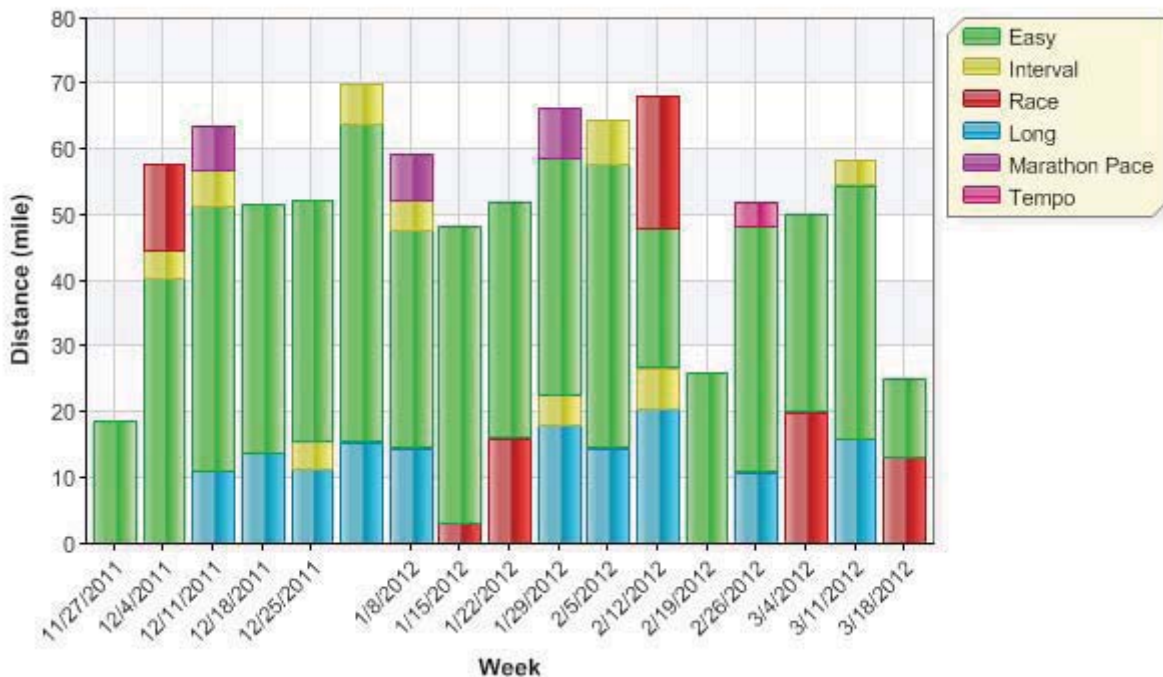
Finally at the Derry 16 miler I went through 10 in 1:06:10 a full 2:30 faster than I ran Newburyport, and finished the final 3 downhill miles in a blistering 6:10 pace, and running a minute faster than I had 9 years ago, averaging 6:36 per mile. There was no denying it now. I was faster, much faster.

Key Races:

Derry 16: 1:45:45 – 6:36

Black Cat: 20 2:13:47 – 6:41

New Bedford Half Marathon: 1:23:54 – 6:25



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I have learned a lot this last year. I got a lot of contradictory advice, from books message boards, articles. Trying to sift that out, and figure out what works for your lifestyle, and current fitness can be difficult.

- Consistency over time gets results. Patience pays off, once you've have a training plan stick with it. It can take a long time to show results.
- Don't be a wimp. Every little ache is not an injury. Just because you haven't run a particular mileage doesn't mean you can't.
- Mileage is everything. Sure every other article in Runners World tells you to run less, don't believe it. If you want to get better, you need to run more.
- Train for your current fitness. Not your goal race pace.
- Make goals about training, not racing. Racing is just an indication of your current fitness.
- Long runs are less important than overall mileage.

More Important News!

Greenwood Toddler reveals running stroller Do's and Don'ts:

- Don't make eye contact with Yellow Labs - they're too friendly.
- Bodyglide or not, expect some chafing.
- Who needs a porta-potty?
- If you think you hit the wall, you probably actually hit a wall.
- Don't drop your pacifier onto the sidewalk unless you've brought along something to read.

Look for these Articles in the next and more frequent Melrose Running Times!

- Non-Runner uses bathroom at Brueggers.
- Why tweed remains unpopular fabric for running.
- Runner with poor math skills completes 2.62 Marathon.
- Malden Man gets parking space behind Shaw's.