

**November 7, 2019**

**Contact:** Jeff Darman  
(610.925.1976)  
(610.299.4436 Cell)  
[jdarman@rrm.com](mailto:jdarman@rrm.com)

---

## **James Balcome Named 2019 MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year**

---

A committee made up of race directors, athletes, media, corporate executives and club officials has named Manchester Road Race Director James Balcome the MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year. MYLAPS is the presenting sponsor.

He will be honored at a reception at the Road Race Management Race Directors' Meeting in St. Petersburg, FL on November 7.

"This year we had a most remarkable group of nominees and James emerged as the winner," said Road Race Management President Phil Stewart. Described by Bill Rodgers as "the Gold Medal of race directing," the award is one of the most prestigious honors in the sport of road racing. "Anyone nominated should be proud of their accomplishments," said Stewart.

"Our winner, then a local high school track coach and president of the local running club, was recruited to direct the event in 1979, when the race attracted 2,000 starters. He could have been content to continue his small, little traditional event as the running boom of the 1970's swept the country and the number of Thanksgiving Day races vaulted to the point where Thanksgiving became the single most popular road race day on the calendar. But he was not. Over the next 41 years, he expanded the field to its current size of 15,000 participants, making it the third largest race in New England and the largest in his home state of Connecticut. It would be an understatement to say that our winner lives and breathes the event year around. He must be doing many things right, as former *Runners' World* editor and Boston Marathon winner Amby Burfoot has returned to run 4,4748 miles annually for the last 56 years." Stewart added.

His nominator said of him, "As Race Director, Jim and the Road Race are synonymous. No one else has devoted more time, expended more energy, or labored more diligently to promote and grow the race. While the formal planning process for the event begins in June, Jim's commitment is year-round. He diligently works to improve and refine race procedures, recruit and encourage volunteers, and cultivate and sustain sponsors."

"During the five months leading up to the race, Jim oversees and coordinates the activities of a core group of volunteers. While each of the 45+ General Committee members has a designated area of responsibility, Jim orchestrates their efforts to ensure the duties are completed, synchronized and communicated. With over 600 volunteers, the race has dozens whose tenure exceeds 25, 30 and 35 years. Similarly, the event is supported by several sponsors who have donated for over twenty years. This degree of loyalty to the race derives as much from an allegiance to the Race Director as support for the event. No detail in the planning or execution of the event escapes Jim's notice or critical assessment."

"A master at creating relationships, Jim has maintained strong ties with municipal administrators, public safety officials, media representatives, and community business leaders. When Jim requests assistance or proposes a new idea, people seldom say, "No". A perpetual cheerleader for the race, Jim literally wears the road race "on his sleeve." He is always garbed in a road race shirt, jacket or cap, hoping that someone will comment, allowing him to promote the race!" he concluded.

The MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year award (presented by MYLAPS) is made annually to recognize and promote excellence in race directing. Nominees were judged on several factors, including overall ability, reputation of race, creativity and organizational ability. For a list of previous recipients, visit

<http://www.rrm.com/act/rdm/rdypast.asp>.



James Balcome, Director of the Manchester Road Race in Manchester, CT is the recipient of the 2019 MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Race Director of the Year Award, presented by MYLAPS

Road Race Management ([www.rrm.com](http://www.rrm.com)) is a member-based organization that publishes a digital newsletter and many other publications designed for race and industry professionals, and conducts a prestigious annual national race directors' meeting and trade show in Florida. MarathonFoto ([www.marathonfoto.com](http://www.marathonfoto.com)) is the leader in race and endurance sports photography. MYLAPS ([www.mylaps.com](http://www.mylaps.com)) helps athletes, timers and events to create the ultimate sports experience for participants, followers and sponsors.

**Road Race Management Race Directors' Meeting**

610-925-1976

[jdarman@rrm.com](mailto:jdarman@rrm.com)

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