



# PACESETTER



***A Newsletter for Track and Field  
Athletes, Coaches, and Friends.***



Shore Athletic Club

Winter 2020-2021

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

*By Walter MacGowan*

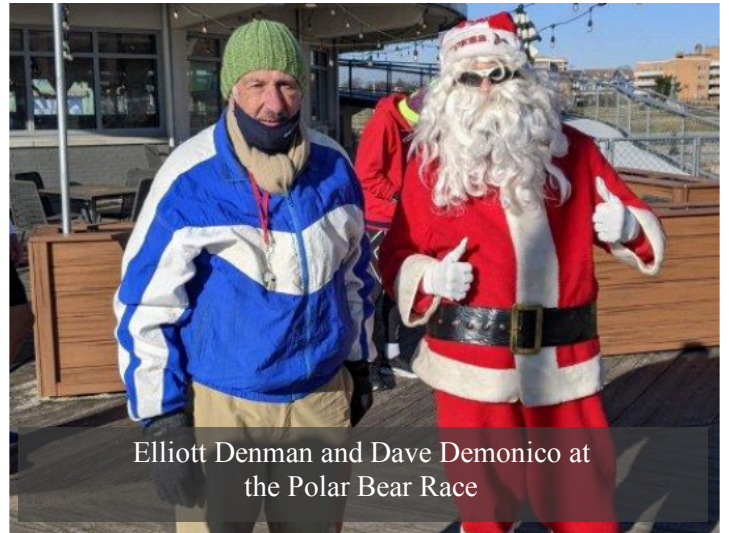
Those of us old enough to remember the TV show called the Twilight Zone might identify it with our current era of the Covid-19 pandemic. Host Rod Sterling would come on and introduce some strange set of other worldly circumstances, and then we would spend half an hour watching the common man and women deal with altered reality. Well, those people were us for the last 12 months. Think of how we got to a total attendance at Lake Tak this summer of four who ran a total of six laps and no kids. Just a year ago people would shake hands, no one wore a mask, and we were all making plans to compete in track meets or road races. Good times were had by all traveling to and from events and hanging out while competing with our friends. With the exception of our Youth and Adult XC series, along with an “invitational only” 57<sup>th</sup> Polar Bear race in 2020, everything else were either virtual, intramural or cancellations. Personally, since last March, I have found running to be a welcome respite because my normal outside of work routine of taking a trip, going to the movies, restaurants, concerts, sporting events or just a walk on the beach were either risky or cancelled. There is a traditional Old English saying that goes “May you live in interesting times”. Although the English have always called the saying a blessing it is said that it actually is an adaptation of an ancient Chinese verse and a curse. To me this year of pandemic was both, and we may have been cursed by not being able to host our usual variety of events or compete with our teams, but Shore A.C. was blessed by the adaption and resilience of our members.

Walter MacGowan  
President  
Shore A.C.

## KUS, O'NEILL WIN 57<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL ASBURY PARK POLAR BEAR 5K RACE

*By Elliott Denman*

Nolan Kus, a freshman student at Quinnipiac University won the 5k race at the 57<sup>th</sup> running of the annual Asbury Park Polar Bear Carnival on December 27, 2020. Taking the lead from the start, Kus built up twenty-yard gap over second place runner Dan Campbell of Middletown to win in 19:21. Campbell was clocked in a close 19:32, while it was new comer Christian Politan taking third place in the men's division in 21:51. Erin O'Neill ran off with the women's title in a quick 20:09, with Liz Geiger (26:36) and Leslie Nowicki (26:39) capturing the second and third spots. The race once again was held on the Asbury Park Boardwalk, with runners traveling from Convention Hall out to Ocean Grove and back over a two-loop course.



Elliott Denman and Dave Demonico at the Polar Bear Race

The Polar Bear Carnival event is the oldest road race within the shore region, and one of the oldest in New Jersey. It was first organized in 1964 by former Asbury Park Press sport's writer and 1956 Olympian Elliott Denman. Denman was on hand once again this year to help with the race administration. While the program of races has changed in distance over the years, and the actual course has varied due to weather conditions and construction on the Asbury Park Boardwalk, this year's race took on a different tone of its own. Limited in the number participants that were allowed to gather for outside events to twenty-five people due to state COVID-19 restrictions, the race became an invitational event of mostly club members and past winners of the race. Thus, the race once again maintained its reputation as an event which has never been cancelled for any reason.

Among the participants this year were former 1974 winner Phil Hinck and Shore A.C.'s Dr. Harry Nolan, who has won nine of the races over the years between 1972 to 1996. Nolan has also run in every one of the Polar Bear races going back to his high school days at Middletown (North) High School. Also helping Denman in the race management was Shore A.C. President Walter MacGowan handling the administration and longtime club member John Kuhl serving as Chief Timer. The number of runners this year was a far cry from the 2019 event which saw over five hundred athletes take part. The 2021 race is scheduled for December 26<sup>th</sup>, and hopes to be back to full participation.



Runners Gather for the 2020 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Polar Bear Race

## SHORE A.C. ADULT CROSS COUNTRY LEAGUE SOLDIERS ON DESPITE THE PANDEMIC

*By Walter MacGowan*

The Shore A.C. was able to host one of its signature events last fall when the Monmouth County Parks Commission allowed us to conduct our annual Adult Cross Country League. Founded in 1980 by long time club member Bob Bazley, the event began and has continued as a dual XC series with various teams competing for an overall championship title. With COVID-19 creating havoc on the road race and track seasons worldwide, we were pleasantly surprised when the Parks System permitted us to hold the series. Race director Erin O'Neill and her crew staged the event in a very safe manner. Each week registrations were conducted online only. The start of each race was staggered to keep the groups manageable for social distancing purposes. At the finish each runner was given a number card, and instructed to provide their name and age, along with wave that they ran in and hand it into a table of volunteers by the finish line. Master's distance running captain Scott Linnell then tabulated the results along with each runner's time provided by chief timers Hoyle Mozee and John Kuhi. Dayna Luma and her Monmouth University teammates provided excellent support with the finish line operation, while Park Ranger Matt Coleman, Coach Joe Compagni and Rich Arabia conducted the course setup. Steve Apostolaukas and Elliott Denman also assisted with the finish line operation along with other volunteers.

Shore A.C.'s Justin Schied won the overall title this year for the men and Amanda Marino won the women's title. Age group winners included Jon Smolenski and Amber Hart in the 40's division, Greg Calhoun and Suzanne LaBurt in the 50's, Gene Gugliotta and Nora Cary in the 60's, and Harry Nolan in the 70's. The Shore A.C. dominated the overall team results for the third year in a row winning 5 of 6 of the men's events while our women, led by Erin O'Neil swept the series.

Other Shore A.C. Club members who participated in the series included Bill Hughs Jr. and Sr., Reno and Susan Stirrat, Luke Falk, Don Schwartz, Brian Cunningham, Mike Deleva, Pau Dykerhoff, Jim Wright, Prez and Leslie Nowicki, Adam Garcia, Andrew Rumph, Max Popov, Chip Nolan, Tony Plaster, Paul Gilly, Kerry Gillespie, CJ Titmas, Rich O'Brien, Dave Freidman, Dan Campbell, Mike O'Connor, Nicholas McFarland, Margerie O'Connor, Jess Weaver, Kari Hullen, Megan Fakult, Kim Hart, Laura Donnelly, Laura Dykerhoff, Kellee McEwen, Laura Wronski, Anne Marie Ireland and Joann Cunningham. A great job by everyone.



Runners at the start of the XC Series race at Tatum Park in 2020.

**SHORE A.C. MASTERS TRACK AND FIELD  
SPRING-SUMMER SPECIAL RACE PROGRAM**

*By Dr. Harry Nolan*

With the arrival of the COVID-19 virus arriving in mid-March of 2020, and all of the variety of running events cancelled for the spring and summer, the prime track season was put on hold at just about every level. This included major track events like the Penn Relays, all New Jersey USATF Championships, and the Shore A.C.'s own summer All-Comers track meets. With no hope in sight for some good battles on the track, the club master's division took it upon themselves to create a series of track events beginning in early May through the beginning of August.

The action began on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, when after the Penn Relays was cancelled the week before, there was a desire to create our own Penn Masters event, specifically the 4 x 400. Eight club runners gathered at the CBA High School track to stage a 4 x 400 relay race. The teams were divided in two groups of equal ability. The result was a down to the wire event with the "A" team edging the "B" team 4:45.97 to 4:47.12. Running on the two teams included the following with relay splits:

Team "A"		Team "B"	
Brian Hill	65.35	Greg Calhoun	62.71
Bob Andrews	67.91	Hal Leddy	74.79
Harry Nolan	75.98	John Kilduff	73.67
Scott Linnell	75.73	Tony Plaster	76.49
Team Time	4:45.97	Team Time	4:47.12

With the success of the 4 x 400 relay, the group returned to the CBA track on May 16<sup>th</sup>, this time running a 4 x 800 Meter relay. With a nice 65-degree day, all runners ran very well, with the designated "A" team outrunning the "B" team 10:44.74 to 11:05.59. Dan Campbell replaced Bob Andrews for this race, while John Kilduff ran an unofficial PR for the 800. The team splits as follows:

Team "A"		Team "B"	
Harry Nolan	2:52.77	Tony Plaster	3:06.61
Scott Linnell	2:47.78	John Kilduff	2:46.49
Greg Calhoun	2:30.49	Dan Campbell	2:30.50
Brian Hill	2:34.53	Hal Leddy	2:43.44
Team Time	10:44.74	Team Time	11:05.59

On June 20<sup>th</sup>, the race format changed to head to head competition with the 1500-meter run. A small field gathered for this event, including the addition of club members John Dranga and Przemek Nowicki. Race conditions included a nice 75-degree day, but humid. Dan Campbell went straight to the lead, and was never headed as he clocked in a 5:08.91, followed by the rest of the field as follows:

1500 Meter Run	
Dan Campbell	5:08.91
Scott Linnell	5:44.61
Harry Nolan	6:19.13
John Dranga	7:02.87
Przemek Nowicki	7:26.50

In keeping with the 2020 clubs New Jersey International Track and Field meet, which was held in a virtual format this year, the next masters track event was an 800-meter run held on July 18<sup>th</sup>. A good group of six runners, including the first female of the series turned in excellent times on the time weathered CBA track. Again, Dan Campbell lead the pack, but this time closely followed by club teammate Chris Rinaldi:

800 Meter Run	
Dan Campbell	2:28.52
Chris Rinaldi	2:32.35
Scott Linnell	2:45.09
Mike Mooney	2:56.66
Przemek Nowicki	3:27.95
Leslie Nowicki	3:48.57

The last event of the special master’s track series took place on August 1<sup>st</sup>, with a special one-mile run. There was an excellent turnout of ten runners, ranging in age from 25 to long time club member John Kuhl at 75. Young Christiana Rutkowski showed her heels to her elders as she cruised to an easy 5:04.29, with master’s runner Chris Rinaldi thirty seconds back in 5:32.15, and the rest of the pack following:

One Mile Run	
Christiana Rutkowski	5:04.29
Chris Rinaldi	5:32.15
Erin O’Neill	5:35.59
Dan Campbell	5:38.09
Brian Hill	5:40.19
Mike Mooney	6:15.25
Harry Nolan	6:57.66
Prezmek Nowicki	7:27.64
Leslie Nowicki	8:07.70
John Kuhl	9:45.63

The special summer track series proved to be a very successful and fun program. With no other track events scheduled throughout the summer, the CBA meets allowed serious track runners to go head to head in order to maintain good race shape. As the spring and summer of 2021 approaches, the program may be repeated if there is again a lack of available track events in the state. Finally, a special word of appreciation has to go to long time club Hall of Fame member Hoyle “Mo” Mozee for taking the time to serve as the official starter and timer for all of these events, including hauling the race clock from his car to the track in his little red wagon. We could not have conducted these events as well without his special help.



Participants in the 4x800m relay include: Kneeling, Greg Calhoun, Harry Nolan, Scott Linnell, Dan Campbell. Standing Tony Plaster, Brian Hill, Hal Leddy, and John Kilduff.

## SHORE A.C. COACHING PROGRAM EXTENDED AND EXPANDING FOR 2021

*By Joe Compagni*

We chose the right sport.

While 2020 was a challenge in so many ways, we were fortunate for the most part in that we could get outdoors and move. To walk. To jog. To run. To train. To breathe.

Training had more obstacles than usual, with limited races, ever-changing restrictions and the temporary closing of some venues. But making the effort to “get out there” was extremely valuable for all those who made the effort. For many, training with the help of a coach helped provide that needed guidance and motivation to keep moving forward.

Early last year, the Shore Athletic Club created a new coaching initiative designed to provide more planning, structure and individualized workouts to those looking to prepare for specific events and reach new goals. Those who are interested in tailored training plans can get coaching guidance in three different ways in 2021.

First, when renewing a Shore A.C. membership or joining the club for the first time in 2021, athletes can choose the “Annual Membership + Coaching” option. For an additional \$70 beyond the standard \$30 membership fee, athletes get a customized training plan for 10-12 weeks in preparation for a race or races of your choice. This includes an individual consultation and evaluation, at least one in-person training session, and weekly feedback and adjustments to help you prepare and excel.

Second, when signing up for any of our signature club events like the Sheehan Classic or Jersey Shore Half Marathon, athletes can choose to have a training plan designed for them as an option when registering for the race. As is the case with the Membership + Coaching option, athletes will consult with Coach Joe Compagni to assess their current training and fitness, have an opportunity for at least one in-person training session, and receive a weekly training plan adjusted for you based on your workout results and progress.

For both of the first two options, coaching beyond the initial phase is available for an additional fee, which varies depending on the level of support that the athlete would like.

Third, registered club members who live in different areas of the state (or even the country), or those training for a specialty event (field eventers for example), we can help. Starting last year and continuing this year, we are always willing to offer guidance from a distance or, better yet, connect you with a Shore A.C. coach who is in your area or focuses specifically on your event.

All three of these options are available in the year ahead for athletes of all ages. Last year, we worked with high school, open and master’s runners who were preparing for everything from the sprints to the marathon. The coaching option has also led to a growth of new members, including some post-collegians looking to be connected to a club to continue training and racing at a high level. For all club members, the plan is also to re-establish and expand our group runs and training with others as state and local regulations allow.

These programs are all in addition to and separate from the renowned Gone Running program. Established by “Big Bob” Andrews, Gone Running services youth through high school age athletes with recreational and competitive running programs each season. The home base for the program is in Manalapan, but the program was extended to Middletown last year. Further expansion is planned with spring, summer and fall training groups

available. Program and registration dates for Gone Running can be found at [www.gone-running.com](http://www.gone-running.com), with updated information coming soon.

The Shore A.C. coaching initiative has several goals for 2021. First, of course, we want to provide more training options so that new and returning club members can stay healthy, have a professionally designed plan and be more likely to reach their goals. Second, through coaching and recruiting new club members who want a “team” connection, we want to have even more competitive open and master’s groups at the major races as the calendar starts to open up in 2021. Third, through the coaches we have throughout the state, we want those who are training to have more connections, group sessions and resources to help them thrive and enjoy our great sport.

Among the major events where the club can do very well are the track, cross country and road races where scored team competitions are contested, along with major events such as the USATF Club Cross Country Championships which are scheduled for December 11 in Tallahassee, FL.

The Shore Athletic Club has a remarkable tradition of success through all age groups and all disciplines in our sport through the years. As our veteran and new club members look forward to “getting back out there,” the value of working together and communicating to support each other is more valuable than ever. This can be a year of further building the team, enjoying the camaraderie and competition, and reaching for an even greater level of excellence.

For more information, feel free to contact me at [joecompagni@gmail.com](mailto:joecompagni@gmail.com).



## **SHORE A.C. RACE WALKERS DO BIG THINGS DURING THE 2020 PANDEMIC**

*By John Soucheck*

2020 was an unusual year to say the least. With the normal competition schedule wiped out, some laid low (looking in the mirror) and some turned to the new alternative of virtual racing.

Tim Chelius started off by walking a 36:30 5K on April 17 for the virtual Captain Ronald Zinn Memorial Races. Mike Mannozi turned in a 26:35 for this event encouraged on by his Air Force buddies. The leading time was turned in by our own AJ Gruttadauro (23:28). Tim then turned around two days later for a quarantine style 5K, running around the perimeter of his backyard in a bid for the honor of completing a race on the shortest length course. Laboring through a dizzying 128-1/2 laps he turned in a 48:26. Chelius then got real busy in the second half of July. First hitting the virtual NJ International mile in 10:05.5 on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Tim started completing the three virtual WMA walks the next day. Starting with the 10K covered in 1:13:05, he followed with a 2:32:37 20K on

July 25 and a 32:14 5K on the 30th. The 10 and 20 were completed on a bayside 300m loop, trying to get some shade from the summer sun. However, Tim had to fight off the blood sucking attacks of the notorious greenheads so he gets the nod for top survivor of wildlife attacks while completing a race. Chelius finished his summer campaign in August with a USATF-NJ virtual 5K in 34:15.

Rich Luettchau started the shutdown period running which included a 16:52 virtual 5K May 31st on a hilly road course. Switching to racewalking efforts later in the year, Rich time trialed a 6:57 mile on November 2, then gobbled down the virtual Somerville Turkey Trot 5K in 22:49 and breezed through the Rutgers Big Chill virtual 5K on December 11 in 23:21 His early 2021 effort was a 7:03 1600 for the virtual USATF-NJ Winter Carnival.

The big news in the racewalk world occurred away from the roads and track. World Athletics made the decision to drop the 50K distance from the world championships schedule (although the Tokyo Olympics, if held, will have a men's 50K) and replace it with a 35km event. This decision was not made with the consent of the athletes and it remains to be seen if this increases the popularity of the discipline, which is the reported goal. Shore AC has a long history of our teammates who have competed internationally in the 50 including Elliott Denman, Dave Romansky, Curt Clausen, Randy Mimm and Erin Taylor-Talcott to name a few. February 28 saw the US Men's 50K and Women's 35K Championships and was the event to select the US representatives for the 35K race at the 2021 Pan Am Racewalk Cup. Shore's A.J. Gruttadauro and Mike Mannozi took the start in California and completed the grueling 50K test. A.J. was second in the national championship behind US champion Nick Christie, finishing in a PB 4:19:18. He had prepped for this event in December by racing a 1:28:46 PB 20K .in San Jeronimo, Guatemala. Mike was fifth in 4:54:00, his best time in four years for the distance.





## MARZIGLIANO THE REAL DEAL IN VIRTUAL BOSTON MARATHON WIN

*By Scott Linnell*

Pandemic fatigue: we runners have known it too well this past year. With essentially all races cancelled, it's been hard to stay motivated. Sure, there have been virtual races, but where is the excitement in racing alone? Many of us have decided to just go easy until live competition returns.

Not Beth Marzigliano! When the 2020 Boston Marathon was cancelled, and a virtual version offered in its place, Beth didn't toss away the invitation in disgust. She jumped at the opportunity to compete. After all, racing Boston was part of her plan to bounce back from delivering child number two in November of 2019. It would have been her first crack at running the iconic Beantown course.

So, when the competition window for the virtual Boston Marathon opened in September, Beth mapped out a 1-mile loop in her neighborhood. A tremendous support crew buoyed her through the 26 grueling laps. Family, friends and neighbors cheered her on – at one point numbering forty along the roads! A teammate from college ran with Beth between miles 8 and 20, and her husband rode his bike alongside her through the final 6 miles. While nothing can compare to the jubilant crowds on Boylston Street, Beth's cheering squad gave her the impetus to run strong and achieve her winning time of 2:45:54.

How does this busy mother of two young boys stay in top shape? When training for a race, Beth runs six days per week. Most days, she logs 8-10 miles. Fridays for her are for long runs. Having children has prompted Beth to accept more flexibility in her training regimen and to listen more closely to her body. Easy days are exactly that, and she limits the push-hard days to one or two per week. Beth also focuses more on core and upper body strength. She finds herself less prone now to injury and burn-out.

Shore area track and field enthusiasts will recall Beth Mayer as a Red Bank Regional track athlete in 2000-2004 specializing in the 400M, 400M hurdles and 800M events. She added the 3K steeplechase and cross country to her repertoire while attending LaSalle University. The trend towards longer distances led to her first-ever marathon in 2016, when she crossed the NYC finish line in a scintillating 2:59:03. Beth also takes great pride in her 2019 Austin Marathon performance, when 10 months after delivering child #1 she clocked 2:50, lopping 8 minutes off of her marathon PR.

What's next for this Shore AC star? Beth looks forward to resuming marathon competition once the pandemic subsides and chasing the Olympic qualifying standard. She also has her eyes set on a sub-18 5K. Stay tuned, fans!



## THE HISTORY OF SHORE AC CROSS COUNTRY SERIES

*By John Kuhi*

In the Fall of 1979, Bob Bazley envisioned dual meets in XC for adults. He discussed this with some local runners and everyone “agreed”. They were excited to be able to race XC like they did in college or high school. In the early years, Bob Bazley’s father did all the timing. Shore AC provided the clock and the Chronomix timer.

Team captains and home courses were chosen in the summer of 1980. At the end of September, the dual meets began with eight teams: Hare and Hound Harriers (later becoming Green Pond), Greater Belmar, Ocean County Harriers, The Twin Light Harriers, Bell Labs, Bankers Plus, Bob Hazel Harriers, and Jim Wright RC. In 1980, my team the Twin Light Harriers (later becoming Black Swan) with captain Larry Bova competed against the Ocean County Harriers at our home course Hartshorne Woods. Larry and I went one, two in the meet. I was ecstatic only to learn later that the Ocean County team refused to run hard due to all the rocks and roots on the course. One OC runner told me that they were also not used to big hills, claiming that there were no hills in Ocean County.



Participants line up after a 1980 race of the Shore AC XC Series.

By 1981, Bob realized that too often teams did not have full teams for scoring. Therefore, in the Fall of 1981, the series evolved into invitational style cross-country meets. Only full teams were scored and unattached runners were assigned teams. Scoring was tabulated like a College Invitational Meet. A scoring team needed 3 open runners, two females and one Masters runner. In 2004, 60-year old’s were added to the scoring. By 1987, unattached runners were allowed to run individually. The first races (1981) had 25-30 runners. Consistently in the top 3 were Bob Bazley, Bob Haithcock, and Hoyle Mozee. In 1989 the top females were Sue Corr, Marge

Nealon, Alice Glover, Jill Everts, Mary Gilligan and Kathy Wolff. There were six large meets in various Monmouth County Parks with the championship meet held in Holmdel Park.

By 1987, the number of participants grew to an average of 55 and a new team, The Trail Blazers, was formed. By 1991 teams grew to 10. Miles Ahead joined in 1989 and in 1991 the Sandy Hookers with team captain Doug Rice joined.

In the early days of the XC league many Masters runners competed. Standouts like Kent Sabin, Frank Haviland, Pete Evarts, Peter Rowe, Maureen Cadmus, Charlie Rooney, Stan Edelson, Lester Wright Jr., Bob Thurston, Fred Best and Gene Chase were among the runners.

In the 1990's consistent top male runners were Gary Wersinger, Mike Tully, Paul Reck and Gary Cohen. Top female runners were Laurie Corbin, Jill Everts and Kim Hart. On October 1, 1988, Jill Everts came in second at Thompson Park with a time of 15:05. She came very close to winning the race. No female had won it out right until Kellee Hand in 2019.

In the 1988-89 races, Lou Zimmerman became the top contender in the series.

The decade from 2000-2010 saw the most participants with between 100-120 runners every week. From 2010-present Walter McGowan become race director of the series and in 2019 Erin O'Neill became co-director of the series.

## **FRIEDMAN ELECTED CHAIR OF THE USATF NATIONAL CLUB COUNCIL**

*By Dr. Harry Nolan*

David Friedman, a long time Shore A.C. club member, meet director of the clubs Jersey Shore Half Marathon and the International Track and Field meet was recently voted in as Chair of the United States Track and Field Association (USATF) Club Council. The voting took place at the national USATF annual conference held in December, 2020.

His responsibilities in his new position include the coordinating of the various U.S. club activities, including the National Club Championships and the National Relays. The Shore A.C. was the winning team of the club championships in 2005,2007,2009 and 2011. The club also played host to the National Club Relays for a number of years, including having won a variety of individual national relay titles.

Friedman is no stranger to USATF management, as over the years he has served in a variety of roles at both the state and national levels, including serving as President of New Jersey USATF. He also serves as the club's entry coordinator for both the Millrose Games and the Penn Relays, as well as sitting as a member of the Shore A.C. Board of Directors.

## **NOLAN SETS WORLD RECORD FOR CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF RUNNING THE MILE UNDER SIX MINUTES**

*By Ambry Burfoot  
(Courtesy of Podium Runner.com)*

In a recent study by the online website Podium Runner in conjunction with the magazine Outdoors, Dr. Harry Nolan, a charter member of the Shore A.C. dating back to 1964, has been listed as holding the world's record for the most consecutive years running the mile in less than 6:00 minutes, 57 years in a row. Nolan's record dates back to 1963 when as a high school sophomore he ran 4:56 and ended in 2019 with a 5:57. Over the years, he ran a career best of 4:08, and in 1988 at 41 he set the U.S. over 40 American record with a 4:15. At 59, he was still breaking 5:00 in the mile.

Two other individuals were listed in the study, with New Zealander Nick Willis, 37, setting the record for most consecutive years, 19, in breaking 4:00 minutes for the mile. The former record of 18 years was held by former Olympic gold medal 1500-meter runner John Walker, another New Zealand athlete. American Steve Spence, the 1991 bronze medal winner in the Tokyo World Marathon Championships, is credited with the most consecutive years of 44 years in running the mile under 5:00 minutes.

## **MIKE MCDONNELL LONG TIME SHORE AC MASTERS STAR**

*By Elliott Denman*

Mr. Michael Martin McDonnell (his full name) was a truly wonderful gentleman who did so much in his 85 years on this planet (Sept 30, 1965 to March 5, 2021). He did so much for so many. He was there for all of us. He was a great family man. He was a great FBI man. He was a proud alumnus of St Benedict's Prep and Seton Hall University. He traveled the world. He was a proud Shore AC teammate. And he was much more

It was good that several of us were able to attend the viewing Monday and some the service Tuesday morning at St. Mary's Church. I was there and, with tears still in my eyes many hours later, want to report to all that teammate Mike received the very best of sendoffs, with services conducted by his brother, Father Patrick McDonnell and a very eloquent address by eldest son Mike Jr.

Let it be known now, thanks to Mike Jr, that Mike was an Olympian in spirit. He did not compete in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games but served in the FBI security group there and, just as has happened to many who experience the Olympic Games for the first time. Mike quickly got caught up in the Olympic atmosphere of universality and total dedication to the visions of a better world through friendly health-building and lively competition.

Soon as Mike returned from Los Angeles he embarked on the training programs he would follow all the rest of his days. He became a road runner and soon he was entering every race he possibly could, 5Ks to half marathons and full marathons, surely smiling through every step of them. Some days, when the time schedule allowed, he'd even run two races in one day. When a progressive illness precluded him from running these "long ones" in recent

years, Mike - with coaching by his family - reinvented himself as a sprinter. And so, one of his greatest recent joys was taking part in the Masters 80-up 100-meter dash at the Penn Relays, an event sometime seen by over 50,000 fans and a worldwide television audience, when some kidded, "Mike, don't let that 100-year-old woman beat you," his smile set a world record, too.

Like so many of us, Mike loved the Lake Takanassee Races in Long Branch, where the "new" Shore AC was born in the early 1960s. Mike ran those 5Ks - every Monday night through the summer for years and years. When the 2019 "Lake Tak" season rolled around, Mike wasn't quite up to going the 5K distance. So - true to form - he set another great example for all of us, by volunteering to assist his fellow runners. There he was yelling out one-mile "split" times at "Lake Tak." When we gave him a stirring round of applause at the concluding session of the series, Mike's smile was again a record-breaker.

How much did all this running and comradeships and years-long friendships and his favorite club team represent to Mike, dear wife Bunny, and the McDonnell family? Obviously, the world.

The single photo chosen for the "official program" to the services showed Mike in all his glory, proudly wearing his Shore AC singlet ("Lake Tak" variety) striding to yet another finish line, hands raised in the "victory salute" every racer can experience at the end of a run well done.

We were able to read Mike's goodbye message on the opposite side of the "program."

Mr. Michael Martin McDonnell wanted to remind all of us that:

"Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always."

That was our beloved Mike.

-

These, of course, are very difficult days. A pandemic is still raging, we do not know "when this whole thing will be over". So are the debates centering on the challenges our proud nation - and our fellow occupants of this planet - must ponder. But, as we do, lessons are being taught. The most basic, of course, is that "we're all in this together," Let's continue making Mike proud of all we do.



## NEPTUNE TRACK HONOR TO FAMED SHORE A.C. ALUMNA AJEE' WILSON

*By Chris Christopher  
(Reprinted Courtesy of the Coast Star Newspaper)*

Ajee' Wilson sped to numerous successes on her home track at Neptune High School as a member of the Scarlet Fliers winter and spring teams, and then in the worlds of national and international track and field. So many that the Neptune Board of Education has voted to name the oval Ajee' Wilson Track in her honor. She noted that the donation to the Neptune girls track team would not have been possible without the help of her sponsor, Adidas.

Wilson sped to her latest success in Staten Island, N.Y., the scene of the New Balance Grand Prix at the Ocean Breeze Athletic Complex (and seen on NBCSN). She sped across the finish line in the women's 800 meters in 2:01.79. Her splits were 29.89, 1:01.39, and 1:32.78. Wilson competed in lane four. She nosed out Kaela Edwards, an American (2:02.17). The field consisted of eight runners – six Americans, one from Canada and one from Great Britain.

“No matter where I travel, where I train, Neptune is always home,” she told the Coast Star. “People from the community have been encouraging and are an important part of my success”. She also pointed out that “the athletic legacy in Neptune is such a strong one. My success is a testament to the people who came before me.”

Wilson hopes to qualify for her second USA Olympic team in the Women's 800m for the games that hopefully will be staged this summer in Tokyo. She made her Olympic debut in 2016, reaching the semifinals in 1:59.75 in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil and barely missing the eight-runner final as a member of Team USA. She recently gave back to her community, donating and selecting Adidas warm-up jackets and Scarlet Fliers red sneakers to their girls track and field team. Neptune Board of Education President Chanta L. Jackson said that Wilson will be honored on a date to be determined.

## SHORE A.C. LONG DISTANCE RUNNING NEWS

*By Scott Linnell*

Resilience keeps us runners on our feet. The novel coronavirus pandemic knocked us out of racing for essentially all of Year 2020. But “virtual” racing gave a number of us long distance runners the chance to bounce back into competition.

Our athletes took advantage of several virtual team competitions. We participated in a trifecta of national virtual 5K and 10K road races between May and September for those age 60 and over that was sponsored by Boulder Road Runners of Colorado. Meanwhile, Shore AC rocked the virtual Asbury Park Sheehan Classic 5K team race in August. Finally, a scintillating quartet of mostly Shore AC master's women held sway in a 250-mile Compuscore Runaway From 2020 team challenge early this year. Read all about your teammates' accomplishments below.

## The Boulder National Virtual Age 60+ 5K/10K Challenge

What joy invigorated us elder harriers when we heard that Boulder was hosting a nationwide series of virtual races! Finally, after more than two months of shutdowns, we had reason to strap on racing shoes and run with a purpose. Boulder coordinated three events: A Memorial Day 5K/10K, an Independence Day 5K/10K, and a Labor Day 1M/5K/10K. Participants chose their preferred distance and were rated on age grading rather than time.

Shore AC entered men's and women's teams in all three Challenges. While our men's teams were overshadowed by stronger squads, our Shore AC ladies shone brightly by winning two of the three races.

### Memorial Day Challenge: Shore AC Women Win First National 60+ Virtual Race Results for Shore AC Athletes (May 23-31)

#### #1 Shore AC 60+ Women A: 79.84%

Name	Age	Distance	Time	Age Grading	Location
Barbara Donelik	73	5k	24:16	90.78%*	Thompson Park
Susan Stirrat	64	5k	25:53	75.27%*	Roads, Denville, NJ
Dawn Ciccone	64	5k	26:31	73.45%*	Lehigh University

#### #4 Shore AC 60+ Men A: 81.42%

Name	Age	Distance	Time	Age Grading	Location
John Kilduff	68	5k	20:35	83.08%*	Colts Neck Town Hall
Harold Leddy	65	5k	20:11	82.49%*	Colts Neck Town Hall
Reno Stirrat	66	5k	20:47	80.83%*	Colts Neck Town Hall
David Huse	62	5k	20:11	80.43%*	Princeton U Track
Kevin Dollard	64	5k	20:35	80.24%*	Cary In. Millbrook, NY
Scott Linnell	63	5k	21:01	77.87%	Colts Neck Town Hall
Harold Nolan	73	5k	23:46	75.49%	Mater Dei HS Track
Paul Deykerhoff	68	10k	53:35	66.06%	Thompson Park

Who says that you can't have fun during a lockdown? A collection of Shore AC runners aged 60 and over reveled in the first-ever National Virtual race -- while practicing social distancing, of course! Sponsored by the Boulder (Colorado) Road Runners, the race rated teams based on age grading. Participants chose their preferred distance, 5K or 10K, on pretty much whatever course they desired. Each contestant was required to submit proof of their time and distance (You'll find our body of proof in the pictures below). Races needed to be run within an 8-day window, specifically between May 23 and May 31.

And how did we do? It is a sheer delight to report that the Shore AC women's 60+ team \*WON\*! Our three super-gals combined their remarkable talents to score an average age grading of 79.84%. **Barbara Donelik** led the way, zipping through her 5K Thompson Park course in a stunning time of 24:16. Given her spritely age of 73, that equates to an astounding age grading of 90.78%. Congratulations, Barbara! SAC stalwart **Susan Stirrat** spun a swift 25:53 on the streets of her hometown of Denville, yielding a marvelous age grading of 75.27%. Fellow 64-year-old harrier **Dawn Ciccone** streaked across the Lehigh University campus to clock an

excellent 26:31, in the process sewing up first place for the team with her age grading of 73.45%. The team's composite age grading of 79.84% just edged out the 78.23% score for second-place Greater Lowell Road Runners. A women's team from Boulder Road Runners also competed and took third place. Well done, Shore AC ladies!!!

Meanwhile, Shore AC did what they could to cobble together a decent outcome. Mere weeks prior to the race, SAC stars **Reno Stirrat** and **Kevin Dollard**, both sidelined for months by nagging injuries, doubted that they could participate. But, as she often does, Lady Luck smiled on our squad. Reno's back muscles behaved long enough for him to squeeze in a 20:47 and lodge an age grading of 80.83%. Kevin's toe bided its time quietly while he toured the Cary Arboretum near his upstate New York hometown, notching an impressive 20:35 for a solid age grading of 80.24%. Well aware of the injuries to our two power hitters, other Shore AC athletes stepped up to the plate and rapped some key hits. **John Kilduff** ripped a towering shot, running a fabulous 20:35 to nail a spectacular age grading of 83.08%. Next, **Hal Leddy** cleared the bases with a rocket run of 20:11, good for an age grading of 82.49%. New club member **David Huse** made his debut ace for Shore AC a memorable one. He sped through 12-1/2 loops on the Princeton University track in 20:11 to post a (road) age grading of 80.43%. Great to have you aboard, David! Backing up our front five runners were **Scott Linnell** in 21:01 (77.87%), **Harry Nolan** in 23:46 (76.41%) and **Paul Deykerhoff** doing a 10K in 53:35 (66/06%). Shore AC's team score of 81.42% placed us fourth in between #3 Boulder Road Runners (82.42%) and #5 Athletics Boulder (78.98%). Atlanta Track Club dominated this kickoff coronavirus race with 88.00%, while Greater Lowell Road Runners grabbed second place with 83.22%.



Left to right: Hal Leddy, Reno Stirrat, Scott Linnell and John Kilduff after their 5K race at Colts Neck Town Hall.



## Independence Day Challenge: Shore AC 60+ Women Repeat as National Champions

### Results for Shore AC Athletes (July 3-12)

#### #1 Shore AC 60+ Women A: 81.29%

Name	Age	Distance	Time	Age Grading	Location
Barbara Donelik	73	5k	24:39	89.18%*	Thompson Park
Diane Rothman	62	5k	24:01	78.90%*	Thompson Park
Susan Stirrat	64	5k	25:40	75.78%*	Denville Roads
Kim Hart	60	5k	24:39	75.05%	Thompson Park
Kathy Packowski	63	5k	30:18	63.37%	Belmar Boardwalk

#### #7 Shore AC 60+ Men A: 78.11%

Name	Age	Distance	Time	Age Grading	Location
John Kilduff	68	5k	20:34	82.90%*	Thompson Park
David Huse	62	5k	19:54	81.19%*	Princeton University
Kevin Dollard	64	5k	20:17	80.97%*	Cary Institute
Scott Linnell	63	5k	21:36	75.46%*	Thompson Park
Paul Deykerhoff	68	5k	24:20	70.034%*	Red Bank Track
James Wright	67	5k	24:53	67.92%	Thompson Park
Mike Washakowski	68	5k	25:28	66.95%	Thompson Park

Our Shore AC "grandes dames" did it again! Flush with success from having won the first national virtual 5K/10K challenge during Memorial Day weekend in May, these high-spirited gals took on an even larger field of women's teams over the July Fourth weekend and scored another victory! The SAC 60+ ladies prevailed by posting an unmatched composite age graded team score of 81.29%. The next closest team, the Greater Lowell Track Club, came close with a score of 79.43%. Spearheading our squad once again was 73-year-old **Barbara Donelik**. By completing her 5K in a time of 24:39, Barbara achieved a remarkable age grading of 89.18% that ranked first among all female contestants. Next on the age grading scale came **Diane Rothman**. She was actually our fastest 60+ participant with her time of 24:01. Given her age of 62, her age grading (based on the brand-new 2020 curves) worked out to a terrific 78.90%. The team's third lady to cross the virtual finish line was 60-year-old **Kim Hart** in 24:39, yielding an excellent age grading of 75.05%. However, the team's third scorer turned out to be 64-year-old **Susan Stirrat**, whose time of 25:40 produced an even higher age grading of 75.78%. All-important insurance was provided by **Kathy Packowski**, who clocked 30:18 for a solid age grading of 63.37%. Well done, ladies!!!

Alas, the Shore AC men suffered nearly the opposite fate, finishing towards the back in seventh place out of eight teams. Key absences due to injury and illness depleted our ranks. Nevertheless, the remaining men put up a valiant fight! **John Kilduff** led the charge once again, pounding out another racing gem in 20:34 that corresponded to a superb age grading of 82.90%. **David Huse** proved that his debut race on Memorial Day was no fluke as he scorched the Princeton University track in 19:54. By doing so, David contributed a magnificent age grading of 81.19%. Rugged teammate **Kevin Dollard** played his part, blazing to a fast 20:18 despite persistent

leg pain. Being of age 64, his time gave Kevin a stellar age grading of 80.97%. The Shore AC men's 60+ team was off to a great start with three members over 80% age grading!

Regrettably, our remaining horses weren't able to match such torrid paces, especially in the steamy heat of summer. Lack of fitness flattened **Scott Linnell** in the third and final mile of his 5K, as he lumbered to a 21:36 and a sub-par 75.46% age grading. A pleasant surprise, though, came over the wires when 68-year-old **Paul Deykerhoff** notched a speedy 24:21 on the Count Basie track to reach the 70% age grading threshold (70/03%). Paul's superb effort as fifth scorer helped the Shore AC men's team stave off the Silverbacks team with an average age grading of 78.11% versus 76.76%. Fellow SAC warriors **Jim Wright** (24:53, 67.92%) and **Mike Washakowski** (25:28, 66.95%) ensured team success with strong backup performances.

The National Virtual 60+ 5K/10K Challenge, sponsored by the Boulder Road Runners, wraps up on Labor Day weekend with the third and final race. Can the Shore AC ladies make it a clean sweep? Tune in two months from now to find out! Let's go, Shore AC!!!



Left to right: Kneeling: Barbara Donelik and John Kilduff; Standing: George Kochman (not a race participant), Mike Washakowski, Jim Wright, Scott Linnell, Diane Rothman and Kim Hart. Location: Thompson Park in Lincroft.

**Labor Day Challenge: Shore AC 60+ Men Reach New Performance Height**  
**Results for Shore AC Athletes (September 4-13)**

**Shore AC 60+ Women A: 69.15%**

Name	Age	Distance	Time	Age Grading	Location
Sue Patla	62	5k	25:51	73.31%*	Thompson Park
Susan Stirrat	65	1 Mile	8:11	68.88%*	Denville Roads
Kathy Packowski	64	5k	29:48	65.27%*	Belmar Boardwalk

**Shore AC 60+ Men A:****81.41%**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Age Grading</b>	<b>Location</b>
John Kilduff	69	1 Mile	6:06	82.81%*	Track in Virginia
Reno Stirrat	66	5k	20:24	82.03%*	Thompson Park
David Huse	62	5k	19:45	81.81%*	Princeton U Track
Mike Mooney	64	1 Mile	5:57	81.04%*	Colts Neck Town Hall
Scott Linnell	64	1 Mile	6:00	80.36%*	Colts Neck Town Hall
Harry Nolan	73	1 Mile	6:58	76.32%	Colts Neck Town Hall
Spider Rossiter	68	1 Mile	6:52	72.82%	Track in Virginia
Przemek Nowicki	75	1 Mile	7:44	70.98%	Colts Neck Town Hall
Mike Washakowski	68	5k	24:44	68.94%	Eatontown 5k
John Kuhi	76	5k	35:00	53.57%	Thompson Park

This summer, an epidemic swirled through the Shore Athletic Club. No, we're not talking COVID-19 (and our best wishes to any afflicted with the dreaded disease), It was the injury bug! Ailments claimed several of our top age 60+ men and practically wiped out our 60+ women's team. But did that stop us from participating in the third and final Boulder National Virtual Challenge? Make no bones about it: we showed up for the Labor Day event!! In fact, our 60+ men's team achieved something that it may not have done in 7 years or longer: all five scoring members of the team exceeded 80% age grading. This was especially remarkable considering that new and more stringent age grading tables went into effect earlier this year. As for our 60+ ladies, their much-depleted ranks failed to three-peat and sweep the national series. But, hey, having a women's team at all for the Labor Day Challenge represented an accomplishment.

The Shore AC men's 60+ squad started their quest for success far away from the Jersey shore. **John Kilduff** debuted his athletic prowess at his new home in northern Virginia by smacking down a 6:06 mile, which at age 69 gave John an admirable 82.81% age grading. Meanwhile, further up the Northeast Corridor in Princeton, teammate **David Huse** fashioned his own heroics by spinning a 19:45 on the university's famous track. That impressive time earned the 61-year-old club rookie a superb age grading of 81.81%. The scene then shifted closer to home base, as 66-year-old **Reno Stirrat** sailed to a 20:24 5K in Thompson Park, garnering an encouraging 82.03% age grading. Reno's effort was truly triumphant, considering that it was his first race after two months spent rehabilitating his back and hamstring muscles. Happily, Reno's muscles now appear to be fully healed. Close by at Colts Neck Town Hall, 64-year-old **Mike Mooney** and his contemporary **Scott Linnell** pushed each other to their limits in a mile race. Side-by-side through 1200 meters, Mike pulled ahead down the finishing straightaway to cross in 5:57 while Scott followed close behind in 6:00. Their respective age gradings of 81.04% and 80.36% delivered the much-sought all-80+ result for Shore AC's 5 scoring team members. And we even did this without the services of reliable 60+ runners Kevin Dollard and Hal Leddy, who were both sidelined by bodily mishaps. Happily, the team received contributions from other 60+ stalwarts. Historical powerhouse **Harry Nolan** continued his comeback attempt at age 73 by powering through the mile at Colts Neck Town Hall in 6:58 to notch a 76.32% age grading. Harry's elder teammate, 75-year-old **Przemek Nowicki**, followed in 7:44 to nail down a 70.98% age grading. Shore AC veteran **Spider Rossiter** gave the 1-mile option a spin and landed a solid 6:52 to earn a 72.82% age grading. Long-time coach **John Kuhi** tried his luck with the 5K distance, squeezing out a credible 35:00 from sore legs to register a

53.57% age grading. Finally, **Mike Washakowski** selected a \*real\* race for his contribution. His fine 24:44 in the September 7 Eatontown 5K gifted the 68-year-old with a worthy 68.94% age grading. Well done gentlemen!

Alas for the Shore AC 60+ women, a three-peat was not in the cards. Had the ladies managed to win the Labor Day Challenge, they would have made a clean sweep of the three-race Boulder National Virtual Series. However, ace harrier **Barbara Donelik**, who led the team to victory in the first two races with age gradings close to 90%, was nursing a sore muscle and made the difficult decision to sit out this race. Likewise, **Diane Rothman**, **Kim Hart** and **Dawn Ciccone**, all key members of the two prior winning teams, were unavailable for the Labor Day Challenge. In fact, when the Labor Day Challenge began, it appeared that Shore AC would not have enough ladies to field a team. At first, **Kathy Packowski** was our lone participant. She got the ball rolling with a sturdy 29:48 5K performance to rack up a 65.27% age grading. Newcomer **Sue Patla** then climbed aboard the Good Ship Shore AC. She started her SAC career on the right foot, speeding to a 25:51 gem on a 5K course in Thompson Park to polish off an age grading of 73.31%. The Good News Parade continued when **Susan Stirrat**, who had broken a toe several weeks prior and had to wear a protective boot, got clearance from her podiatrist to resume running. Susan cautiously tackled the 1-mile distance. Though her time of 8:11 didn't rank as one of her better achievements, it still meant that we had enough women for a team! Susan's mile time translated to an age grading of 68.88%. Although the ladies, like the men, finished in last place, they were proud to have "shown up" for the final match of the 2020 Boulder National Virtual Challenge. Kudos to you gals!



**September 12, 2020:** Gathered beside the 9/11 memorial at Colts Neck Town Hall, a contingent of Shore AC athlete's contentment with their just-run mile race. **Left to right:** Harry Nolan, Leslie Nowicki, Przemek Nowicki, Mike Mooney and Scott Linnell.

**September 13, 2020:** On the final day of the National Virtual Labor Day Challenge, Shore AC harriers strive to run their best at Thompson Park in Lincroft. **Left to Right:** Reno Stirrat, Susan Stirrat, Scott Linnell, Sue Patla, Przemek Nowicki, Mark Leary, Leslie Nowicki and John Kuhi.

## Asbury Park/ Sheehan Classic 5k Virtual Race

Shore AC honored their stomping ground by pounding out winning team performances. SAC teams dominated the Men's Open, Women's Open, Men's Masters and Women's Masters team categories. Results appear below. Note that the women totally ruled, having the better team times! GO, LADIES, GO!!!

### Open Men:

**#1: Shore AC**

**1:02:11**

Team	Place	Name	Gender	Clock Time
1	2	Justin Scheid	Male	18:13
2	19	Mike DiLeva	Male	21:48
3	20	Michael Giuseppe Mannozi	Male	22:10

### Open Women:

**#1: Shore AC Boardwalk Babes**

**0:54:35**

Team	Place	Name	Gender	Clock Time
1	1	Christiana Rutkowski	Female	17:28
2	3	Beth Marzigliano	Female	18:17
3	6	Amanda Eller	Female	18:50
4	7	Shannon Hemmerle	Female	19:15
5	8	Kiera Russo	Female	19:50

### Masters Men:

**#1: Shore AC Old Men of The Sea**

**1:02:06**

Team	Place	Name	Gender	Clock Time
1	13	John Kilduff	Male	20:35
2	14	Brian Cunningham	Male	20:38
3	15	Donald Schwartz	Male	20:53
4	16	Robert Shields	Male	21:02
5	18	Scott Linnell	Male	21:45
6	31	Spider Rossiter	Male	24:38

### Masters Women:

**#1: Shore AC Masters Women**

**0:59:27**

Team	Place	Name	Gender	Clock Time
1	5	Lauren Jackson	Female	18:43
2	9	Suzanne La Burt	Female	20:09
3	12	Laura DeLea	Female	20:35
4	22	Dawn Wilcox	Female	22:29
5	30	Laura Donnelly	Female	24:16
6	35	Joanna Cunningham	Female	25:52

## NJ Runaway from 2020 Music Festival Virtual Challenge Presented by CompuScore

The #KFG Girls lived up to their team name by Keeping <ahem> Going for a combined 455 miles – and at such a torrid pace that they finished \*FIRST\* among 31 relay teams! This dashing quartet consisted of three Shore AC ladies: 55-year-old Laura DeLea, 57-year-old Suzanne La Burt and 47-year-old Necia McQueen. The fourth member was Kerry Monahan Gaughan, a true friend of Shore AC.

Here were their individual contributions to this spectacular team achievement.

Team	Place	Name	Gender	Bib	Clock Time	Miles
1	4	Suzanne La Burt	Female	4048	13:24:44	103.33
2	5	Laura DeLea	Female	4051	30:47:56	233.78
3	21	Kerry Monahan Gaughan	Female	4054	7:50:11	49.48
4	35	Necia McQueen	Female	4109	12:59:02	68.49

## YOUTH CROSS COUNTRY PROGRAM ROLLS ALONG

*By Joe Compagni*

Under the expert direction of Lester Wright Jr., the Shore AC Youth Cross Country Series was once again a great success this fall. Over the course of seven Sundays and one Saturday, more than 1,000 youth runners were able to compete at Holmdel Park in 800, 2K, 3K, 4K and 5K races.

State regulations led to the cancellations of many events in 2020, but with some great efforts from Matt Coleman of the Monmouth County Parks System and some additional safety regulations, the series was able to continue this fall. With pre-registration capped at a certain number, most weekends were sold out in advance.

Each week, from little ones in their first cross country race to high schoolers seeking an extra chance to challenge themselves at Holmdel Park, the Youth Series led to valuable experience and positive competition. The 3K race, with an average of nearly 60 boys and girls making their way through the grass and trails each week, proved to be the most popular distance this fall.

Club member Maurice Bell and family handled registration and timing of each race, with full results available on the Viper Timing website. In addition to weekly awards for top finishers, Mr. Wright hosted a barbecue at the park shelter on the final Sunday of the series, providing awards to the top performers and most improved athletes from the fall.

Youth clubs and runners from across the state joined the fall tradition of our Youth Cross Country Series, which Mr. Wright has overseen for most of the last four decades. We thank all of those who volunteered to help, along with the coaches, parents and young athletes who made it possible. This year in particular, the hills of Holmdel Park and the chance to get out and race were a warmly welcomed opportunity.

## SHORE A.C. YOUTH PROGRAM GONE RUNNING CONTINUES TO GROW

*By Bob Andrews*

The Shore A.C.'s youth running program, conducted by the staff of Gone Running, in conjunction with the Manalapan Township Department of Parks and Recreation continues to grow in number of participants, as well as event participation. Under the direction of the coaching staff lead by Bob Andrews, Will Cicoria, Liz and Alan Spector and Jeff Papcun, nearly 50 young runners participated in the fall running program which was designed to culminate in the USATF Junior Olympic competitive program. Unfortunately, the state and regional championships were canceled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 virus, so the Shore A.C. team never got to compete.

However, the team did train through all of November and supported the two XC All Americans from 2019 as they continued their quest in 2020. On December 5<sup>th</sup>, members of the team traveled to Tallahassee, Florida for the AAU National XC Championships. Among the club top finishers was Jessica Abbott, for finished a close second in the age 11/12 race, just .01 seconds in back of the winner in a nail bitter of a race. Teammate Lilia Gordon also had an outstanding race in the 13/14 division, landing a 5<sup>th</sup> place in a large field of athletes.

The next outing occurred on December 12 and 13, with participation in the USATF Jr. Olympic National XC Championships held in Kentucky. This time, Jessica Abbott had another outstanding race to win the national race, repeating the same win that she had in 2019. Also running another outstanding race was Lilah Gordon, who cracked the top three finishers with a fine 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the 13/14 division.

During the 2021 winter months, nearly 45 youth runners participated in the winter, outdoor Polar Bear running program which was designed to culminate in the USATF Northeast Championships. Unfortunately, the indoor track meet schedule was cancelled again due to the COVID-19 virus, so the Shore A.C. club did not get to compete. However, time trials were held indoors in March, and at the end of the program, the young athletes were able to test their skills at the 200, 800 and 1600 distances.

As an off chute of the Manalapan program, a secondary club youth program also is underway. In fall of 2020, a new relationship began with Middletown Township Department of Recreation and Parks to conduct a youth running program at Poricy Park. Under the direction of club Coaches Erin O'Neil and Joe Compagni, the program has begun with a modest number of young runners, including having conducted a competition complete with prizes for all of the participants. The program is scheduled to continue during this coming spring pending the posting of a spring flyer.

## 35<sup>TH</sup> N.J. INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD MEET AND OTHER TRACK EVENTS ON TAP FOR SUMMER

*By Dave Friedman*

In continuing the great tradition of one of its largest events, the NJ International Track and Field Meet, the Shore Athletic Club is planning to hold the 35<sup>th</sup> edition of this event this summer in mid-July. The International meet

offers events at every level and age, and if state protocols permit and a proper venue can be secured, the club hopes to stage this event once again in 2021.

In addition to the International meet, plans are in the works to hold the annual NJ/NY meet at Icahn Stadium on Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, with the combined NJ open and masters meet tentatively scheduled for Sunday, June 27<sup>th</sup>. NJUSATF is also working to create a series of development meets for the spring. There will also be a series of youth meets planned in Northern New Jersey by the NJ Striders. Information on these meets can be found on their websites. The Shore A.C. are also planning to conduct the annual summer track and field all-comers track meets beginning in early July.

If state protocols again permit, the club plans to host the annual Jersey Shore Half Marathon along with a 2-mile run on Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. If you would not be competing that day, volunteers are needed to help with this event. Please check the club website for updates.

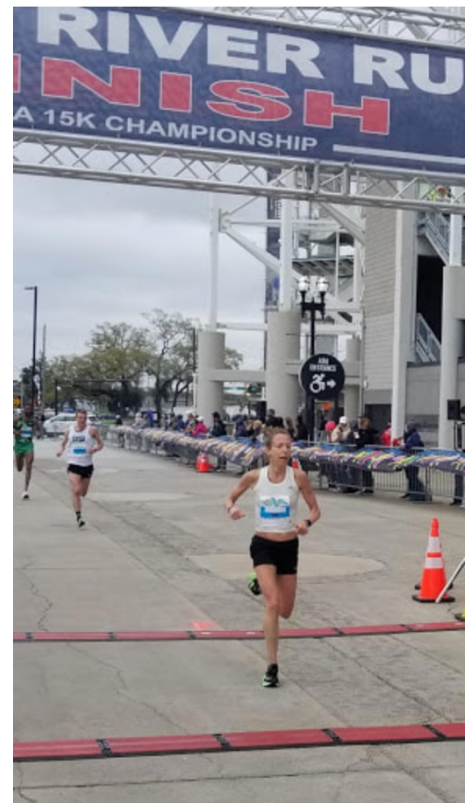
### **NEW SHORE AC RECRUIT OFF TO A GREAT START**

*By Scott Linnell*

New Shore AC member Roberta Groner continues to do what she has done for the past ten years: amaze and inspire the running world. A busy mother of three and full-time registered nurse, somehow, she finds the time to engage in the sport of running at a near-Olympic level. Roberta owns the third-best time in the marathon among masters (age 40+) American women with her jaw-dropping time of 2:29:07 in the 2019 Rotterdam Marathon.

Roberta kicked off her 2021 competitive campaign with that same red-hot speed. On a windy March 22 in Jacksonville, Florida, at the USATF Open 15K National Championships, she shredded the tough course with a phenomenal 51:56 performance. This feat earned her the women's masters crown with a margin of more than 2 minutes over second place. And get this: her time was a mere 4 seconds behind the top masters male, multi-year USATF champion David Angell. Read all about it here in an article by USATF Running Professor Paul Carlin.

We look forward with great anticipation to see what Roberta conquers next in 2021!





## CHEERS FOR MR. DEVIN HART AND STANFORD XC TEAM

*By Elliott Denman*

Cheers again for Mr. Devin Hart and the whole Stanford University cross country team. Devin is doing a superb job as a redshirt freshman for the team that just won the Pac-10 titles for both men and women. It's a tribute to the whole great Hart family and all the big things that they together with the Shore A.C. have done together for years.

Also cheers for the Stanford head coach JJ Clark, now making his mark in yet another section of the country, having previously excelled as a runner at Villanova and coach at Florida, Tennessee and UConn. On the International scene, Clark was the U.S. women's middle-distance assistant coach for the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics games, as well as head coach for the World Championship team in 2001.

Other Stanford connections to the Shore A.C. is the Stanford assistant track coach "Iggy" Ignaczak, a graduate of Toms River North HS and Mt. St. Mary's College, who also starred for a while for the Shore A.C. And we know that cheering all this are the Trotter twins, Red Bank Regional HS alumnae who did so many great things, too, for Stanford in recent years. And furthermore, twins Joe and Jim Rosa were major Stanford stars, too, from West Windsor, NJ.

And moving right along, let's applaud (along with Mom Joetta Clark Diggs) all the great deeds thus far in her freshman season at the University of Florida by Ms. Talitha Diggs who is completing the NCAA Indoor Track Championships as having the number two 400m time in the nation (only behind another New Jerseyan, Texas A&M's Ms. Athing Mu). No doubt about it, Talitha Diggs will soon be a top Olympic candidate, along with so many other athletes with Shore A.C. connections.

Let's salute them all!!!

SAVE THE DATES!

*The Shore Athletic  
Club presents:*

# 2021 SCHEDULE

APRIL 18TH - CAPTAIN ZINN  
MEMORIAL RACES

JUNE - AUGUST - LAKE  
TAKANASSEE SERIES

JULY - ALL COMERS TRACK  
MEET SERIES

JULY - INTERNATIONAL T&F  
MEET

AUGUST 14TH - SHEEHAN  
CLASSIC 5K

SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER  
CROSS COUNTRY SERIES  
(YOUTH + ADULT)

OCTOBER 2ND - JERSEY  
SHORE HALF MARATHON

NOVEMBER 20TH - ALUMNI  
CROSS COUNTRY RUN

DECEMBER 26TH - ASBURY  
PARK POLAR BEAR RACES

youth programs + racing

casual + competitive running

# The Shore Athletic Club 2021 Membership Form

*“Promoting the Olympic sport of Track and Field since 1934.”*

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Address:</b>
<b>Phone or cell:</b>
<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Email:</b>

***Check all specialties and interests:***

	Track & Field		Distance Team (5k & up)		Race Walk Team
	Youth Team		Alumni Division		Shore A.C. Friend
	Volunteering		Event Support		Marketing

***Fees:***

<i>Check yours</i>	Amount	Membership Type
	\$10.00	Youth
	\$30.00	Individual
	\$100.00	Individual + coaching

Make checks payable to: Shore Athletic Club and mail to: 1401 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Spring Lake, NJ 07752. Please provide us with your USATF-NJ# \_\_\_\_\_ if you wish to compete for the club in USATF championship events. If you need to do so go here: [www.usatf.org](http://www.usatf.org). Our club code is 07-0101.

€ I know that running and volunteering to work club events are potentially hazardous. I should not enter or participant in club activities unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to my ability to safely compete to run. I assume all risks associated with running and volunteering to work at events including but not limited to falls or contact with other participants, the effects of weather and traffic on roads.

*Members of the USATF and the RRCA*

