

# A view of the

17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## Perfection Runner

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

27 July 2013 (morning)

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

Sarvagata says that in a previous edition of this Race, "I was observing all the different qualities that the runners represent. If we combine all those qualities we get a perfect runner, with all the divine qualities that we need in the spiritual life."

As he tells me this it is still the very early hours of an almost perfect day. There is a fresh breeze from the west is drifting coolly across the Course of the

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. The sun is rising up full, bright and promising and it, for today at least, will not burn and abuse the twelve runners who have lived under its hot gaze for so many days.

Sarvagata has spent the previous two summers here running this Race, and is now into his 42nd day of his third time. Yesterday, might have been the worst day he has ever had on this Race Course. He finished the day with just 87 laps and saw the tall Slovak, Pranjali, shuffle past him and take over his fourth place position. Something that probably neither of these two noticed nor cared much about.

When you compare Sarvagata's mileage this year to last year it is nearly 200 miles less. Yet as we talk, his face is bathed in the soft, golden light of dawn and it is clear that he is happy with what he has and also where he is. He is at peace and content with all that life has given to him.

I feel it is so easy to forget what is really happening in this Self-Transcendence Race. You see the runners, you listen to them and they tell you — from their hearts — their experiences here. Each expressing their unique vision of the Race and when this is all collected it seems to describe a world that is completely different than the one the rest of humanity is stumbling around in.

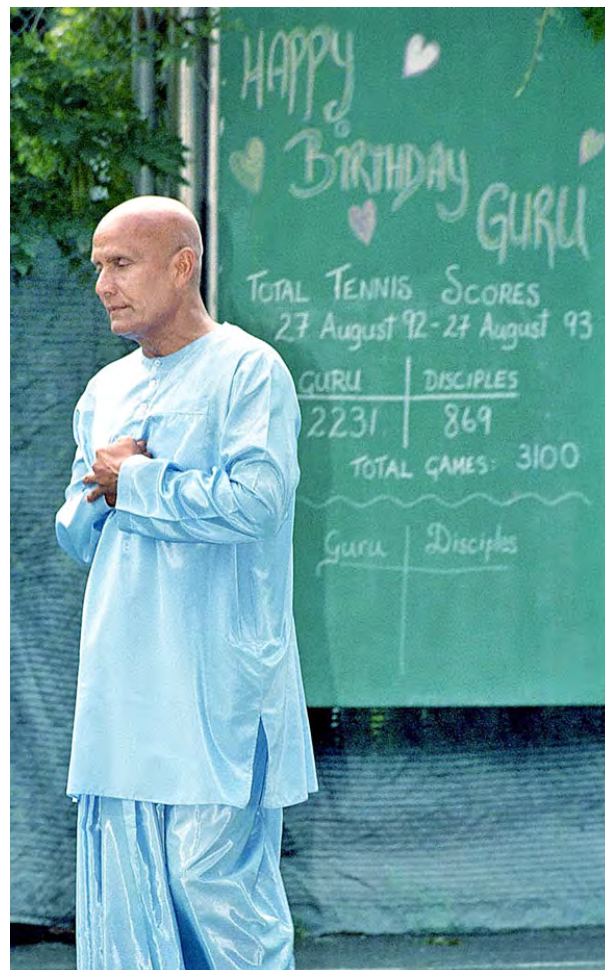


Photo by Prashnputra 1993

Sri Chinmoy on his birthday in 1993.  
(Note the numbers written on the blackboard)

For Sarvagata, a "bad" day and a "good" day seems have equal value — because no matter how many miles he collects, what he really wants is to grow stronger within. His real destination is to simply get closer to his inner Source. He is running, he is praying, he is asking God to lead him only there.

Describing those different qualities the runners of this Race represent, Sarvagata says are, "speed, consistency, soulfulness, wisdom — everything that we need in our spiritual life. This is so incredible. All of them together complete the perfect painting. We can't take

## Day 42

### Six Weeks In

By Sahishnu, 27 July 2013 (evening)

[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

On the special 42nd day of the race — the day Madhupran Wolfgang Schwark of Germany set the current record for the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race in 2006 (41 days+8 hours) —six people went past 60 miles to continue their quest to finish this race in good standing. Vasu Duzhiy and Atmavir Spacil continued their excellence, running 71.3 and 69.6 miles, respectively. These two men also slipped past the 2,700 mile barrier, invoking that one-year event (the forerunner of this event) in 1996. The weather cooperated yet another day, with cool pleasant conditions in the early morning and early evening. The days are growing a little shorter and the intensity of the sun has diminished a little. Ten days left....

Atmavir Spacil:

2,700 miles = 41 days+04:45:47

Vasu Duzhiy:

2,700 miles = 41 days+12:15:50





Of new "lessons" being experienced in this Race, Sarvagata says, "I am very happy. I am enjoying every bit."

any of them away without breaking the whole picture."

"I was begging the Supreme to have all those qualities in myself. It is probably not possible without experiencing them. So [during] this Race I noticed that I experienced all those qualities. I noticed that I was even copying the running styles of the different runners. It was incredible."

Ananda-Lahari is directly in front of us as we are running. I ask Sarvagata how he thinks it is possible for this fellow-runner of his to remain so cheerful despite all the ups and downs he has had. Sarvagata quickly corrects me, "First of all, I would like to say that, for Ananda-Lahari, there are no such things as ups and downs. What I see is the highest height. I see a spiritual man walking along the road. It doesn't matter what kind of speed we see. Because the actual speed of his inner progress we don't know."

*If you want to be a perfection-runner,  
Then start at the aspiration-start  
And run along the progress-road  
To the realisation-finish.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-  
Plants, Part 118" (Agni Press, 1988)



Yuri



Vasu

Sarvagata tells me, "Today is a perfect morning. I am so happy. And yesterday was a perfect day. Nevertheless, I had the lowest mileage that I ever had. I really enjoyed yesterday. I strongly felt that it was the Supreme's Will expressed. It was the Supreme's Grace that I did it exactly like that. Not more and not less." He adds, "I was on my feet all the time. Maybe in previous years I would have cursed myself, that I was lazy, or something like that."

"Yesterday I strongly felt that all the energy we have is borrowed. It is all given. If it is given, you use it. And if it is not, then you have to accept it. You can pray for it or humbly wait for it. You can't



Enthusiasm-Awakeners and friends celebrate their name anniversary and 6 years of singing daily at the Race



Atmavir



Pranjal

be disappointed — because it is not actually yours."

"Like Sarah said one day: the ego of those who walk in the Race is so small." He says, "If I myself didn't walk for three days in a row, then I wouldn't accept it — I wouldn't realize it. So, I am so happy that I had this experience." Of this inability to run, Sarvagata says, "I don't have any pain. I don't have any injury that causes this. I just feel empty in terms of energy. I feel great, but I can't run. It is amazing. It could be funny, but it is an uplifting experience. Now I don't have to worry about anything in my life, because I know that it is all given. If you are given something then you use it. If not, then so what? It is not your fault. It is not anybody's fault."

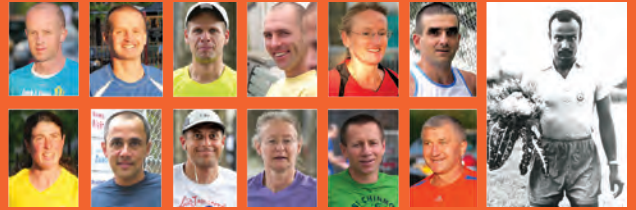
With complete openness and humility, Sarvagata says, "Now I don't have to have expectations from other people, from supplements, from food, from the helpers. It is just God's Will. I wish I could keep it with my every day life. In my life after the Race — after today, after this moment. But is so easy to forget it. But at least I had a glimpse of it. I am very happy."

*The inner runner  
Is always trying to offer  
Inspiration and aspiration  
To the outer runner.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,  
Part 16" (Agni Press, 1999)

# A view of the 17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## Live Inside Your Heart

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

28 July 2013 (morning)

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

"It is such a long race, but when you are nearing the finish you start to savor every moment because you know it is coming to an end." After 42 days of running Sarah has completed 2,100 miles. It was not the distance she had hoped for at the beginning — yet, she has continued on and now has run for more days and for a longer distance than she has ever done before.

## Day 43

### Hanging On and On

By Sahishnu, 28 July 2013 (evening)

[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

On a hazy, warm summer day with a lot of upper clouds, the pack of twelve put on their survival bibs and carried on. With only nine days left, Vasu Duzhiy pushed on to take day leader honors with 68.6 miles. With a maximum of eight possible finishers in the next week and a half the runners realize that this race is winding down. Atmavir Spacil maintains a large lead and should finish on Friday midday or afternoon. It is almost inconceivable that the race will end soon, but it must.

Ashprihanal Aalto:

2,700 miles = 42 days+04:28:57

Pranjal Milovnik:

2,700 miles = 42 days+17:27:44



*Rupantar joins the runners in a 6 a.m. moment of meditation on the start of Day 43*

For several weeks now, the possibility of completing the full distance in the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race drew further and further away from her. Many other athletes, when faced with this discouraging scenario, would have simply opted out — packed their bags and headed off to warm showers and soft beds.

There are times when we see such powerful and illuminating qualities in someone that we can be both surprised and inspired by them. In this Race, Sarah has amply demonstrated an incredible strength, resilience, perseverance and bravery — strong inner qualities that aren't immediately evident if you were to take just a quick glance and see her kind and gentle nature.

Just finding her way through her long-standing foot injury showed that Sarah has an incredible grit and determination. For many of us, our greatest adversary is dealing with our own doubts and disappointments. How well she has fared in this regard is evident

by the fact that she is happy and still out there on the Course.

I mention to Sarah that she now she has just ten days more — a time she has confronted many times in the Spring races in Flushing Meadow. She says, "Ten days is still a long time." Then adds, "The mind is our biggest enemy. This place could be a playground the whole time if you chose to see it that way, in the best consciousness. It is like our every day life. Sometimes we get down, and we think, why do we have to do this? I think the mind has a lot to do with it."

Sarah says she is focusing on "each day at a time now. The foot injury feels like I am managing it — for the first time in a long time. It is not giving me a lot of trouble, so I hope to run a little better. I really feel like I want to enjoy each lap. I feel like there is a change right now. People have got through the extremely hard times. But who knows what's ahead?"

As she contemplates the final moments of the 3,100 Mile Race, she





*Sarah running along the Course in a this "mini world"*



*Kausal, here with Vasu, offers the Race invaluable medical help*



*Vasu catching up with friend, Dhrubha, on the Course*



*Vajra telling Vasu a story*

says, "Really, I think I am going to miss it. I never thought I would say that, but when I go home to my regular life, I am going to remember that this is a kind of spiritual world here. It is a mini world. Everyone you speak to has a slightly different perspective on life. I am really going to miss that."

*Why do you live inside your body  
To become a puppet of your foe, fear?  
Why do you live inside your mind  
To become a puppet of your foe, doubt?  
Live inside your heart  
To become an admirer of your true friend,  
Your soul.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 48"  
(Agni Press, 1982)

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There are quite a few people who go to great lengths to serve the Race in the best way they can. Jowan has been taking pictures since 2006. He is one of the main photographers along with Prabhakar and Arpan.

Last night Jowan was here for four hours trying to get time-lapse pictures of the stars. Of continuing to come regularly to the Race, he says, "I am trying to keep a high standard. I try and do now what I did at the very beginning. I am inspired by the runners and I want to honor what they are doing."

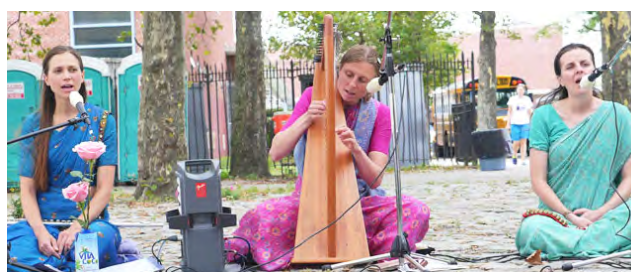
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*Jowan taking photos: see the Race photo gallery at:  
<http://gallery.srichinmoyraces.org/3100/2013>*



*Ananda-Lahari*



*A few members of the musical group Sangit Surabhi perform for the runners*

#### INSIDE OUR HEARTS

*I shall not die, but live.  
Where?  
Inside your heart.*

*I shall not speak, but listen.  
Where?  
Inside my heart.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Transcendence-Perfection"  
(Agni Press, 1975)



*Surasa and Irena*



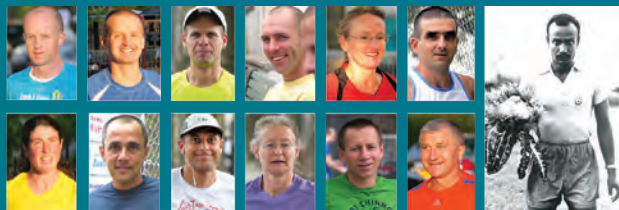
*Sahishnu with Ray*



# A view of the

17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## The Divine Journey Never Ends

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

29 July 2013 (morning)

*This is a shortened version of the article, please  
visit the website for the full version*

Surasa tells me, "Today I am feeling a little bit tired. But it is okay."

If you ever want to take a real look at somebody with a calm, steady mood

### Day 44

#### Two Is A Crowd

By Sahishnu, 29 July 2013 (evening)

[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

On a deceptively warm afternoon of an otherwise pleasant summer day, the group of twelve runners continued on towards their goals of destiny. Vasu Duzhiy crept within 3.85 miles (7 laps) of the lead with a very strong 64.7 miles. Ashprihanal Aalto ran 62.01 miles to remain solid in third place. Pranjal Milovnik remains ever-steady in fourth. Sarvagata Ukrainskyi rebounded off a poor day before to hold fifth, while the ever steady Surasa Mairer dazzled again with 60.9 and her fastest 2,700 mile split. Eight days remain and should yield eight finishers and twelve happy souls as the racers move towards their invisible finish line. Beach days beckon.....

*Sarvagata Ukrainskyi:*

2,700 miles = 43 days+09:11:01

*Surasa Mairer:*

2,700 miles = 43 days+17:41:31

and temperament then spend some time with Surasa. Add to those qualities her extraordinary ability to remain cheerful and positive even when confronting a monumental physical, mental and emotional challenge — one that most of us would never even consider, let alone attempt, even once in our lifetimes. What Surasa has taken on is not one of those mythical, but one very real battle. And this 55-year old champion from Vienna is enduring it, not for the first time — but for the third time.

Surasa says, "I have some blisters, yaaah, my dear friends. But they are not so bad." She is not complaining, merely stating the facts. "I think I didn't sleep enough."

There are some runners, who when looking at the daily schedule of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race, might just think that the time the Course shuts down between midnight and 6 a.m. would offer all the rest and comfort an exhausted body would need — just enough to then be able to get up and face another day. It doesn't.

That cruel mistress, Time, often makes false promises of relaxation but they never come true, certainly not during this Race. Surasa, like all the runners, tried to snatch a handful of hours of sleep last night. What she probably ended up with was not more than a miserly three grim hours.



*Sri Chinmoy in Puerto Rico*

Who knows how much sleep is really enough? How much is enough on an ordinary day, when the sole tasks confronting you are a few hours of work or school? How much do you need to run 60 miles? No, excuse me, 3,100 miles in 52 days?

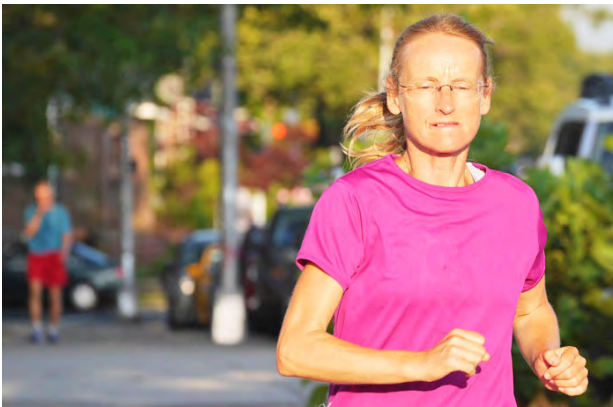
There could be some good, practical science which might be able to accurately predict a lot of things about this Race. It could calculate and map out the optimum amount of training and experience; introduce a proper course of nutrition; tell what should be done in preparation of the feet; how and how often to stretch. Technical details that might make a lot of sense on paper but are as useful to Surasa now as being invited out for a coffee and a strudel at a cafe in Vienna.



Ananda-Lahari, Surasa and Pranjal



Sopan and Ashprihanal have — and give — some fun on the Course, they perform a joke for the 20+ singers that are there this morning



Nidhrui



Day 43: Atmavir is 124 miles ahead of his mileage last year



Sarvagata

Atmavir Spacil	2812	Yuri Trostenyuk	2590
Vasu Duzhiy	2786	Nidhrui Zimmerman	2576
Ashprihanal Aalto	2742	Sopan Tisekov	2456
Pranjal Milovnik	2700	Baladev Saraz	2366
Sarvagata Ukrainskyi	2674	Ananda-Lahari Zuscov	2264
Surasa Mairer	2632	Sarah Barnett	2146

The mileage board at the beginning of Day 43

The only thing that counts now is the 470 miles ahead of her and that she simply continues running as best she can. Her entire focus is on the Course. All the forces, and all the qualities she has within — be it her tiredness, her pain, her strength and her dedication — are mixing, moving and manifesting in and through her as a runner and who she is becoming as a spiritual seeker.

Yesterday Surasa felt her mileage was “not so good” (it was, in fact, a very respectable 109 laps which equals 59.82 miles). “I spent too much time with the doctor and couldn’t do my mileage. In the late afternoon I was a little bit dizzy,

I couldn’t do too many miles.” She says, “But it is okay. I am quite happy with this mileage. If I can do this until the end, then I will finish fine.” She adds, “My goal is ‘slowly and steadily’. Not to overdo it. And I can run quite good until the end.”

We talk about the support Surasa receives from overseas. She says, “It is always nice to hear from your friends. You see that they are thinking of you, and it is so touching. When they are writing ‘we are thinking of you and praying for you’. It touches me always very deeply.”

*The divine journey never ends.  
Each ending is the preparation for a  
greater and more fulfilling beginning.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
“Colour Kingdom” (Agni Press, 1974)

Pranjal says, “It is always part of the Race. The lack of sleep and exhaustion accumulates towards the end of the Race. Your body is only functioning on two levels. Either you are running or you are sleeping. Nothing in between. Either you are running or when you sit down, you immediately fall asleep. Day by day it is harder to stay awake.” Pranjal completed 113 laps yesterday (62.01 miles).

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Sarvagata managed just 32.93 miles yesterday. Still, we know he is finding something positive and encouraging from his experience in the Race. But, of course, nobody would like to see him struggle this way for another 426 miles.

*A journey to no end  
Was my animal life’s destruction-journey.*

*A journey to no end  
Is my human life’s desire-journey.*

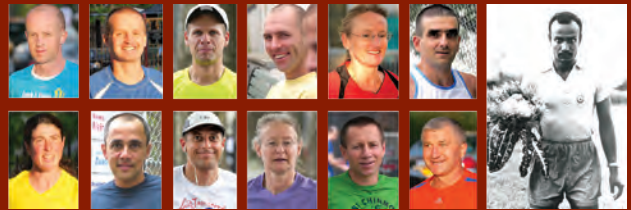
*A journey to no end  
Shall be my divine life’s  
aspiration-journey.*

*A journey to no end  
Shall be my God-life’s  
manifestation-journey.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
“Europe-Blossoms” (Agni Press, 1974)



# A view of the 17th Annual



# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

## A Changed Man

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

30 July 2013 (morning)

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

I remember once hearing my Dad say that he was too old to change. I don't remember now whether it was something in particular troubling him or if it was simply life in general vexing him, in the way it exhausts most of us mortals. At

the time I thought he was incorrect — but I was not going to be the one to tell him so. When our troubles mount up sometimes finding a solution often feels like adding another problem to the already considerable pile.

Sri Chinmoy's philosophy has everything to do with change and transformation. The very phrase "self-transcendence" cannot be separated from the very core of what everyone involved in the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race is trying to accomplish. Admittedly, as someone who is now getting closer to the age when my father said those words, I know how easy it is to resist the great divine forces that really want to lift us up to our own perfection. The first step, surely, has to be to just release and let go of the things that do not illumine and inspire us. Not always easy.

*A changed man  
Is a changed world.*

*A changed world  
Is a changed God.*

*A changed God  
Is a changed Dream.*

*A changed Dream  
Is a changed Silence.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"The Dance Of Life, Part 13"  
(Agni Press, 1973)

At the 3,100 Mile Race nothing is static. Now, as the Race is drawing quickly to its conclusion, one can sense a gathering surge of even more energy and movement. Like a great, powerful tide that sweeps through and carries



Photo by Kedar

*Sri Chinmoy at Jamaica High School Track,  
just across the street from the 3,100 Mile Race*

everyone involved in the Race to some new destination.

Physical bodies have managed, over the past 40-plus days and thousands of miles, to find amazing ways to adapt to this physically impossible task — and also to the mental and emotional burdens as well.

Despite everything thrown at them, you can see clearly how each runner has pushed to their absolute limits and then beyond — adapting, changing and dealing with the problems, even if there seemed to be no easy solution. Clearly, the Supreme did not bring us into this world to be stopped dead in our tracks. Change only appears to be painful and impossible if we don't honestly and soulfully try.

## Day 45

### Lead Change

By Sahishnu, 30 July 2013 (evening)  
[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

On the 45th day of running towards 3,100 miles, the twelve runners continued their quest. Ever-steady Vasu Duzhiy of St. Petersburg, Russia moved into the lead with a sparkling 71.3 miles. With 170 miles to go small leads are not guaranteed. This is the closest the top two men have been this late in the race since 1998, when Hungarian Istvan Sipos dueled two-time winner, American Ed Kelley. Mr. Sipos won in the last two days. Vasu is 7 miles ahead of Atmavir Spacil, who has led this race for a few weeks. Nidhruvi Zimmerman continues to amaze, reaching 2,700 miles for the first time in her long running career. Stay tuned as the runners head for the goal....

Yuri Trostenyuk:

2,700 miles = 44 days+12:00:05

Nidhruvi Zimmerman:

2,700 miles = 44 days+16:58:13

*If you sleeplessly aspire,  
You will not remain a prisoner  
Of the failure-past.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
“Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-  
Plants, Part 130”  
(Agni Press, 1990)

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This morning Vasu starts the day just four miles behind Atmavir (who did not have a good mileage day yesterday). I ask Vasu what this new situation means to him. He tells me, “Many people have inspired me to run faster. But I think I can do only what I can do. Yesterday I got a letter from home and they told me that they were inspired to see that I was in the top three. They were very happy. But I think I need to only do my best. It is only God’s Will who will be first and second and who will finish.”

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Baladev wrote a poem yesterday:

Who am I? Peace.  
Who am I? I am a light.  
Who am I? I am joy.  
Who am I? I am happiness.  
Who am I? I am faith.  
Who am I? I am forgiveness.  
Who am I? I am harmony.  
Who am I? I am love.  
Who am I? I am a light blue bird flying  
in the infinite sky forever.....(Baladev)

I ask him where his poems come from. “Everything exists. I only say this.”

He says that he feels that each new passing day simply becomes better and more fulfilling. “It is a very nice feeling. Because when you feel this, it is like problems don’t exist. Because everything feels like you are part and parcel of a river going on its way. Nobody can stop this river because this river is very strong. It is a very natural feeling. I think everyone has this feeling sometimes. I hope so.”

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With the decreasing humidity, many runners are having good mileage days. Yesterday, Sarah ran 57.42 miles — her best in over 30 days. Sopan also had a great day yesterday, running 101 laps (55.43 miles). He has 2,511 miles but sees that his plan-B goal of finishing the 52 days with 3,000 miles will also probably



Vasu with helper, Nicolay



Bipin, one of the Race Directors, checks in with Ashprihanal



Ashprihanal helps Sopan out with his “mental blister”

be out of reach. He and Ashprihanal address this issue in a short skit that they perform for the singers that came this morning:

**Sopan:** *I have this huge mental blister. It really hurts me.*

**Ashprihanal:** *I know. You have pushed really hard for 3,100 miles through all those painful blisters. And if you complete the distance, people sing your name song and there is this big party with cake. You don’t get this if you don’t finish. But remember, we value inner progress much more than outer success. But if your mental blister is the problem my hand is the answer.”*

At this, Ashprihanal smacks Sopan’s hat-covered head and water comes shooting out. A hidden-water balloon has provided the surprising special effects. And for the next several minutes the



Atmavir



Surasa

shocked singing group is in hysterics as Sopan and Ashprihanal happily run off on their way.

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Atmavir has had an exceptional race this year and has been in the lead for the past ten days, but he is currently having problems and is walking. He ran 92 laps yesterday (50.49 miles) and Vasu passes him for the lead.

Vasu comes with some awesome strength this year (he is 180 miles ahead of his mileage last year) and

also has a very strong and willing helper in Nicolay. His most important strength, however, is of an inner nature. Vasu tells me how he views this Race: “If we offer it to Guru, he can run in and through us ... and make miracles.”

*Change! Change!  
If not, you will suffer.*

*Change! Change!  
You will prosper.*

*Brave, brave the old!  
If not, you will die.*

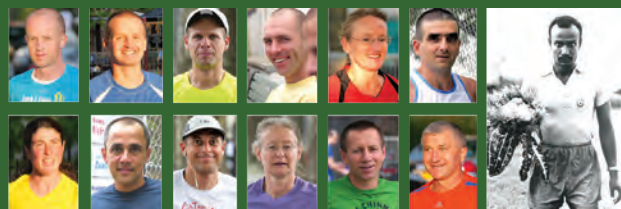
*Brave, brave the new!  
You will fly.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
“The Dance Of Life, Part 12”  
(Agni Press, 1973)



# A view of the 17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## Your Soul History

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

31 July 2013 (morning)

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

This morning, Sopan set off on the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Course just as he has done for the past 45 days. For the last few weeks, watching his first few laps is a painful sight. He is — at that time of day, at least — by far the slowest of the twelve runners and what he does in those early laps is not what most of us would call running or even walking. There is probably a more accurate physiological term, but to me it could best be described as a hobble.

As his shoes scrape along the sidewalk you can hear him shuffling along from some distance away. There are a

few reasons for his current condition including blisters, pain and fatigue. But perhaps the easiest way to understand his early morning hobble is by looking at the mileage board. Those numbers next to his name — 2,562 miles — are the reason for both his suffering and his joy.

Of course, there have been days on the Course when every little bit of Sopan was working smoothly rhythmically and superbly. He regularly ran over 60 miles a day for the first two weeks, accumulating those all so important miles in case problems should arise and, then, they did — with a vengeance.



Photo by Jowan

July 31, 2006: Sri Chinmoy giving a beaming smile to two finishers of the 3,100 Mile Race (Sopan, at age 25 — the youngest ever to enter this Race — is one of them)

Yet he says he is happy to be here. And, fortunately, as the morning progresses he becomes more limber and does move along well. And clearly his intention is to stay out here as long as he can, doing his best and simply see where all that effort and sacrifice takes him.

For Sopan, this year's Race is far from a failure. Instead, he feels that he has made a truly significant breakthrough and found an answer to a long-standing muscular and skeletal problem that has kept him out of the Race for a few years. Not too many days ago Sopan said, "Every time I have a good day, I thank God and try to stay humble."

Today is special for Sopan in several ways, for it was on this day seven years earlier, in 2006, that he finished the 3,100 Mile Race in 50 days and 13 hours. It was a glorious achievement for this young man from Bulgaria. In what was also a great surprise to him, Sri Chinmoy was there for his finish. Just a couple of hours earlier another runner finished as well. So, on that very special occasion, Sri Chinmoy gave them not only their spiritual names but also composed songs in their honor. Sopan's name means stairway to the highest.

## Day 46

### Clear But Cloudy

By Sahishnu, 31 July 2013 (evening)

[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

On a cloudy, hazy, not too hot but sticky day, Vasu Duzhiy all but cemented an insurmountable lead with a 72.9 mile total. His lead is nearly 20 miles over Atmavir Spacil as the race heads to a conclusion. His mileage today was his best since Day 1. Vasu will probably finish in the noon hour on Friday, barring any health issues or acts of God. In the meantime Surasa Mairer had second best total with 63.6 miles and is within three laps of fifth place. More later...

Vasu Duzhiy:

3,000 miles = 45 days+16:55:52



The 6 a.m. starting line on Day 46





*Sopan offered special prasad to the runners and singers this morning ...*



*... and they sang the Sri Chinmoy wrote for Sopan on this day in 2007 (birthday girl, Tejini, is in white cap)*



*Atmavir and Ashprihanal, sharing experiences only a handful of people in history have ever endured*

As we near that same spot where it all happened Sopan says, "there is a lot of history here."

*Your body-history  
You do not know.*

*Your vital history  
You have forgotten.*

*Your mind-history  
Disheartens you.*

*Your heart-history  
Inspires you.*

*Your soul-history  
Satisfies you.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Europe-Blossoms" (Agni Press, 1974)

\*\*\*

Shortly before going home last night Nidhruvi completed 2,700 miles. She tells me, "It was so beautiful. Very special. Yesterday I had such a good day. A fast day. I did many more laps than usual." She adds, "My 2,700 miles was at lap 107 and I did 113 laps yesterday. All special numbers."

At her current pace, she will complete the 3,100 miles sometime next Tuesday — on the final day of the Race. Nidhruvi says, "I hope so very much. I am looking forward to it, like anything. I am already imagining it in my head and heart to see the 3,100 mark and

cross over it. Just do it. It is just my dream and, hopefully, Guru's dream too."

Surasa also had a great day with 114 laps and she now has 2,763 miles, putting her in sixth place overall and top for the women.

\*\*\*

Pranjal ran 62.01 miles yesterday despite saying that he was "slow" in the morning and in the afternoon "but in the evening I was able to pick up the pace."

\*\*\*

Ashprihanal ran 58.72 miles yesterday and is continuing to regain his strength. This morning, he ran for a short time with Atmavir who, despite having a rough day two days, ran 110 laps (60.37 miles) yesterday and has just 177 miles to go.

\*\*\*

In the meanwhile, something quite extraordinary seems to have happened to Vasu yesterday. He ran 130 laps (71.34 miles) yesterday and now has just 170 miles to go. He is more than 200 miles ahead of his pace last year.

\*\*\*

With self-transcendence in the air another runner is running on the Course this morning (in the opposite direction as the twelve runners). It is Tejini's birthday and she says, "Last year, I did 25 km for my 25th birthday. This year, I become 26 so usually it would be 26 km" but says she is "still recovering a little bit from the [Self-Transcendence] Six Day Race. So I was thinking of doing 13 laps." This is her third time she has come to New York for the 3,100 Mile Race and is helping the cooks and in other ways.

Several years ago when she came to New York to celebrate her birthday she watched Ashprihanal finishing the Race. Tejini says, "The finishes are so amazing. I had tears. I felt so much oneness. It was so beautiful, beautiful. I immediately fell in love with the Race."

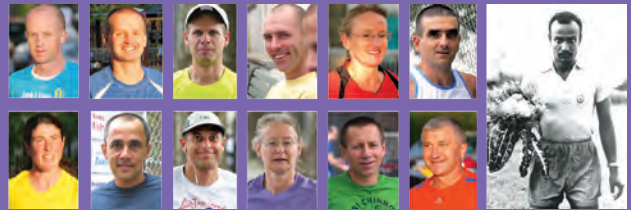
*History man has.  
Mystery man is.  
Mastery man needs.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"You And I Are God" (Agni Press, 1979)



# A view of the

17th Annual



# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

## Faster Than The Fastest

By Utpal  
<http://perfectionjourney.org>  
 1 August 2013 (morning)

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

When you see what Vasu accomplished on Day 46 of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race yesterday you have to wonder how it was possible. He says simply, "I was inspired to run faster." For all outer appearances he appeared to be doing exactly what he has done now since the beginning. But, in fact, he did something astonishing that only the clipboards can show. He ran 133 laps yesterday (72.99 miles). A mileage that is only surpassed by his first day on the Race Course — 45 days ago.

Obviously, Vasu's appreciation of the finish line is no longer an ethereal concept floating in some distant realm of his imagination. Instead, it is very real and very close. He started the day yesterday with just 170 more miles to go and will finish on Friday [2 August]. Astonishingly, after already running 3,000 miles he found a new gear, a new strength and most definitely more inspiration.

I try to ask Vasu about this increased mileage using a traditional, English-language, metaphor. If you have ever competed in any race then you have, no doubt, heard the expressions, "leave nothing in the tank," and "leave it all on the track." Expressions that suggest that we as athletes can make a conscious decision to commit more of ourselves to the last few miles or meters of a race.

## Day 47

### Getting Close

By Sahishnu, 1 August 2013 (evening)  
[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

Running his third consecutive day of over 70 miles (72.44) to his total has placed Vasu Duzhiy just 44 laps (24.09 miles) shy of finishing his second straight 3100 miler. The strong Russian has assumed the lead and will finish around 11:00 a.m. local time. Second place man Atmavir Spacil should also finish Friday evening, adding to his total finishes at seven straight. On the women's side, Surasa Mairer ran 64.2 miles to move into fifth place overall. The tough Austrian is getting stronger as the race goes on. Surprisingly, Ananda-Lahari Zuscin had the second best total of the day with 67.5 miles. Mr. Zuscin may be down the list of runners but has the talent to dazzle at any given moment. In all seven runners went past 60 miles on a mostly rainy, cool day and night. The best is yet to come...

But no matter how I try to explain them to Vasu he doesn't understand. Then it becomes my turn to comprehend: Vasu doesn't grasp these words, these hypothetical concepts, because within his vision and within his experience he has already surrendered himself entirely. It is not for him to decide anything. He is so immersed within the great flow of this Race that he need do nothing more than what he has been doing since the beginning: doing his best every moment of every day. And now he will simply arrive, at just the right time, at the finish line.

Vasu says, "Your goal and Guru come to you. You just have to be happy and be grateful — for everything."

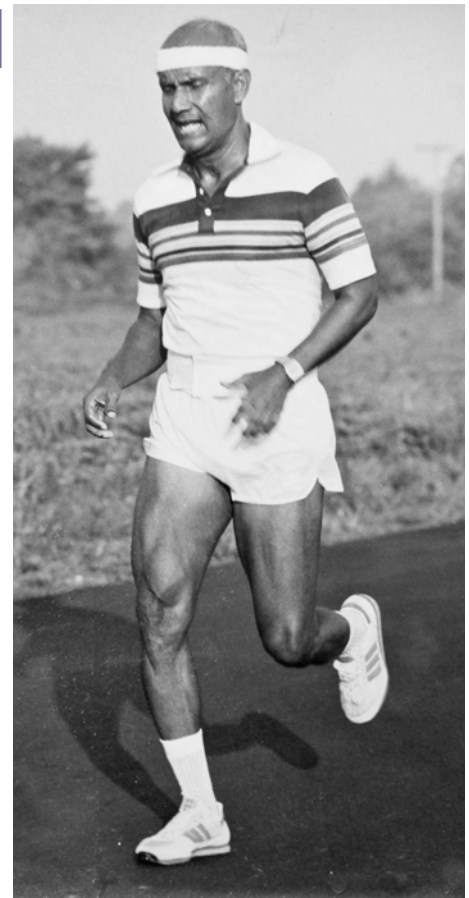


Photo by Bhoshwar

Sri Chinmoy in the 1980s

He adds, "I don't feel as though I am pushing harder. I am just trying to be happy."

*The ticking of the life-clock  
 Encourages and inspires  
 The brave souls  
 To run faster than the fastest  
 Towards their destined Goal.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
 "Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,  
 Part 18" (Agni Press, 2000)

\*\*\*

Yesterday, Surasa ran 63.66 miles — the second best mileage of the day (behind Vasu). I ask Surasa how it was



she was able to complete those 116 laps yesterday. She says, "I also don't understand. The power came — and when the power comes, you cannot resist." She adds, "It was just flying. Effortless."

I ask if it was the weather or something else. Surasa says, "Something else. The power came within and it was so strong. You just have a feeling of flying. I was so grateful to have the feeling. I can run for eternity. It was so wonderful. You feel nothing. You are just flying around. When you are in this flow it is just wonderful."

\*\*\*

This morning Sopan and Ashprihanal perform another skit for the singers who came this morning. Ashprihanal explains that they were too tired to practice and so even though they arrive in costume masks they simply hand the handwritten script to them and ask them to read it.

It reads:

*Ashprihanal: Did you hear about the Enthusiasm-Awakeners performance yesterday?*

*Sopan: About their premier at the Royal Edison Hall?\**

*Ashprihanal: Yes, they sang for the first time ever a Bengali song\*\*. And it was a great success. And today, they are doing the skit.*

*Sopan: That is real self-transcendence.*

*Ashprihanal: Do you know who takes care of all Bengali instruments?*

*Sopan: No. Who?*

*Ashprihanal: A baby sitar!*

*Sopan: Why did it take so long for the singers to get home last night?*

*Ashprihanal: They were off key!*

*The End.*

Writing these skits take time and energy away from Ashprihanal and Sopan's primary focus — completing

*A few notes on the subtleties of the jokes:*

*\* They sing on the Race Course in front of Thomas Edison High School*

*\*\* This song group specializes in Sri Chinmoy's English songs, but made an exception yesterday by singing Sopan's song which was in Bengali (Sri Chinmoy composed the majority of his songs in Bengali)*



Surasa takes flight



The mileage board at the beginning of Day 47



Pranjal



Nidhruvi and Sarah



Atmavir



Sarvagata



Ashprihanal



Vasu



Sopan



Ananda-Lahari

mileage — but gives everyone joy.

This morning Ashprihanal is also enjoying telling Pranjal the story of how he got his laundry back today and it had not been cleaned. He jokes that it looked so clean and neat that whoever was supposed to wash must of thought it had already been done.

\*\*\*

Vasu has been collecting stories of people's personal experiences with Sri Chinmoy. He tells me that someone told him yesterday, that whenever Sri Chinmoy gave concerts he would plant a seed within the hearts of those in the

audience. Seeds that would eventually grow and blossom one day, in a way that would bring inspiration into the life of that person. It so happens that the prayer that Sri Chinmoy wrote (in 2006) for this day for the 3,100 Mile Race is:

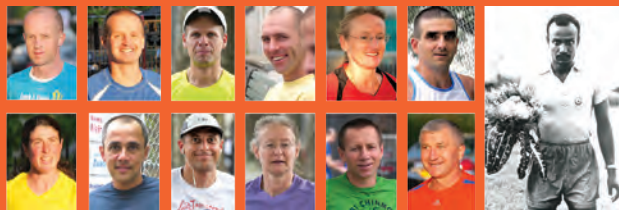
A  
God-faith-seed  
Becomes slowly  
But unmistakably  
A God-treasure-tree.

—Sri Chinmoy  
August 1st, 2006



# A view of the 17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## Our Victory

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

2 August 2013

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

It is still early in the morning of Day 48 and in about four hours Vasu will complete his long journey at the

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. It will be his second finish in the event — he completed the distance in the 2012 edition of the Race. But, for me anyway, watching Vasu this year was almost like seeing a completely different person. He was stronger, faster and simply delightful to watch — and to run occasionally with.

Of his experience at the race, Vasu says, "I would like to offer my gratitude to Sri Chinmoy and to everybody.



Vasu finishes the 3,100 mile distance for the second time



Atmavir finishes the 3,100 mile distance for the seventh time

## Day 48

### Vasu Duzhiy Wins 3,100 Mile Race

By Sahishnu, 2 August 2013 (afternoon)

[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

Vasu Duzhiy, 47, from St. Petersburg, Russia won the Seventeenth Annual Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race today, finishing the 5,649 laps in 47 days +05:39:00. The race started on June 16th with 12 runners circumnavigating a 0.5488 mile (883 meters) loop in the neighborhood. Mr Duzhiy averaged 65.6 miles per day (105.6 km). He was trailing by over 20 miles with only seven days of running left but made a charge that included four days over 70 miles out of the last six. The whole field had been reeling from a second heat wave lasting seven days in the middle of July. Vasu ran four days faster than his first-time finish of last year (51 days+10 hours). Tonight Atmavir Spacil will finish late in the evening which will be his seventh completion of the longest footrace and his highest placing ever. Stay tuned....

## Part Two:

### Atmavir the Great

By Sahishnu, 2 August 2013 (evening)

[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

Atmavir Spacil from the Czech Republic finished second in the 3,100 Mile Race in a time of 47 days+16:24:52. This was the seventh time in a row that Atmavir completed the 3100. He averaged 65.01 miles per day (104.63 km). He is still ranked seventh all-time for 3100 miles (45 days, three hours). A large throng attended both finishes of the first and second place men, capping a busy day full of sun and clouds. Ashprihanal will probably finish on Sunday morning, as well as Pranjal Milovnik in the late afternoon. It has been an interesting race, with six finishers still to come. Good luck to all ultra runners.



Everybody who organizes the race and who serves the race. I would also like to offer gratitude to all those who not only do something here physically but also those who even think about it — and want to become better people.”

Vasu’s attitude throughout the race was always positive, cheerful and incredibly humble.

Vasu says, “I tried to do my best last year and I tried to do my best this year. Last year I needed more patience and this year I had more happiness. It helped me so much. Last year and this year both were very good for me.”

I ask him about his helper, Nicolay. Vasu says, “He was the big difference between last year and this year. He helped me so much. He did many things for me from the morning until the evening. I am very grateful to Nicolay for his help. I do not think that this is my victory — but our victory. This is our victory and Guru’s victory.”

I joke with Nicolay that in a few hours he will be out of a job. He says ‘no’ — he will continue to work with Yuri.

*It was God’s Plan  
Right from the beginning of time  
To give our soulful faith  
A splendid victory.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
“Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 33”  
(Agni Press, 1982)

At Vasu’s finish, Sahishnu says, “Vasu, you are the epitome of self-transcendence. Last year, in your first attempt, you finished the race in 51 days and 10 hours. This year you finished in 47 days, 5 hours and 39 minutes. You bettered your previous time by over 4 days. Vasu ran 65.32 miles per day, 105 km a



Sahishnu congratulates Vasu



Vasu’s support team— here and overseas — encouraged him every step of the way



A huge crowd celebrate Atmavir’s achievement



Atmavir requests a photo with friend and mentor, Sulochana

day. He is now ranked 13th out of the 32 men and women who have finished the race. The 2013 champion, Vasu.”

*God has prepared my meal. I have to prepare my hunger. God is ready with my Victory. I have to prepare myself to accept my Victory.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
“Meditations: Food For The Soul”  
(Agni Press, 1970)

\*\*\*

That evening, Atmavir completed 3,100 miles for the seventh consecutive summer. He says, “Somewhere in the middle of the race, I felt as though I had fulfilled my task here. I am not coming back next year, but maybe in the future. I am very grateful, because I love you all here.”

His has been a long and incredible journey that very few have ever accomplished before. His accumulative mileage on this Race Course over the seven

years adds up to 21,700 miles — a distance that would nearly allow him to circle the globe.

His battles with the elements over all those summers and all the other countless difficulties have shown just how courageous and determined Atmavir really is. Just to enter this incomprehensible event is astonishing: to finish seven times is miraculous.

Sahishnu says, “Finishing in second place in the 3,100 Mile Race for 2013, in a time of 47 days, 16 hours, 24 minutes. Which is an average of 65.015 or 104.6 km a day. This is his seventh finish in a row. From the Marathon Team, and all the helpers: congratulations, Atmavir, on a job well done.”

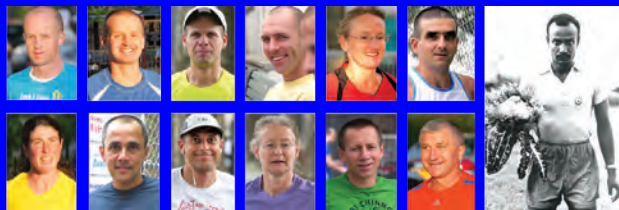
*My responsibility is  
The preparation of my heart.  
God’s Responsibility is  
The Satisfaction of His Heart in my life.  
Can we not fulfil our respective tasks?*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
“Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 50”

# A view of the

17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## Great Finnish

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

3 August 2013

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

Yesterday saw two finishers' who completed the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. The remaining ten runners arrive at the starting line this morning. I ask Nidhruvi about the finishes yesterday. She says, "I was crying the whole time. Even when I was running, I was crying. For me, the special thing is when they run with the flag. When I see them from afar running with the flag, coming into the camp and then crossing the line. This is so moving for me. It is such a beautiful feeling I cannot describe."

As I run along with Nidhruvi, Surasa is just behind us and gradually catches up to us. I suggest that Surasa is either speeding up or Nidhruvi is slowing down. Nidhruvi tells me, "No, we are kind of the same. Either she is in front — or I am. It doesn't matter. She finishes one day earlier. I have to do one and half days more." We joke that Surasa will be having strudel and a coffee while Nidhruvi will still be running. Nidhruvi says, "Actually we have to stop drinking coffee. I have never drunk so much coffee as here. But it really helps to stay awake, and I am very, very sleepy. Surasa is much stronger in the sleeping part. She sleeps much less than me, and is still so strong. I never see her staggering around like a drunk like me when I am tired." Surasa laughs and says, "But I am feeling it in the late afternoon. No, no, you are not behind me."

\*\*\*

Both Vasu and Atmavir come this morning and they run in the Self-Transcendence 2-Mile Race happening across the street. Atmavir runs 12:55 (placing third!) and Vasu runs 14:55.

\*\*\*

When Ashprihanal arrives at the race, he steps onto the edge of the curb and stretches his calves, just as does every day here. He is directly in front of the mileage board as he does this. I see that he is looking at the mileage he still has left to do and, speaking to no one in particular, he says, "the old Ashprihanal could do that".

Ashprihanal has completed 3,034.86 miles and has 65 miles or 119 more laps to go. A number he had not met in more than three weeks. In my mind, the person I was looking at was just a slightly diminished version, of one of the greatest multi-day runners of all time, Ashprihanal. One who was incredibly talented, certainly still capable of majestic flying around the Course, and

## Day 49

### Ashprihanal the Champion

By Sahishnu, 3 August 2013 (evening)

[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

Finnish legend Ashprihanal Aalto made race history again, becoming the first male to ever finish the 3100 mile race twelve times, trailing the immortal Suprabha Beckjord by only one finish. Mr. Aalto placed third this year but remained cheerful throughout the race. Today he ran 65.3 miles to reach the goal in 48 days+16:14:33. He is still the second fastest runner to ever attempt the world's longest certified footrace, and has the most first places with seven. Pranjal Milovnik will finish on Sunday in the mid-afternoon. He has been a model of consistency and fears nothing that the race can throw at him. Good luck to all ultra runners....



Ashprihanal finishing the 3,100 Mile Race for the twelfth time



Vasu Duzhly	3100
Atmavir Spacil	3100
Ashprihanal Aalto	3034
Pranjal Milovnik	3008
Surasa Mairer	2952
Sarvagata Ukrainskyi	2938
Yuri Trostenyuk	2901
Nidhruvi Zimmerman	2886
Sopan Tsekov	2674
Baladev Saraz	2622
Vanda-Lahar Juscin	2513
Sarah Barnett	2386

*The mileage board at the beginning of Day 49*



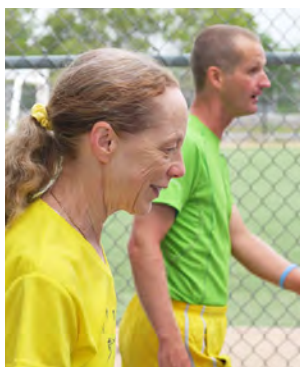
*Ashprihanal*

probably the guy who would not finish until sometime the next day. I was wrong.

Late in the afternoon I phone the Race to see how Ashprihanal is doing. I learned the shocking news that he was flying around the Course, just like the "old Ashprihanal". And he — on his twelfth time running this distance — was going to pull off one of those little miracles that often seem to occur here.

I am reminded of what happened with another great Finnish runner, Lasse Viren, who fell while running in the 10,000 metre race at the 1972 Olympic games but then got up and not only won the race but set a world record in the process.

I catch up with Ashprihanal in the late-afternoon and he tells me, "I have been having a problem with my back, my hip and my knee. And I have been able to do 60 miles on only a few days. That is not my normal self. Normally 60 miles is very easy for me. My standard is more like 70." But, he says, "Today the problem is totally gone. So today I could do 70. I am definitely going to finish, no problem. I would have been moving if my body had worked." I ask him why he thinks his body is suddenly working again. "Just Guru's grace. That is what happened. I didn't go to any doctors or anything like that." He adds that he experienced, "a lot of joy yesterday. Two great finishers. And today was very nice running with Suprabha."



*Suprabha, who has completed 3,100 Mile Race 13-times came to cheer on all the runners, including Ashprihanal who will now have completed the distance 12 times*



*Nidhruvi and Surasa*

I am going to run again. That is my plan, but maybe I take a year off. This Race has been mentally good for me. I have been happy. Two years ago after the Race I was physically and mentally exhausted. I really needed a year off. This year I am not. I am even physically okay. Yesterday I would have said that physically I am not okay. I am very happy that whatever the problem was went away. Everything is good now."

*Your business is to begin.  
God's business is to finish.*

*— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Flame-Goal" (Agni Press, 1973)*



*Ashprihanal carried a bell around and once he caught up with Surasa rang it to honour her achievement of completing 3,000 miles*

Of Vasu, who won the Race the day before, Ashprihanal is very impressed and says, "He was always in a good consciousness, always listening to Sri Chinmoy's music, always inspired by asking stories about Sri Chinmoy. Just a great guy." He says he told Vasu several stories from his own life.

We joke about the old Ashprihanal vs. the new Ashprihanal. He says, "let's say the healthy one. I definitely think

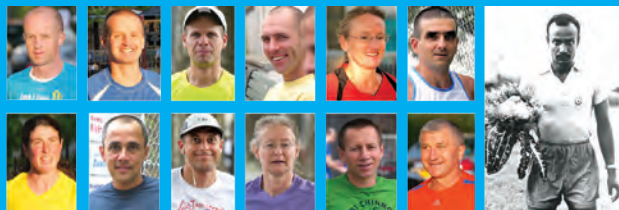
Just after Ashprihanal crosses the finish line Sahishnu announces, "Ladies and gentlemen, this is another extraordinary event in the annals of the 3,100 mile history. Because Ashprihanal has now completed the Race twelve times. Finishing in what most people would die for: a time of 48 days, 16 hours, and 14 minutes. Which is an average of 63.68 miles a day or 102.94 km a day. He is the second fastest all-time and seven-time winner of the Race. This year finishing third. Congratulations from the Marathon Team and all the helpers. You are the best. Guru once said of him, 'running 700 miles is like drinking water'. He is Finland's treasure and our joy, Ashprihanal."



# A view of the

17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## I Will Be Here

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

4 August 2013

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

Pranjal has 31 miles to go today to reach his ninth straight 3,100 miles in the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race.

Pretty exciting stuff, but for now Pranjal is struggling with drowsiness. He tells me, "In the morning I am always sleepy. The morning is not for running it

is for sleeping." He is clearly exhausted and yet he never ever stops moving along the Course.

In this, his ninth turn in this Race, he contemplates his slower time this year. "I don't know, my legs are not so strong. In the beginning I did have a bad stomach for one day — the rest was okay. But I am just slower." He adds, "My blisters were not as bad as I used to have. Even the weather wasn't bad this year. There was this stretch of seven days when we had very hot weather, plus a few days over 30°C (86°F) — but the rest were just nice."

We talk about the videoblog Pranjal has been doing for the past two years. This year, for the first time, the Slovakian has been recording it in English. I have found it to be a great way to get some of his unique insights into the race. He says,

"It helps me after a day of running to just take my mind somewhere else. To focus on something else. I like computers and I like to sit there and work with this video. It doesn't take that much time."

I ask him about emptying the mind. "I just try and push away all the distractions. I just try and stay focused on running. I sometimes do not even look at the people who are cheering me. I don't talk very much to people. I found out that if you give attention to people, you are giving your energy also. It is not much, but it is always a little bit. Just a drop of energy. This way I just try and focus my energy on my running. I know sometime people think that I am ignoring them, but for me it is really important to stay focused on running. It is not even something that I consciously believe. It is just part of me."

About his motivation he speaks of Sri Chinmoy's guiding force and says, "I feel that God gave me the capacity to

## Day 50

### Big Man Finishes

By Sahishnu, 4 August 2013 (evening)  
[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

Forty-year-old Pranjal Milovnik of Slovakia finished the 3100 Mile race for the ninth straight time in 49 days+07:57:40 (62.843 miles per day/101.136 km). The gracious tall man with a large heart withstood the usual challenges with aplomb and perseverance. Food labelled 'Pranjal Friendly' from the kitchen was a welcome sight for many of the runners, for it was going to have taste, plus fat or sugar or both. He keeps coming back year after year and enjoys the race in so many ways. Great job 'Big Man'. In other news, Surasa Mairer is set to finish as first woman and fifth overall on Monday around 11:00 am. She had a big day with 65.8 miles and needs only 36 laps (19.8 miles) to reach her second finish of the 3100. Sarvagata Ukrainskyi should reach the goal as well on Monday evening, which will be his third finish. Only two days left for this year's race...



Pranjal finishing the 3,100 Mile Race for the ninth consecutive year





*Pranjal on his final lap of the 3,100 Mile Race*

do this Race, so I have to use this capacity. I feel it is my duty to be here." He adds that, for him, he doesn't question whether or not he will return to run, "It is not that I am thinking about 'maybe' being here, it just happens that, 'I will be here' is much easier."

Pranjal says that the 3,100 Mile Race "is part of my life. I am working at home and I am here. Here is more fulfilling. I am really alive here because it is totally intense. You cannot experience this intensity in normal life. In my first races I found that it was very hard to get back to normal life. Because you experience something so intense for two months. After that, everything is just boring. Not interesting. Nothing can fulfill you. It is really, really hard to get back to this normal life."

His solution to do this he says, "is like turning the page. This is like one side of life, this race. You turn the page and you come back to your life before. Then you can bring something from that page — from this race — to your regular life. But you have to be really focused on that normal life. Even this focus you have during the race you can use in your normal life. Especially in the spiritual life you can use it."

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Sahishnu announces, "Ladies and gentlemen, our fourth finisher, Pranjal,

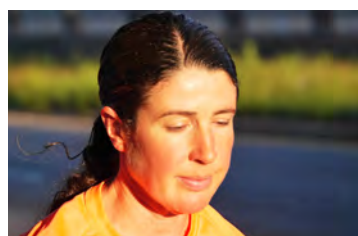
has finished for the ninth straight time. He is ranked twelfth in the world. This year he ran 49 days, 7 hours, and 57 minutes. Which is 62.8 miles per day or 101.3 km a day. This man is unflappable. Nothing bothers him. He has such clear vision. He loves this race. He epitomizes self-transcendence. When he came here his first year it took him 59 days to finish the race, and his best is 47 days. Even this year with the heat wave he was strong throughout. From the Marathon Team and all the helpers a huge thank you."

*From start to finish,  
I run  
Only to be close to God.*

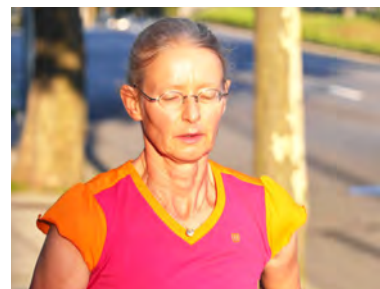
*— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Seventy-Seven Thousand  
Service-Trees, Part 48"*



*The runners line up to shake hands with Pranjal*



*Sarah recovering from a bout with the flu is back on the Course full-time*



*Surasa*



*Ananda-Lahari*



*Saravgata*



*Sopan*



*Yuri*



*Nidhruvi*

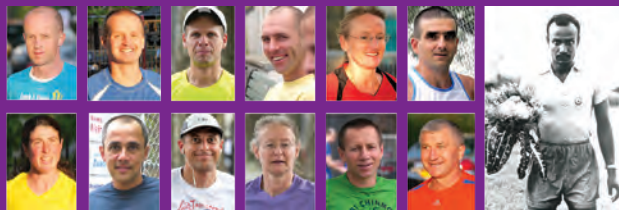


*Baladev*



# A view of the 17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## Something Good

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

5 August 2013

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

"I don't know what happened. I had no wings — I was not flying. It was running, really running." Yesterday, on her last full day on the Course of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race, Surasa ran an incredible 120 laps (65.85 miles). An amount she has not achieved since way back on the second day of the Race. "When I heard "92 laps" and I was looking

at the clock and I thought, 'Oh my God, I am one hour ahead'. It was so easy. The only thing I did different was I didn't take as long of breaks. I took shorter breaks: two breaks of 25 minutes."

In just a few hours from now she will finish her final 20 miles. A distance

that, for most runners, is still a pretty serious task. Yet watching at her smooth rhythmic style she makes this extreme sport somehow look effortless — as if she were somehow specially designed from the inside out just to do this. True, she got into multi-day running almost by accident, and yet in her lengthy career she has managed to accomplish a record of achievements that is just a little bit beyond extraordinary.

## Day 51

### Surasa Shines, As Does Sarvagata

By Sahishnu, 5 August 2013 (evening)  
[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

Fifty-four year old Surasa Mairer of Vienna, Austria finished first lady and fifth overall today in the penultimate day of the race. She became the oldest runner to ever complete 3,100 miles and bettered her own previous finish by over three days. She averaged 61.74 miles per day (99.37 km) and moved into the realm of earlier finishers getting under the original 51 day standard. Her time still ranks 24th out of 34 all-time finishers (3,100 miles = 50 days+04:57:24).

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Almost nine hours later Sarvagata Ukrainskiyi of Berdansk, Ukraine finished his third straight 3,100 Mile Race, in 50 days+14:33:11. There are two runners left who will reach the coveted goal of 'Finisher' in tomorrow's final day. Go Runners!!!



Surasa completes the distance for the second time



Sarvagata finishes the 3,100 Mile Race for the third time





Surasa

This humble, soft-spoken lady from Vienna has world records in distances from 1,000 km up to 1,300 miles. Perhaps even more amazing is that she has never once been beaten in any multi-day race she has run. In a few hours she will not only set her own personal best here at 55-years old she will also be the oldest runner to ever finish the race.

In our world where athletes dance across the playing field when ever they score, Surasa is a reminder to us all that greatness does not have to be demonstrated by fist pumps and loud screams in front of the goal. Quietly doing your best and focusing on the true goal within is also something to be celebrated and admired. To understand why she does this so, so difficult thing she says, "Sri Chinmoy inspires me most to do it. I see it as an opportunity to finally do something good. This is satisfying. It makes you happy when you know you are doing the right thing."

At Surasa's finish, Sahishnu says, "Surasa finishes in fifth place in a field of twelve. This is her second finish. She moves up in the ranking from 29 to 24th place. As of now 32 people have finished 123 times. She finishes 3,100 miles in 50 days, 4 hours, and 57 minutes. Which is 61.47 miles per day or 99.37 km per day. She becomes the oldest finisher in the history of the race."

"I must say that her nature is so childlike and sweet and charming. Yet she is a fierce competitor and she is still undefeated [in the women's category] in any multi-day. You know she is really tough. She took three days off her previous achievement. And at this age she is getting better and better and better."



Sarah congratulating Surasa



Nidhrui with Surasa

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*At every moment  
God is expecting something good,  
And not great,  
From you.*

*Sri Chinmoy, Seventy-Seven Thousand  
Service-Trees, Part 35, Agni Press, 2004*

\*\*\*

Sarvagata will also finish this evening. He has to do 56 miles but he only managed 48 miles yesterday so it will not be easy.

"I have no idea what I am going to do." Sarvagata's race has been, for whatever reason, one of the most inconsistent perhaps on record. Yet from his perspective it is all a natural and necessary experience. At the beginning of the day he really doesn't know if he will be able to finish the race today.

"This race was so unpredictable for me. I could never say that tomorrow I will run this or that. Or even today. Or even next lap. It gives you peace when you don't know what is going to happen." I suggest that an unstructured existence is the last thing that most people could cope with.

Sarvagata says, "It is not that I don't have any schedule. Because there is a schedule in the race. You have to come at 6 a.m. and you have to leave by midnight. From

one side you have a schedule and from the other side you are not attached to it. I wouldn't say it was 'uncertainty'. I would say it is really certain. There is Somebody out there taking care of me and He knows better what I need. So, it is like you have a mother and a father who take care of you. You don't have to worry. Why would I?"

"It is easy to say this here on the Course. I would really love to remember this after the race. I really want to remember it."



Sarvagata



Sarvagata tells me that he had “a nice surprise this morning. I found 40 dollars. Yesterday I was worrying a little bit about money. Now I have proof that it also will be taken care of. I mean, I always have the proof — all the time and every day — I just have to recognize it.”

“I am still a human being. It is still hard to define which is your mind and which is your heart. I try not to think about it. But here at the race you have

a golden opportunity sometimes to see where you are.”

“Once I had an experience. A really nice one. I had no control of my body whatsoever. No control at all. I felt as though I was just a small dot in the middle of my head. This is all that I was aware of in my being. The body was just moving.... That is why I love this race. Sometimes you have those spiritual experiences. Which you know *could*

happen because you have read a lot of books — you know it in *theory*. But here, you can have proof. You can actually experience it.” He adds, “I doubt that I could have this opportunity somewhere else with this same intensity. But I shouldn’t. My dream is that this race spreads throughout my life. I don’t want to live

before the race and after the race. I want to live all the time in this. I will. Definitely.”

Several hours later Sahishnu announces to the crowd gathered, “Sarvagata finished in sixth place. His third finish in a row. In a time of 50 days, 14 hours, and 33 minutes. Which is an average of 61.26 miles a day or 98.58 km a day. He is still the fifth fastest of all time. His best being 45 days.”

*I am a chosen instrument  
Of my Lord Supreme  
Not because I have done  
Something great for Him,  
Not because I shall do  
Something good for Him,  
But because He wants to do  
Something divinely great  
And supremely good  
In and through me.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
“Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-  
Plants, Part 1” (Agni Press, 1983)



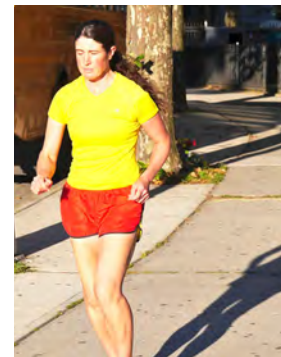
Sarvakamya and Sarvagata



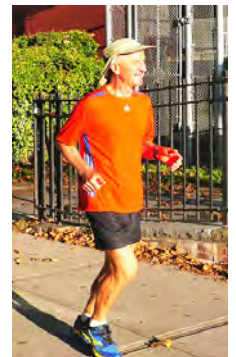
Ashprihanal, Sopan and Vasu



Sri Chinmoy in the 1990s



Sarah



Yuri



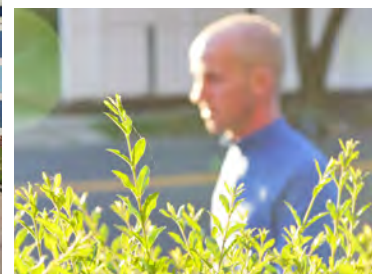
Nidhruvi so happy to see her friend Surasa finish



Surasa thanks super-helper Bahula



Baladev



Ananda-Lahari



Come what may,  
I shall run and  
run and end my  
Pilgrim-journey  
at my Lord's  
Feet.

Aug. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
Sri Chinmoy  
Sri Chinmoy

Today's Prayer handwritten by Sri Chinmoy



Six runners toe the starting line on Day 52, the final day of running

## Heroes of the Road ... 52 days of giving their all

Who is the winner?  
Not he who wins,  
but he who has established his  
cheerful oneness with the result,  
which is an experience  
in the form of failure or success,  
a journey forward  
or a journey backward.

Who is the winner?  
Not he who wins the race,  
but he who loves to run  
sleeplessly and breathlessly  
with God the supreme Runner.

Who is the winner?  
Not he whose glory we sing,  
but he who embodies  
God's Compassion-Light  
in abundant measure.

Who is the winner?  
Not he who has acquired  
tremendous name and fame  
and amassed a big fortune,  
but he who requires only  
one thing: God-satisfaction  
in God's own way.

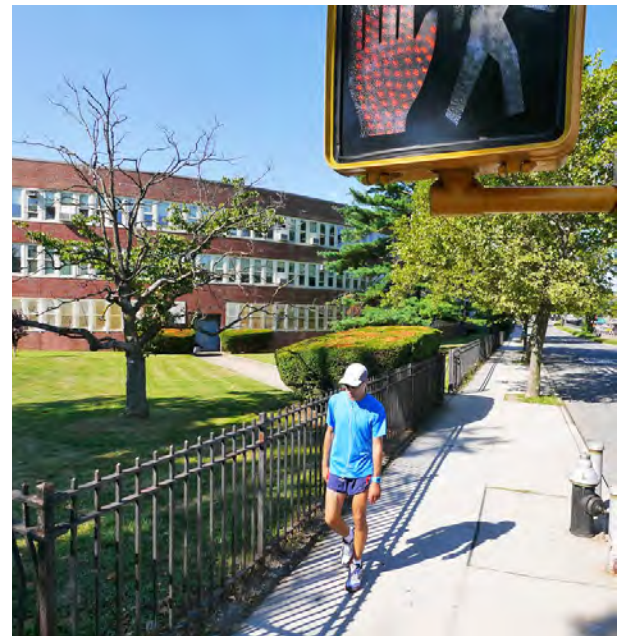
— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Everest Aspiration Part 3"  
(Agni Press, 1977)



Baladev on Day 52:  
he completed 2,828.52 miles



Ananda-Lahari on Day 52:  
he completed 2,696.25 miles



Sopan on Day 52: he completed 2,831.26 miles

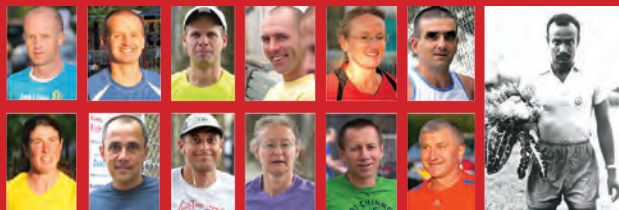


Sarah on Day 52: she completed 2,573.87 miles



# A view of the 17th Annual

# Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



## Straight To My Heart

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

6 August 2013

*This is a shortened version of the article, please visit the website for the full version*

At his finish of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race, Yuri tells the crowd, "Thank you everybody for being here. This race wasn't easy at all for me. I had some really difficult times. The doctors didn't know what to do with me and they were deciding at one time if I could even continue the race or not. But then Aparajita appears and he started

to sing Sri Chinmoy's songs to me. And they went straight into my heart. And from there a feeling of devotion, joy, and happiness started to come from within me, and it flooded my entire being completely. It was then that I understood that everything in my life was going to be really good. Now here I am happy and joyful. Standing right in front of you. Thank you Sri Chinmoy, thank you Supreme."

51 days and a few hours ago, Yuri Trostenyuk started off on a long difficult quest to reach this little spot of concrete upon which he now stands. The fact that it is exactly the same spot he started on so long ago is one of life's great cosmic ironies — that one endures so much and ends up right back where you started. That said, for Yuri — and also for Nidhruvi, who will arrive at this finish-line in just a few hours more — there is no sense of futility or meaninglessness. It is true that nothing outwardly has changed around them. But anyone who

## Day 52

### Last Day Joy

By Sahishnu, 6 August 2013 (evening)

[www.3100.ws/blog](http://www.3100.ws/blog)

On the last day of the 3,100 Mile Race Yuri Trostenyuk of Vinnitsa, Ukraine finished in seventh place in his first try, reaching the coveted goal of 3,100 miles in 51 days+04:22:11. Yuri averaged 60.57 miles per day (97.48 km). The humble runner talked of his great struggle to get to the race and his gratitude for being able to start, let alone finish.

\* \* \*

A few hours later Nidhruvi Zimmerman of Vienna, Austria reached 3,100 miles in 51 days+09:54:59, beaming with joy after reaching the pinnacle of her long multi-day career. She first started doing multi-days in the early nineties but was hoping to one day enter this race. The last four runners did not make the desired goal but deserve our admiration for going the distance of days (52) and staying to the very end. Thanks to everyone and we hope you enjoyed the race. See you next year!



Yuri completes the 3,100 Mile Race in his first attempt at the distance



Nidhruvi completes the 3,100 Mile Race in her first attempt at the distance





Yuri

enters this Race does not come here for what they see, but rather for what they *become* — for their true goal exists only in heartfelt depths of their own beings. And this is why they have taken their lives on the great and impossible 3,100 mile journey.

It is an epic trek, one that has changed and transformed them in ways they have yet to completely be aware of and understand. Their self-transcendence will gradually reveal itself, just as it has for all who have made this Race the center of their lives for the past 17 summers. For these chosen few, have not only taken part in what has to be the most difficult sport of all time, but as well been simultaneously part of a divine inner pilgrimage. One in which there is never failure. The accurate measurements of time and distance are not ultimately at all what this race is all about. The suffering, the pain, the fatigue, the mental conflicts, and all the other foibles and failures of humanity are all here, but are also irrelevant. Self-transcendence is to reveal only who and what we are within. To bring us back the unmeasurable distance to our own glowing divinity within.

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I spoke a few days ago with Yuri and this is what he said at that time. "When I saw all the others finish, I was in heaven. I have never felt this kind of happiness before. I felt complete oneness with the runners. I felt as though it was me finishing. All the joy that those finishing runners felt, I felt it within myself as well. When Vasu

and Atmavir finished, the kind of energy I felt also entered into me."

Yuri continues and says, "Yesterday, after Ashprihanal's finish, there was a kind of tranquility that entered into me. Which allowed me to feel oneness with everyone around and also the peace that was within them." Yuri adds, "All the runners have special unique qualities and I could distinctively feel them. This is wonderful. It is getting better and better."

When asked about his own finish, Yuri said, "This is a feeling I have within my own heart and it is one that is getting stronger and stronger as the finish line approaches." He said that despite all his difficulties he never worried about reaching the finishline. "I always felt the Supreme's Love and Concern. And when I was experiencing the difficult moments, my mind couldn't understand it. My heart could already see the finish, but my mind couldn't believe why these things were happening to me, at that particular moment."

"Right now I am living in my own heart, which is a place that is very beautiful. It is very nice, and I feel a lot of joy. I never had this kind of feeling before. I am reveling in this feeling at this very moment and I am very happy."

"Now I understand why runners are coming over and over again, year after



Ever expressive of his joy and gratitude, Yuri runs by the singers who gathered at the Race this morning



Yesterday, some Oneness-Dream-Boat-Shore friends discuss Yuri's upcoming achievement celebration

year to do this race. This is very beautiful, and this is very powerful, and this is very inspiring."

To all those in Oneness Dream Boat Shore. "I would like to thank them for the enormous, enormous, enormous support that I feel from them. This support that they were offering to me was as powerful as the mighty ocean. During my difficult moments, this support was really propping me up, and was supplying me with energy."

"The hearts of those disciples supporting me I feel it throbbing within my own heart. My gratitude to those disciples has no bounds. I feel that these disciples were running with me, and this joy and gratitude that I am experiencing now I am offering it all back to them. Thanks to them so much."

Sahishnu says at Yuri's finish: "In his first finish I would have to say that this man smiled more times and waved more hands of joy than any runner in the history of this race. He is a quiet and unassuming man. He is a plumber with two kids and a wife back in Vinnitsa, Ukraine. But this was his dream to be here."



*My Lord Supreme wants me  
To run  
Straight towards Him.*

*Sri Chinmoy, Seventy-Seven Thousand  
Service-Trees, Part 32, Agni Press, 2003*

\*\*\*

Speaking of the prayer Sri Chinmoy wrote (in 2006) for August 6th:

*"Come what may,  
I shall run and end my  
Pilgrim-Journey  
at my Lord's  
Feet."*

Nidhruvi says, "It is definitely meant for me. Today is the last day of the Race and I am going to finish. I got this challenge last night before I went home with my knee — and this morning I get this prayer. So I think that everything has to go all right."

Talking about her knee, she says "I had an old injury there. It is the ligaments. Before I went home it started. I thought, what was this? It got really swollen." She says that she stopped ten minutes early, just before midnight in order to try and look after it. "To let it rest. I thought, 'okay, another big challenge'. The race is not over yet. I thought I must have another special task to perform — or whatever it is."

"Whatever this means there is nothing that can hold me back to reach the goal. I know in the inner world that it is done. Guru has done it already. It is written. I just have to have faith and believe that everything is going to be all right. It is Guru's victory."

Nidhruvi continues, "I really want to have a nice day and be happy. And not let this little unpleasant friend bother me. I am like that: I can't give up, even when I wanted to. At the beginning of the race, after two weeks, I got this muscle inflammation — I was brand new in this race, and it was so huge. This wave of fear came over me. I was thinking, 'my God, my dream is shattering'. I was thinking what will happen? To go on? Will I not be able to finish it? Then I learned to surrender and let my dream go. Whatever the Supreme wants is right and not what I want or expect. So, there was a moment when I had this first injury that I thought 'What shall I do? Should I go home? Should I change my flight?'. This moment came also — but just once, then I cast it aside and said 'NO!' "

Of her experience in this Race, Nidhruvi says that it "is something very special and unique here. It is not only about running, it is much, much more about the inner world. This was my big experience when I had to walk for two-and-a-half days. Now I am on my last day. So even if these are forces, or my

own ignorance, or the ignorance of the world. I must not care. I must feel that I am embraced by my Master and just stay happy."

Nidhruvi continues and says, "I can see that in life that you must always go on. Never lose hope. Go on, go on and never, ever give up. It doesn't matter what happens to you. Never give up your dreams. You can dream and then you can try and realize them. But in the end, you always have to surrender — because you never know what God's Plans are."

*The path of the heart  
Is not only straight  
But also vast,  
Very vast.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from  
"Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,  
Part 22" (Agni Press, 2001)



*Nidhruvi with her helpers*



*Nidhruvi at the finish*



*Nidhruvi's finish*



*Utpal's self-portrait*

I am deeply grateful to so, so many of you, who have followed this little offering of mine from time to time, or for some, every day. There are those who have made comments that show me just how much you have identified with this very unique event that Sri Chinmoy created on this city block here in Queens NY.

Francesco of course has done something wonderful by writing something every day, but many others have also been moved. They identify in their own unique way, with the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile race. But just the same I am happy and grateful to all of you, the silent, the bold, the aspiring, and all those dreaming of their own self-transcendence. Much, much gratitude. ....Utpal