

# Road Race Management

The Latest in Road Running  
for Race Directors  
and Industry Professionals

June 2016

Issue 388

## Gone with the Wind?

### *Adapting to High Winds in a Road Race*

By Mark Heinicke

**A**mong the worst woes of a race director is the threat of weather forcing a cancellation or — not quite as bad — a postponement or course alteration. Aside from earthquakes, terrorist attacks, and government intrusions, weather is the factor most out of your control.

High winds coming in bunches are increasingly common. They can strike out of the blue, like the deadly derecho of 2012 that took many experts by surprise, but usually high winds are roughly predictable days in advance. The *exact* timing and severity of the storms can remain uncertain, however, as weather forecasting is still an inexact science. If you are facing the possibility that winds might torpedo your race, the question of cancellation raises its ugly head. If you cancel early and race day is mild, you will have a runner-relations problem and a public relations problem; if you don't cancel and race day turns out worse than projected, you may have a runner-relations problem, a public-relations problem, *and* — worst of all — a *safety* problem.

If you don't cancel, you must adapt. A future issue will look at the cancellation dilemma, but in this article, we'll examine the challenges from wind and how to best make modifications and adaptations so that the race can proceed at least risk.

Three 2016 recent races exemplify the ins and outs of adapting your race to high winds: the **Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile** in Washington, D.C.; **The Fool's 5K** in Waterloo, IA; and the **Big Sur International Marathon** in California.

A snapshot of each event to show what they were up against appears below; details on the coping measures and adaptations each race took, as well as advice on managing similar situations, follows.

#### **2016 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile: A Chill Wind**

With 16,000 runners, an elite international field with the potential to set world records, and a prize purse of \$60,000 plus bonuses, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile does not bow to the weather gods lightly. Such was the case in April of 2016. Several days before the event, high winds were forecast for race

(Wind continued on page 3)

#### **INSIDE**

**Tip:** A Race Director's Job Doesn't End at the Finish Line  
**Going Green:** Austin Marathon An Environmental Leader  
**The Business Page:** Kenya's First Shoe Company Gets a Kick Start

## IN THE NEWS

### **RRCA Releases Guidelines for Event Directors Regarding Drug Offenders:**

The nation's largest grassroots running organization takes a tough stance on the status of runners with current or past drug bans, recommending that they be ineligible for elite entry or prize purse at events adopting the new guidelines. They also recommend the same stance for athletes who *are coached or represented* by individuals who have had two or more suspensions in the last four years, or if their coaches or agents have served a drug ban during their professional careers.

RRCA Executive Director Jean Knaack wrote, "I hear it often that mid-sized races that value competition and provide prize money, often times really good prize purses (\$5K - \$10K +), note they can't afford to test athletes and still provide prize money. While this makes sense, all events can and must do more to be part of the solution to stamp out doping in our sport. Unfortunately promising talks between major event directors, industry leaders, USADA, and USATF about implementing an athlete licensing program for elite runners (both foreign and domestic), similar to USA Triathlon's licensing efforts, have stalled out and seem to have "died on the vine" in the legal department at USATF over the last 18-months. Visit [www.rrca.org/resources/event-directors/fair-competition-policies](http://www.rrca.org/resources/event-directors/fair-competition-policies) for the full text of the guidelines. A list of athletes currently or formerly serving drug bans appears at [www.dopingsanctions.com](http://www.dopingsanctions.com). ■

[www.rrm.com](http://www.rrm.com)

# It Ain't Over Till It's Over

By Dave McGillivray

*Dave McGillivray is the race director of the BAA Boston Marathon. In addition he directs or consults on a number of other major events ranging from the TD Beach to Beacon 10K and the New Balance Falmouth Road Race to the 2004 and 2008 Women's Olympic Marathon Trials. He is the owner of Dave McGillivray Sports Enterprises, a complete event management firm.*

I always used to feel that the most important part of a race is what goes on between the starting line and the finish line. That is where the true race experience lies for a runner. Or so I once thought. Now, however, that is only a piece of the overall experience, as runners are now just as focused on what goes on before the gun fires and immediately after they finish. To quote the late Yogi Berra, "it ain't over till it's over."

Setting up and managing all the services and activities post finish line can be a daunting task, especially if you are dealing with tens of thousands of runners all streaming across the finish

line, non-stop, for hours and hours. Over the years I have identified some areas to consider to best manage this final stage of the event and to make the experience a positive one for each runner.

- **Order of Services** – What you place first and then next can be critical. Some say put the medals first, others say water and others say the mylar heat sheet. I suppose it depends on the conditions, but the typical set up might be: water, Gatorade type product, medals, heat sheets, food, gear bags. It is always prudent to check with your medical team first.

- **Distance from Finish Line** – No matter what service you put first, be sure it is a good distance from the finish line. The last thing you want to have happen is for there to be a severe back up of runners where finishers aren't even able to cross the finish line.

- **Volunteers** – It is critical to have enough (even more than enough) volunteers to handle all the distribution and to keep up with the density of finishers. Preventing backups and eliminating any waiting is crucial.

- **Photography** – If you engage a professional race photography company to take photos of all the finishers, be sure not to set up the photography area too close to the finish line and be sure the area does not create backups and gridlock in the finish area. The further down the system this is located the better. The photography company will want to have the area come sooner rather than later, especially before the runners are handed food bags and/or gear bags. Consider having tables set up near the photography so runners can place these items on the table while they are having their picture taken.

- **Water and Replacement Drinks** – Arguably, most would say that you should have your water station and replacement drinks first in the line, especially if it is a hot day.

- **Gear Check Return** – It's important to have a quick and efficient system in place for gear return either by a runner showing their bib number or handing in tear off from the bib.

- **Medical Tent(s), Medical Lane, Medical Sweeps** – Placing the medical tent near the finish line is also important, but be sure to avoid putting it where it will be in the way. Some

*(Finish continued on page 8)*

<b>Don't Miss: 2014-16 RRM Running Industry Resource Directory</b>	<b>Organizing Running Events: The Complete Guide to Staging a Successful Road Race</b>
This completely updated publication will be loaded with contact information for over 1,500 businesses, organizations and running event directors.	This A to Z Guide is a single-source, complete overview of race directing, designed for beginning and advanced race directors of races of all sizes.
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# Wind

(Continued from page 1)

weekend, and actually struck as predicted. A temperature drop of 40 degrees was also forecast for the early morning of race day—and it too came to pass.

Preparations went forward with the expectation that the wind would be harsh but not dire.

Setup was a battle. In frigid darkness the morning of the race, sustained winds of 30-35 mph, with a maximum gust of 47 mph, swept relentlessly through the Washington Monument grounds. Fortunately, by the time of the start, the winds had abated somewhat—down to 30 and less. No rain—but the wind chill was down in the teens!

The key to proceeding with the race was creating a sufficiently safe environment not only to protect runners, but also to convince the police, who had the final say on cancellation, that the event could take place safely as long as modifications were made. At 5:00 a.m. on race morning, the US Park Police gave the go-ahead for the 7:30 start.

The race proceeded—much to the satisfaction of runners—despite a whopping dose of discomfort. The setup on race morning had been the hard part; the post-race situation was simple by comparison: steer people out of the wind, which meant away from the normal post-race staging area on the Washington Monument grounds. Organizers curtailed all finish activities, cancelling the awards ceremony and on-stage music and having volunteers advise finishers to go home as soon as possible.

The organization had been prepared and the runners were prepared thanks to intensive communications. More on both below.

## 2016 The Fool's 5K: Controlling Your Venue

Race director David Lapinski succeeded in putting on The Fool's 5K in Waterloo, IA, although the event was pushed back

24 hours from Saturday, April 3rd to Sunday, April 4th—due to, you guessed it, high winds. During the 24-hour reprieve, Lapinski's crews battled sustained winds of 30+ mph with gusts to 58 mph during the setup on Saturday. Portable toilets blew over. A gust picked up a custom EZ-up tent and broke two expansion bars. Two large trees fell, requiring some rerouting of the course.

Fortunately, the winds relented overnight, and the race proceeded smoothly on Sunday.

Lapinski's ability to accomplish most of his setup the day before the race, as well as to push the race day to Sunday, was due in large part to the venue. The race, with 1,100 participants, is run entirely within the boundaries of a park, and the park is managed by a friend of his. This combination attests to the importance of both design and community relations contributing to a high degree of control.

## 2016 Big Sur International Marathon: Taking Wind in Stride

Headwinds are a matter of course for this race, a point-to-point event running along the California coast. In past years, portable toilets have blown down and been relocated. Cones and signs regularly blow down and are restored by volunteers; it's all part of a race where strong winds occur more often than not. The sustained winds over 20 mph, with gusts to 35, which prevailed at the 2016 event, however, were unusually strong, prompting race director Doug Thurston to comment that it was one of the two or three windiest race days in 31 years.

The race start is in a protected area among trees, but the exposure at the finish dictated that signs be lowered or removed—in particular, the large coroplast signs mounted high on PVC poles that threatened to break their Zip Tie mounts.

## COPING MEASURES

If your race decides to proceed under strong wind conditions, there are a number of modifications and adaptations that you can take to reduce risk to participants and spectators and to make sure that everyone understands exactly what is going on and why.

### Coping Measures: Design

*The race course* is the most sweeping design feature, and its characteristics can determine the available adaptations in high winds. There's not much you can do for a straight-ahead, point-to-point race like Big Sur. Courses with loops and out-and-back portions, on the other hand, make rerouting possible to protect runners from high winds, although when this has to be done on short notice it may often come at the cost of shortening the race. Hains Point at the Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, for example, is notorious for winds even in ordinary years, and if gale force winds were to race up the Potomac River, there is a natural and accessible short cut to avoid it. If a course change is contemplated, be sure that the alternate route will be free of construction, broken pavement, badly parked vehicles, or somebody else's event (a funeral procession or a parade can stop your runners literally in their tracks).

*A protected staging area* facilitates calm and order. In mild weather, you like to have the staging in a wide, flat place, with functions easily visible from each other. But high winds beg for protection for runners, volunteers, and officials, as well as equipment. At Big Sur, where strong winds are the norm, the start area is located in a sheltered area among trees. You may have such a protected area nearby to serve as a backup, if not your primary, staging area. (Be careful relying on trees if the ground is soaked—

(Wind continued on page 5)

# Lessons Learned: Austin Marathon Retrospective

By Keith Peters

In fall 2008, all the major U.S. running publications—*Runner's World*, *Running Times* and *Trail Runner*—produced “green” cover stories. In fact, *Runner's World* devoted 20 pages to *The Runner's Footprint*, looking at shoe and apparel materials and production methods, runners' personal habits, and road race management best practices. *Runner's World* even published a list of the *10 Greenest Races*, with the Austin Marathon rated number-one.

Subjective as that top-10 list was, hindsight confirms that Austin's number-one ranking was well-deserved. Since 2009, the Austin Marathon is the only event to have earned five consecutive certifications from the Council for Responsible Sport—an objective measure of an event's performance against 61 different sustainability criteria.

Michelle Sandquist was the driving force behind Conley Sports' enthusiasm for responsible event production practices from her first day on the job, joining John and Stacey Conley's team in the fall of 2007. When she brought up the subject of sustainability in a staff meeting, John encouraged her to come up with a plan, which she and logistics guru David Grice quickly did. That initial plan included solar-powered generators, a finish line farmers market, organic cotton race tees, biodiesel fueled vehicles and a recycling program that kept over seven tons of waste from going to the landfill—and the number-one ranking in *Runner's World* was the result.

With the recent sale of Conley Sports and its event portfolio to High Five Events, I thought it would be appropriate to have Michelle to reflect upon how things have changed on the sustainability front since 2008.

**Road Race Management (RRM):** Where did that original recognition from *Runner's World* lead in terms of future sustainability goals for Conley Sports and the Austin Marathon?

**Michelle Sandquist (MS):** The *Runner's World* coverage helped put Austin and the race on the sustainability map, and it provided a clear focus for our mission. It definitely motivated us to do more; I immediately sent John and Stacey a lengthy email full of new ideas.

**RRM:** Austin is the only event, to date, to have earned five Council certifications (basic certification in 2009, silver in '11, '13 and '15, and gold in '16). What did you learn with each certification, and how did your focus/priorities change over time?

**MS:** Each Council certification challenged us to track certain metrics (waste diversion, energy and water use, charitable contributions, etc.), and that data provided food for thought and drove a process of continuous improvement; certification also helped illuminate pieces of the communications/marketing puzzle—what was working and what wasn't.

As the Council's certification standards evolved, so did the scope of our sustainability initiatives, particularly in the areas of community legacy and energy conservation.

**RRM:** Why go for gold in 2016, when you weren't due for recertification until 2017?

**MS:** We're competitive people and wanted to pass the torch to High Five Events on a high note. Conley Sports was always driven to be the best, to do the best for Austin.

**RRM:** Of all your green teams'

accomplishments and recognition received, what are you most proud of?

**MS:** That is a tough question. I have been proud of our team each and every year for ALL that we accomplished. I truly couldn't pick just one, but as our last year as a team with Conley Sports it sure was nice to go out gold. The gold certification from the Council solidified all the hard work we did over the past nine years!

**RRM:** What are your top five tips for an aspiring sustainable race?

**MS:** That's easy: communicate, communicate, communicate, communicate, communicate!

Tell everyone what you are doing. Ask lots of questions from your sponsors, vendors, team leaders, volunteers, city leaders, and even participants.

First and foremost you have to get the message out about what you are doing and what your company believes in, but you also never know what sustainable initiatives others are doing that could help your event. It is truly a team effort.

**RRM:** Anything else?

**MS:** We used our 5 Rs motto as a decision making/purchasing process: Reconsider, Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

- **Reconsider**—Ask yourself do you need to do this, is it essential to your event, do you need to purchase this many?
- **Refuse**—If after reconsidering, you decide you don't need this item or event or addition then refuse.
- **Reduce**—If after reconsidering, and it is a go, ask yourself is there any way to reduce the quantity, size, scope etc.?

(Green continued on page 5)

# Wind

(Continued from page 3)

they may uproot. Standing dead trees are obviously not good, but check living trees for signs of weakness, such as girdling, rot at the base, and dead foliage at the top. Squat dense trees or shrubs are best.)

*Safe havens:* The Cherry Blossom Ten Mile has designated *Safe Havens* in nearby government buildings for use if the Washington Monument grounds (the start/finish area) are evacuated for emergencies. On weekends, government offices and many businesses are closed; if you can arrange accessibility to such facilities in an emergency, you can breathe more easily. You might approach churches or other meeting-houses as well.

*Contained venue.* Keeping your course within one or a few easily controlled venues—such as The Fool’s 5K run entirely within a park—makes postponement, rescheduling and rerouting more feasible.

*Minimize the number of ancillary events.* Flat-out cancellations are appropriate for races subordinate to the main event, such as the obligatory Fun Run or Kids’ Run. If those cancellations are made before race day, the runners won’t show up but the volunteers will.

## Coping Measures: Communications

*Communications within the race organization itself and with police* are a given, and you probably have as much as you need. Opt for the reliable—and that usually means race radios at every critical point. A cell phone in a high wind may be incomprehensible to the receiver. Bicycling is dangerous in high winds; if you depend on cyclists for communications, you are taking a big gamble in a windstorm. Even motorcycles may have problems in crosswinds.

*Communication with runners before race day* is more critical than usual with the threat of severe weather—when uncertainty over *whether* the race will be run or *how* it will be run prevails. The earlier the posting of information the

better, and the clearer the better. Use logic: *if X, then Y* is the sort of thing a runner understands. Well-informed runners can make their own adaptations—knowing that there will be a wicked wind chill helps them dress accordingly. Fortunately, electronics make the job easier and quicker than ever: the Cherry Blossom employed not only email, website and social media updates, but also a Smartphone app to keep runners informed in the days and hours leading up to the race. Similarly, The Fool’s 5K’s David Lapinski used email through Constant Contact and through the race registration organization and updated two Facebook pages and the race website in the frenzied leadup to his race, which was also almost cancelled altogether.

*Race-day communications to runners* help keep order, especially when signs become useless. If wind makes the sound system iffy, volunteers going among the crowd with scripts and bullhorns—as was done at Cherry Blossom—may save the day. At Cherry Blossom the race app continued to provide updates throughout the entire event. The NIXLE alert system was also available via text on race day for those who had signed up earlier.

# Green

(Continued from page 4)

- **Reuse**—If after reconsidering, and it is a go, and you can’t reduce anything about it, is there any way to reuse this idea or item?
- **Recycle**—If after reconsidering, and it is a go, and you weren’t able to reduce or reuse, can you recycle this item or idea?

Finally, contrary to what people believe, it’s not more expensive to be sustainable. With good planning, it can be more cost-effective in both the short- and long-term. Think strategically when it comes to

*Keeping in touch with a local forecaster* may make a difference. The help of a local meteorologist can be decisive. National Weather Service forecasts are the best you can find for wide areas, but local conditions may depart from the regional outlook, for good or ill.

*Completeness of information* calms nerves. At the start of the Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, race director Stewart explained to the assembled runners what actions had been taken and what to expect out on the course, such as lack of signage.

## Coping Measures: Infrastructure, Equipment, and Supplies

*Harden your equipment.* David Lapinski uses heavy-duty stakes for “industrial strength tents,” weights in the bottom of arch legs, and fence posts pounded in deeply to stabilize speaker stands. Someone’s old canvas tents stored in a garage may come to the rescue.

At setup, the precept *lower is better* rules. It may be hard to perceive in the pre-dawn working with established

(Wind continued on page 6)

purchasing, print less, leave off dates so you can use leftovers again, buy in bulk, brainstorm multi-use for items, seek alternatives to the norm and try to engage the participants as much as you can in your sustainability plan and goals, and have fun!

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*Keith Peters is the author of the second edition of Road Race Management’s Guide to Greener Running Events, and is the Executive Director of the Council for Responsible Sport. He posts regularly on Twitter @GreenRaceGuru. ■*

# Wind

(Continued from page 5)

procedures, but with the light the vulnerability of tall structures becomes conspicuous. At the Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, signs and the overhead truss were taken down, functions usually conducted on the raised scaffolding were brought to street level, and stacks of cups were reduced from four high to two high. At Big Sur, coroplast signs on PVC poles were lowered or removed when they threatened to snap their Zip-Tie mounts (the plan going forward is to use mesh signs with wind vents).

*If lower is better, weightier is also better.* Bring some concrete blocks to drop into trash barrels (tie a rope to the block so you can haul it out later).

*Arrange toilets in clusters* rather than string them out in a line.

*Accommodate the wind.* At Big Sur, wooden mile markers were turned parallel with the wind instead of perpendicular. The plan to use mesh signs with wind vents follows a similar principle: at times you must bend in order not to break.

*Keeping a warm vehicle nearby* could alleviate hypothermia for those not immediately needing a doctor but who are becoming disoriented, stumbling, fainting, or going to sleep. (The warm vehicle should be kept out of sight of the crowd!)

*Heatsheets or other keep-warm materials.* Ideally, depending on climate (not Texas in August), have a Heatsheet for every runner. The Cherry Blossom Ten Mile had more demand than organizers could fill this year—not expecting such a severe event that was a first for the race in its 44-year history. A stash of blankets could serve potential hypothermia victims.

## **Coping Measures: Volunteers—Many. Strong. Experienced.**

*You can't have too many volunteers* in such a situation—starting with setup.

David Lapinski doubled his setup crew, as high winds continued to batter workers for most of the day before The Fool's 5K.

If it's going to be cold, emphasize that volunteers should come dressed for spending hours in a cold wind—think hats and gloves, not just coats. Chemical hand warmers and foot warmers may be in order. You want them to think of their service with pride rather than misery.

*Volunteers can help with communications* if the sound system is inadequate. They will definitely make a difference out on a windswept race course.

*Even if it's only chasing down windblown cones and cups*, extra volunteers can help preserve the appearance of order, which enhances order itself.

*Experienced volunteers can bring institutional knowledge.* At Cherry Blossom, incidents of an overturned

scaffold and a tent lofted skyward in past windy years meant that experienced volunteers had learned lessons in how to effectively secure tents. Get as many volunteers as you can who are experienced with winds—or any freakish challenges.

## **You Know All That. Yeah, but Plan for the Worst!**

Many of these measures are obvious, and doable. But as stress rises, memory falls. They have to be part of a *plan*—a written plan you can hand out, email or snail-mail to key parties. You may need a Plan B for wind, a Plan C for wind and cold, Plan D for wind and rain, etc. You don't need separate documents for different scenarios—a matrix could do the job. If you have a checklist prepared well in advance, you won't be racking your brain for solutions as a violent windstorm rages your way. ■

## **MILEPOSTS**

*Mileposts is a brief, periodic digest of happenings in the long distance running world.*

- **The BolderBOULDER has instituted the use of the term "Procrastination Prices"** instead of the time-honored "Late Entry Fee" to make paying a higher registration fee close to the race date more palatable.
- **New Jersey's Wild Half was found to be short** by about 0.2 miles, with the problem compounded by official pacers and many runners who mistook an aid station as a turnaround point, further shortening the distance run. Organizers are offering discounted entries for next year's race and expressed regret for the mix-ups.
- **Mel Williams**, who helped found Virginia's Tidewater Striders in 1972 and whose research on the risks of steroid use contributed to the Olympic Committee's 1985 decision to ban blood doping, **has died at the age of 78.** Williams was a retired Old Dominion University professor who wrote 10 books, including *Drugs and Athletic Performance*, and who founded *the International Journal of Sports Nutrition*. He ran more than 100 marathons and ran every Marine Corps Marathon from 1976 to 2013.
- Moroccan **Riduoane Harroufi has returned to racing** after serving a two-year drug suspension for EPO. Harroufi, who won numerous U.S. road races between 2008 and 2012, has recently competed in several track meets and placed 14<sup>th</sup> overall at this year's BolderBOULDER 10K, leading the Moroccan team. ■

## Beginning of Enda; Nike Aims for Zero Waste

### FOOTWEAR NEWS

Kenyan Navalayo Osembo-Ombati and American Weldon Kennedy have founded

**Enda**, a running shoe brand hoping to be the first company to manufacture running shoes in Kenya. A Kickstarter campaign intended to make the dream a reality has already exceeded its \$75,000 goal to begin production, with shoe components made in China and shipped to Kenya for assembly. Estimated delivery of the 7.9 oz Enda Iten is set for this coming November, and a percentage of the company's profits will go towards improving living conditions in Kenya.

In its 2015 sustainability report, **Nike** foresees a future with **zero waste** from contracted footwear manufacturing sent to landfill or incineration without energy recovery and using 100% renewable energy in the company's owned or operated facilities. To accomplish these ambitious goals, "it's going to take innovation on a scale we've never seen before," said Hannah Jones, Nike's chief sustainability officer. Nike also plans to spend about \$40 million to expand its airbag factory in Beaverton, OR, from 217,000 s.f. to 357,000 s.f. The facility is operated by Nike IHM, a company subsidiary

Three months after defecting to **Nike**, high profile shoe designer **Dave Dombrow** has returned to **Under Armour** as its Chief Design Officer. In the newly created position, Dombrow will guide the design of UA's entire collection of footwear, apparel and accessories. Dombrow's former position at UA was SVP of Creative Footwear and Accessories.

**Golden Harper** and **Brian Beckstead**, co-founders of **Altra**, along with the company's director of marketing **Jeremy Howlett**, are among the *Sporting Goods Business* 40 Under 40 Award Honorees. The winners were chosen for their

leadership, innovation, entrepreneurship and energy in the active lifestyle industry.

**Hoka One One** ended its fiscal year with sales growing 65% from a year ago.

### MISCELLANEOUS

Corporate venture fund investor **Hearst Ventures** has acquired a minority stake in **Spartan Race**. Scott English, the managing director of Hearst Ventures, said his company has been eager to invest in event platforms, and that Hearst was perfectly suited to help Spartan Race continue its growth story worldwide. Spartan estimates that it will have more than 1 million participants and 5 million social media followers in 2016.

**The Active Network** has launched **TUHF**, a new ultra-high frequency timing system that includes low-cost, disposable chip timing. The new system promises to be cost-effective, with intuitive timing and scoring software suitable for any size race that works seamlessly with Active's existing suite of products. More information can be found at [ipicosports.com/tuhf](http://ipicosports.com/tuhf).

**RAM Racing** has tripled its timing services business and says it has become the largest timing business in the U.S. with its acquisition of **Gault Race Management**. This past March, RAM acquired the **Fleet Feet Sports-Chicago** racing division and its stable of races.

Online registration company **imATHLETE** has acquired **AthletePath**, a social network for athletes that encourages participation in new events and allows friends and fans to follow their efforts. The acquisition furthers imATHLETE's goal of merging online registration and social engagement into a seamless operation.

**iRewind** gave each participant of the **BolderBOULDER** a short complimentary video and provided the opportunity to purchase a full video containing footage

of the runner from eight different vantage points along the race course.

**The Skechers Performance Los Angeles Marathon** and **Venice Marathon** are partnering to promote each other's events and expose more international runners to the two races. Both LA and Venice will conduct promotional contests for a chance to win airfare, lodging and race entry to the other's event.

**Mazda** has been named the Presenting Sponsor of the **USA Today Sports Active Alliance**, a coalition of 15 independent marathons.

The **AAU** is partnering with **Flo Sports** to livestream 10 regional qualifier track meets around the country on [flotrack.com](http://flotrack.com). The regional meets build up to the 50<sup>th</sup> annual AAU Junior Olympic Games in Houston.

**Meb Keflezighi** gave a talk on "Cross Training to Extend Competitive Performance" at the **American College of Sports Medicine's** annual meeting in Boston on June 1. The talk was sponsored by **ElliptiGO Inc.**, one of Meb's sponsors.

1992 Olympian **Judi St. Hilaire** was recently inducted into the **RunVermont Hall of Fame**.

**Clif Bar** voluntarily recalled **Clif Bar Sierra Trail Mix energy bars sold across Canada** because of possible *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination.

### CGI WATCH

**John Bradley** has been named **CGI's** SVP of Media.

Bradley will be responsible for new media expansion, marketing and sales efforts and content strategy for CGI's print magazines and their respective digital properties.

**The Rock 'n' Roll Marathon Series** marked **Global Running Day** with a 24-hour worldwide series sale that offered 'significant' registration savings on more than 30 events in the race series. ■

# Finish

(Continued from page 2)

races are so large that multiple medical tents might be required, with a second tent positioned further down the system. Medical sweep volunteers with wheelchairs should be positioned throughout the finish area, and an express medical lane should be considered so there is no delay in getting a sick runner back to the medical tent.

- **Security** – Given the increased importance of ensuring a safe event, the overall finish area security program has now become the most important aspect of the finish planning. We all have to work closely with our local public safety partners to develop the security plan, credential program and identifying security personnel.
- **Medal distribution** – Arguably the best job to work or volunteer for a race is that of awarding the finisher’s medal to all the runners. However, medal distribution can slow things down a bit, so volunteers need to be instructed to keep things moving and to tell participants to minimize photos and selfies in this area!
- **Food** – You must first determine what you need, what you have and

whether to pre-bag the food or not. It is important that runners only take their fair share and not any more so as to leave enough for everyone behind them. Operationally, it’s more advantageous to have plenty of width with alleys for runners to pass through quickly.

- **VIP Tent** – Some races have a VIP runner program and as such need to designate space at the finish for designated VIP’s to gather after the race, pick up their gear bags and receive post-race food, refreshments, massage.
- **Changing tent** – Some races have changing tents and some don’t. If you want to prevent “nudity” on the street, it is best to set something up for both the men and the women. Most will appreciate it immensely.
- **Massage** – This is always a nice treat to offer; however, you can never have enough masseurs/masseuses, so long lines can form. Depending on your race’s circumstances, sometimes it might be best not to offer massages, as some participants may find it incredibly inconvenient to wait and wait and wait for it.

- **Early Exits** – Many runners simply want to cross the finish line, get their medal and head home or back to their hotel. To force them to walk another country mile, especially in the opposite direction from where they are going, can be really frustrating and disappointing after a long, hard effort.

- **Family Meeting Area** – Once a runner gathers up all that they need, the final step is to find their family members or friends who are waiting outside the secured area to meet up with them. It is always best to plan for a “family meeting area” designated by lettered signs or other distinguishing marks. You want to make it easy for them to meet up and be on their way.

As you can see, there is a lot to think about and a lot to plan for after a runner crosses the finish line. What they experience from that point on, especially given that they may be tired and cold or hot or hungry or thirsty, will be the lasting impression they have of the race, so why not do your best to make it a very positive experience that they will take home with them and tell all their running friends about! ■

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