

A view of the

17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

Follow The Eternal Runner

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

2 July 2013

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

This morning, a young woman who originates from the same country as 3,100 Mile Race runner Ananda-Lahari, was telling him about her recent visit home to Slovakia, where she had given a public talk along with and the great Ten Day Race runner Kaneenika.

Kanala related some remarks that Kaneenika had made at the beginning

of her lecture. Apparently, before Kaneenika became a student of Sri Chinmoy she had not been an athlete at all but, like many young people who join the group, she quickly got inspired to take up the sport of distance running. Her mother had always told her that, 'no matter what you do, you will be good at something. Just follow what inspires you.'

These many years later, Kaneenika is a top-competitor in multi-day races and has set three Slovakian distance records. Kanala says that in preparation for the 2011 Self-Transcendence Ten Day Race Kaneenika had numerous difficulties, "many things went wrong for her, including a broken finger" and was not sure that she should participate. Ultimately, decided to enter. Kanala relates whenever the mind problems or the body problems came up for Kaneenika during the race "she remembered 'it is not me who is influencing the result. Just surrender and do your best.'" As things would happen, Kaneenika not only set a personal best of 724 miles for the Ten Day distance, but she was also the overall winner (men and women).

Kanala's part of the talk was on meditation. She reminded people, "that we are all unique. We have to find what is special for us. Which is our own inner self. We can find this by meditating."



Photo by Bhashwar

Sri Chinmoy running the 47-Mile Race in 1979



Nearly 34 years later, and just a few blocks away, these twelve runners have a group meditation at the starting line on Day 17, clearly continuing Sri Chinmoy's vision and philosophy: "We are truly unlimited, if we only dare to try and have faith."

Ananda-Lahari all this time is running quietly beside us. I ask him if he thinks that any of this also applies to him and the other 3,100 Mile Race runners. "Yes, true. Definitely," he says.

Do not follow me.

Follow the eternal runner

Who is running along Eternity's Road.

And who is that eternal runner?

The eternally awakened God-lover in you.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 68"
(Agni Press, 1983)

Day 17

Smoke, No Mirror

By Sahishnu, 2 July 2013 (evening)
www.3100.ws/blog

On a sticky, hot New York Tuesday in July, Sarvagata Ukrainskyi from Berdansk, Ukraine ran 72.44 miles to add more ammo to a fire already starting to smoke a little. It was the best day of the race so far for the 2011 winner. The embers catching fire are the fit runners who have reached the point to realize that it is time to move. The sparks and flames are their mobile efforts to run mega miles and to promote camaraderie. Ashprihanal Aalto ran 71.34 miles to inch closer upward the standings. Two more runners joined the 1,000 mile club today:

Surasa Mairer:

1,000 miles = 16 days+01:43:51

Sopan Tsekov:

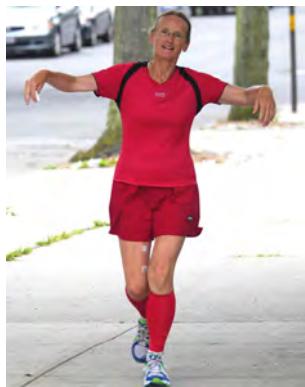
1,000 miles = 16 days+13:26:14



Slovakiens Kanala and Ananda-Lahari



Pranjal



Nidhravi might be contending with an injury but she still continues to flow

I ask Pranjal about something he said a couple of days ago about having inner experiences happening to him while he runs. He says, "It is not like you see it with your eyes. It is like you see something *inside* you. Like qualities that maybe you haven't seen before. Things like that."

Pranjal adds, "It is hard to describe. It is probably different for every person. It is something inner — in your heart or part of your soul. I don't know. Your soul is coming to the fore."

Pranjal ran 114 laps yesterday which is about average for him. I ask him how he is this morning and says, "it is a regular morning." He adds jokingly, "That means it is bad. Every morning is bad."

* * *

Aspiration-road wants
Only aspiration-runners
And not desire-winners.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"My Christmas-New Year-Vacation
Aspiration-Prayers, Part 43" (Agni Press)



Surasa is the 7th runner —and the 1st woman — to reach 1,000 miles this year



Jagadhata helps out with some necessary shoe repairs



Ananda-Lahari gets joy from Atmavir's joke for him. It continues to grow with other found items from the Course.



Race director Rupantar, and race helper Misha, study Sri Chinmoy's prayer for the day.



Sopan got back up to 100 laps for the first time in a couple of days. He is very grateful that his injury has subsided and allows him to run again.



Ashprihanal and Sarvagata both getting stronger and stronger

Good friends and thrill-seekers Sopan and Ashprihanal ride the roller coaster at the Six Flags amusement park.

A view of the

17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

Never Stop

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

3 July 2013

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

Sopan tells me that yesterday, "was the toughest day of the Race for me." The heat and humidity in New York created a challenge that some of the runners in the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race simply could not easily adapt or adjust to. Until you have been absorbed in the steamy embrace of a New York summer's day, you simply cannot know how daunting the weather can be to your performance. How this additional burden can adversely affect muscles — but also how it can strain minds.

Yet, despite being bullied by the humidity all day, Sopan somehow found his way back up to a good lap count of 111 and was able to cross the 1,000 mile barrier. Sopan says, it "feels like a good sign. I only have to get more organized in the evenings at home and go quicker to bed and get the extra sleep I so much need."

Ashprihanal is telling me about the rollercoaster he and Sopan went on last August in an amusement park called Six Flags. "I think they have the world's fastest and highest rollercoasters. The rollercoasters in other places do not compare. Americans really know how to make rollercoasters. I don't know how high and how fast you go — it only takes a few seconds, but those seconds are really a lot of fun."

We often use the metaphor of the rollercoaster to describe our lives. Personally, when I looked at the picture Sopan shows me of the rollercoaster he rode last year I simply could not even imagine getting on one. Doing so would be in the complete opposite direction of my own idea of a fun time. Yet for Sopan and Ashprihanal a ride like this is all excitement and an adrenalin rush. Sopan says, "So much joy. We really had a lot of fun."

Going to an Amusement Park offers harmless enjoyment to millions of people around the world. I would safely speculate that most people if offered the opportunity to either go have a day of



Photo by Bhashwar

Sri Chinmoy, in 1979, always quick with a smile encouragement



Fun? The steep incline — 23 stories high! — and drop of the rollercoaster ride at Six Flags (photo by Sopan)

relaxing fun or, instead, spend the next two months struggling and suffering while running on an unforgiving sidewalk in New York, would not hesitate for a second making up their minds which they would choose.

Sopan and Ashprihanal along with the other ten runners here, of course,

Day 18

Getting Interesting

*By Sahishnu, 3 July 2013 (evening)
www.3100.ws/blog*

On a sticky, hot New York summer day replete with sun, clouds, humidity, temps in the high 80°F, rain showers, thunder and lightning, and maybe a rainbow or two, the Swell Twelve ran and ran. Seven made it past 60 miles for the day, with Sarvagata Ukrainskyi leading the pack for the second day in a row (71.69 miles). Atmavir Spacil felt effects of a cold and a little weariness as the sun beat down on the course. Mr. Ukrainskyi and Ashprihanal Aalto (70.24 miles) motored on after an early evening shower cleared the sidewalks and ball fields except for a stalwart group of soccer folks. Mr Aalto has whittled a lead of 39 miles behind Atmavir to nine. Surasa Mairer and Nidhruvi Zimmerman both topped 62+ miles as the evening finally cooled a little. A happy Fourth of July to all our friends, worldwide, whether American or not. Good luck to all runners.

Nidhruvi Zimmerman:

1,000 miles = 17 days+02:39:01

Baladev Saraz:

1,000 miles = 17 days+04:20:59

Ananda-Lahari Zuscin:

1,000 miles = 17 days+11:17:40



Atmavir has held the lead position for the past 17 days, but is fighting a cold and has had a few so-called lower-milage days



Sarah proudly displays a shoe personally tailored by Ray K — it is specially designed to help the blister on the back of her heel.

A new, mysterious and humorous creation has popped up on the Course: "Sarah's First Aid Station" grows throughout the day as more found items get placed there by the other runners.



made a significant and life-transforming decision to run this Race. Each day, no matter how it outwardly appears, sees them inexorably climbing slowly and steadily upward towards their goal.

Undoubtedly there will be stumbles and tumbles both physically, mentally and spiritually as each day passes. How they will eventually feel when this extraordinary ride of life completes its circuit here is still a long way off. And, no matter what outwardly happens, their inner experiences here will all represent real inner progress. The heat, humidity, and suffering will come and go — but not the transcendence.

Ashprihanal says simply, "When you finish this Race you feel so good. You feel that you really deserve to sit down. That is the reward of this Race."

The outer run intimidates my body.

The inner run liberates my body.

The outer run tells me

When to start and when to stop.

The inner run tells me

Once I start I can never stop.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 30"

(Agni Press, 1982)

"I am just here visiting." Alakananda has experienced the 3,100 Mile Race in just about all its aspects. She has helped her father, Stutisheel, during every summer that he ran here — an incredible



Nidhrushi happily reading some words of encouragement from home



Ashprihanal



Pedro checks in with Ananda-Lahari



Alakananda displays and reads Sri Chinmoy's daily prayer



Alakananda with her father, Stutisheel, at the completion of his 3,100 Mile Race in 2006

nine times. Her presence, if even for just a week, at least goes a little way to make up for the huge vacuum of Stutisheel's absence here this year.

Alakananda says, "I think I will be back next summer full-time, just the way I used to be." She first came when she was just 13 years old in 2005. Stutisheel had run his first race here in 2004. "He got so excited and liked it so much, he felt really inspired to bring me here the next year. He felt it would be a really good experience for me. Which it turned out to be — really amazing. Probably the best thing he had ever done for me."

Alakananda continues to say, "Introducing me to this Race is definitely a life changing thing. In so many ways. I cannot imagine my life without the Race. It has been my home for so many years." She adds, "Besides being just a place it is also a battleground. Where you transcend your own weaknesses."

She describes that nothing is easy about the experience either for the runners or the helpers. "You have to practice your devotion and self-giving. It is a big deal, and if you go through it successfully, you come out a better person."

When God touches

The divine in me,

I run and run

Towards my Destined Goal.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from "Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, Part 36"
(Agni Press, 2004)

A view of the 17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

Who Are You?

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

4 July 2013

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

It is probably one of life's most fundamental questions — but most certainly one that I not dare ask of this very tired group of runners. Yet, Baladev got inspired to ask each one running here "who are you?"

Baladev's little survey was a difficult one from the start. To get an answer from each and every runner here meant that he had to be running literally right beside them. This is not a simple task when most of the time everyone is traveling at such different speeds. Also those being asked the question had to be in the mood to speak about such a serious subject. Nonetheless, Baladev persevered for several days and carried around a little notebook waiting for just the right opportunity to ask his question.

In almost any other setting this kind of inquiry would lead to some simple response. Most people when asked would probably answer with something easy and professional, like what they do

for a living. Others might respond with their family status, or even mention some sport or hobby to which they have seriously dedicated themselves.

In our most sacred and serious reflective moments we all probably pose this question to ourselves, particularly at moments of change and transition. It helps us make decisions about what is important in our lives and helps us decide more clearly where we want to go. On any given day our answer may change, but most likely deep within us the answer is always crystal clear. Unfortunately there just may not be a lot of times when we can connect with this illuminating truth about ourselves, and yet



Sarah celebrates reaching 1,000 miles. Today, the runners participate in the celebration of America's Independence. Some even donning patriotic costumes for several laps to get and give joy.

Day 19

Heat Exchange

By Sahishnu, 4 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

During a sunny, hot Fourth of July in New York, twelve runners continued their struggle with the elements, the distance, and themselves. An intense afternoon sun saw the overall lead change, with Ashprihanal Aalto of Finland reaching 68.6 miles to overtake leader Atmavir Spacil, who is suffering from an illness and tired legs. Sarvagata Ukrainskyi moved into fourth overall with a sparkling 74+ mile day, leading all runners. Vasu Duzhiy in third remained inspired with a 68+ mile day himself. Seven slipped past the 60 mile barrier as temps soared in the high 80°s with an occasional breeze. More later.

Sarah Barnett:

1,000 miles = 18 days+03:09:35



Sri Chinmoy in the 1970s running in nearby Flushing Meadows Park

Photo by Bhaskar

we bravely and diligently keep marching forward — much like these twelve brave souls do here each and every day.

I ask Baladev why he performed this survey. "I don't know. This question just came to me. Sometimes things just come to you here. It was a very nice moment when the inspiration came. I was feeling very good." Intrigued by all this I ask him what his answer is. He says, "When this question came to me my answer, at that moment, was 'I am God.'

*Try to remember
Who you truly are.
You are God's
Dream-blossoming child.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-
Plants, Part 210" (Agni Press, 1994)

Baladev tells me how each runner responded to his question "who are you?":

Ananda-Lahari, God
Atmavir, Soul
Pranjal, I don't know
Sarvagata, I don't know
Surasa, I have no idea
Vasu, God
Sopan, I am a blister
Ashprihanal, I don't know
Yuri, I am a son of the Supreme
Nidhrushi, I am a God-child
Sarah, I am a God seeker.

Baladev says that the act of asking all the runners this question was a very nice experience for him. Though he says that he was surprised by the answers he received. He explains, "I think it depended on the moment when I asked the runners this question. It was more about what kind of mood they were in. For Sopan, it was still morning, during the first 10 meters. On the day before this he got a big painful blister. So everything he was thinking and doing was about this blister." Baladev continues, "When I asked Ananda-Lahari, he was in a very good mood. Without even thinking he was quick to answer that he was God. Vasu was the same. Very, very fast answer. I am a God, this was very nice."

"Some runners started thinking what their answer was, but I told them 'No. No thinking. It should be spontaneous.'



Baladev with the answers to the Big Question

But it is not easy to answer. When you are having a problem and you are having a hard time, or when you are pushing." Baladev adds that for those who didn't have an answer, they were most likely at that moment more interested in pushing themselves. "They were in the beyond. And when you ask a question at this moment every answer is, I don't know, I don't know. I am only running."

* * *

Lowensky has biked over to the Race this morning. He tells me he only heard about the Race two days ago. He is interested in how the runner's minds can absorb such stress, and what they get out of it. "It is amazing. I have experienced a little part of it." He says that he is a bike rider and that when he goes long distances he feels he gets to understand and experience a little of what the runners are going through. "When you are doing it and there is a moment when you can detach yourself from the world. It becomes more about you sustaining yourself."

Above: A runner goes by a group singing the song Sri Chinmoy wrote at that location exactly 6 years ago. Atmavir; Ashprihanal; Sarvagata; Sarah and Vasu all running strong.

At right: Lowensky

He has ridden his bike from New York to Orlando, Florida. He describes the satisfaction he got by achieving his goal. "It stays inside of you. What they get is a life journey, because after that — you reach another state. During the race, and even after, you really feel that energy. It is wonderful!"

*Who says
You are a weak mortal?
You are not!*

*Who says
You are an erring human child?
You are not!*

*What are you then?
You are God in His preparation
For His ever-transcending Height.*

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

A view of the

17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

Closer to God

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

5 July 2013

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

"We have to come out of our comfort zone. When we do that, we call it austerity. What it does is move us closer to God. The goal of life is God-realization and we have to constantly think like that. We have to have God-realization in this lifetime." In past years at the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race it was a familiar site to see Swami Paramesha Ananda in the early morning hours running along the Course.

He once lived just a few blocks away and for most mornings he would have already started making his speedy circuits

Day 20

Heating Up...

By Sahishnu, 5 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

The temps were warm, the pavement still hard, and the miles are still many to go. Yet nine of the Dizzy Dozen made it to 60 or more miles. Sarvagata Ukrainskyi keep his streak alive at four straight days over 70 with a dazzling 74.63 mile day. Ashprihanal Aalto increased his lead over second place by 16 more miles. Ananda-Lahari Zuscin, a six time finisher of this long race, had his best day today with 64.75 miles. Sopan Tsekov of Bulgaria is only four laps behind being on pace to finish. Four more days of strong sun and nary a cloud await the hero runners. If they get through this stretch confidence will grow. Stay tuned.

of the Course before the runners even arrived for the daily 6 a.m. start. Now, the Swami lives in Long Island and it is no small thing for him to come here and run his laps here, as he so often used to do.

"I got up around 3 a.m. and then I did my meditation." Sometime after that, in the predawn hours, he then made his way to the Long Island Railroad, travelled from the distant suburbs to Queens and then walked from the Station to the Course. The sum total of his effort to make his way here today was, for most of us, an undertaking well beyond most of our "comfort zone". He will run about 10 laps here and once finished he will collect his orange robes and glasses and go on with the rest of his day.

The Swami says, "I want to be on this Course. I want to be with the runners because we are like-minded people. High-thinking, simple-living and contentment."

The Swami's presence here on the Course, in his luminous orange apparel, is a striking reminder of just how similar

the twelve runners and he are. Like him, they too are devoted and dedicated to a path that is leading them to a divine goal. One that is way beyond the measurable distance of 3,100 miles. A goal perhaps not so easily described and yet one of which we all feel compelled to strive and reach for within ourselves.

*Eternity's Love
And Infinity's Joy
Shall come closer to humanity
If and when
Humanity accepts life as a gift of God
And not as a burden of man.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 11"

The Swami says, "Lack of contentment is the cause of us having all these desires that are putting us in trouble. The world is going like that. But if a few people choose to radiate divine energy, through this austerity — through this marathon — then it will affect thousands and thousands of people, here in America and all over the world."



The bustling camp just prior to the 6 a.m. starting time on Day 20. Rupantar takes a video of the mileage board and the various goings on, the runners and helpers do last moment preparations for a long, hot day.

"Because divine vibrations travel even faster than our thinking. When it radiates and hits people, they are affected unknowingly. Some of us God chooses to do that kind of work — I think your group here, the Sri Chinmoy group. He was a very great man. He has laid some great guidelines, which I think everyone is accepting as the norm for the spiritual life." The Swami continues, "This way is not enforced, but accepted through experience — and this is what is called realization. This realization, we get a little today and we get a little tomorrow, becomes a foundation for a springboard to go higher and higher and higher."

The Swami says, "This is why I enjoy being here. This opportunity, I don't want to waste it. So while it is available, I want to be part of it. To utilize it for the best of my spiritual quest — and my goal for God-realization."

* * *

Ananda-Lahari goes off to a quick start this morning. His face, even before the start of today's run, betrays a mischievous smile of delight.

Today, he leads the others by an ever-increasing distance through the early part of the morning. When he has about two laps more than the others, I ask Ananda-Lahari what has happened to him this morning. He replies, "I was dying yesterday. I came home and fell apart. This morning I was still fallen apart." He then tells me that when he goes home at night and again just before he comes to the Race in the morning, he watches short videos of Sri Chinmoy meditating directly into the camera. "These are like private meditations with you. I really like this. This is my only explanation [as to what has] happened to me in the morning." Then he laughs and adds, "It is just one morning out of 50. We will see."



Sri Chinmoy, running in 1981

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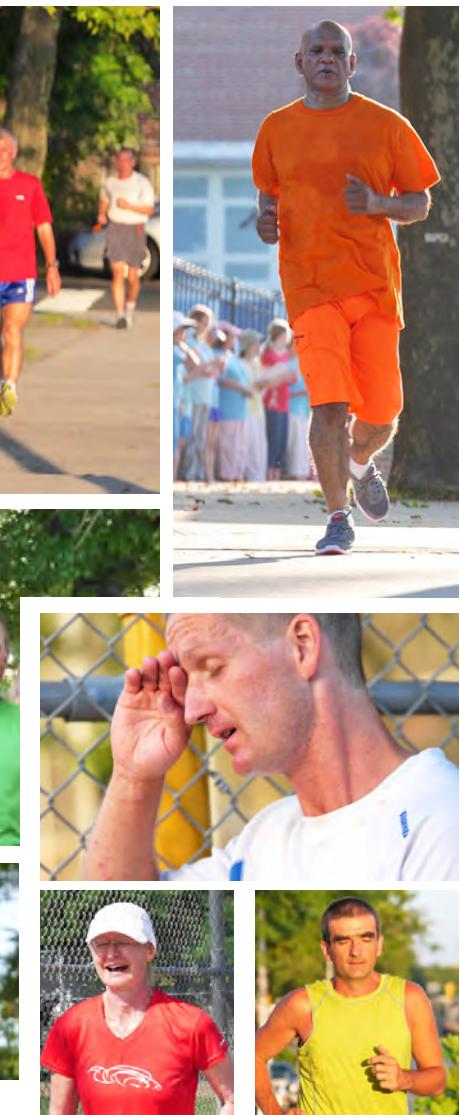
Bhadra, who is counting laps this morning, tells me, "I come every Wednesday and every Friday." Bhadra has been part of all the local multi-day races for the past 20 years.



Bhadra

She tells me about an experience she had at the 2013 Self-Transcendence Six and Ten Day Race, "I was in the midst of counting and I kind of looked out on the field..." she describes a profound sense of an immense wave of peace sweeping over her. "It was very, very powerful for me." Bhadra adds, "It wasn't me. It came from the race. So, when that happened, I decided that I would take regular shifts" at the 3,100 Mile Race.

Bhadra describes that, for her, the simple act of counting the runners here



Top: Swamiji runs along the Course.

Second row: Ananda-Lahari, Yuri and Vasu basking in an inner joy; Ashprihanal feeling the effects of the intense weather. He is now in first place.

3rd row: Sarvagata; Surasa and Pranjal

even now at this race has changed in some subtle way. "It gives me a lot of joy now. I am happy to see everybody. I am still so awe in all of the runners. Those who are running fast and those who are running slow. Everybody is inspiring."

Question: How can we be aware of the opportunities that God gives us?

Sri Chinmoy: We can be aware of the opportunities that God gives us by becoming aware of the fact that each opportunity is a conscious help to raise our consciousness and also to bring us closer to our supreme Reality, God.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from "At The Doors Of Time And Delight Opportunity Knocks" (Agni Press, 1974)

Days 11-20 ... see page 27 for Days 1-10

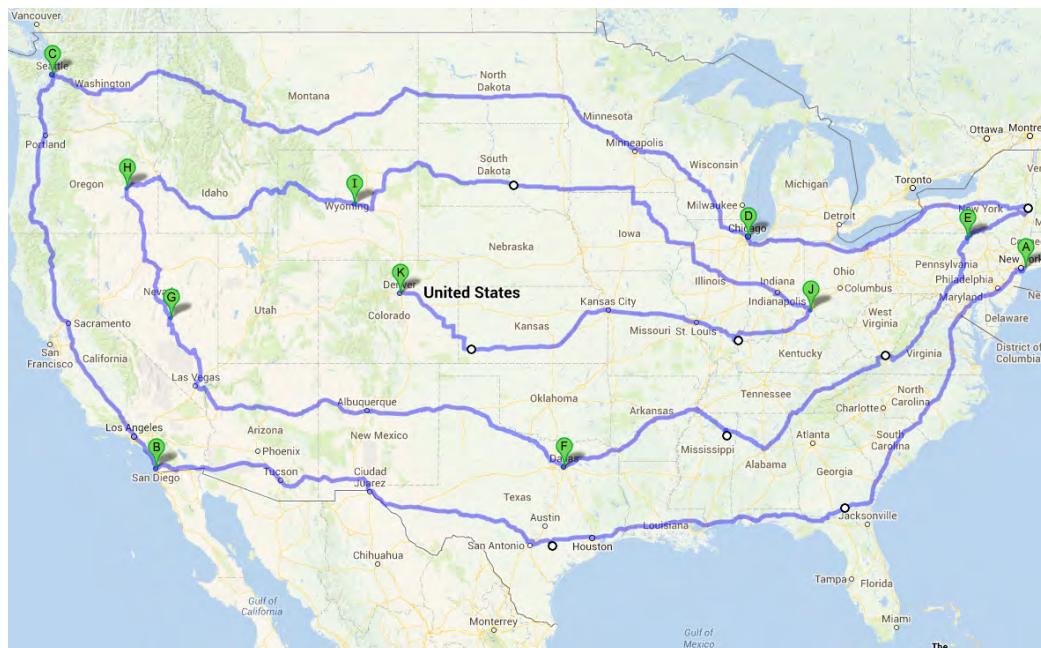
please see <http://3100.srichinmoyraces.org/3100-results-2013> for official daily statistics

Runner (alphabetical by first name)	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	Runners per day average (Days 1-20)
Ananda-Lahari Zuscin	650.33	700.27	749.11	795.76	844.05	902.23	963.14	1021.32	1075.65	1140.41	57.0
Ashprihanal Aalto	746.37	816.61	874.24	941.19	1011.44	1082.78	1154.13	1224.37	1292.97	1364.87	68.2
Atmavir Spacil	774.91	840.76	909.91	980.71	1050.95	1121.20	1182.12	1233.15	1283.09	1338.52	66.9
Baladev Saraz	659.11	713.99	770.52	827.59	879.18	936.25	987.84	1041.07	1090.47	1143.70	57.2
Nidhruvi Zimmerman	676.12	736.49	796.86	844.05	885.76	931.86	990.04	1052.05	1112.97	1175.53	58.8
Pranjali Milovnik	703.56	768.87	833.63	898.39	961.50	1024.06	1085.53	1149.74	1213.95	1276.51	63.8
Sarah Barnett	658.56	706.85	751.31	812.22	861.62	898.93	938.45	990.04	1039.43	1090.47	54.5
Sarvagata Ukrainskyi	704.66	757.89	822.65	889.60	955.46	1018.57	1091.01	1162.91	1237.00	1311.63	65.6
Sopan Tsekov	689.84	751.86	807.28	853.38	898.93	953.81	1014.73	1069.61	1130.53	1191.44	59.6
Surasa Mairer	688.74	748.56	809.48	870.95	931.31	993.33	1054.79	1116.81	1178.27	1240.84	62.0
Vasu Duzhiy	744.17	807.83	872.04	939.00	1002.66	1065.22	1129.98	1195.29	1263.34	1329.74	66.5
Yuri Trostenyuk	717.28	780.39	844.05	906.62	968.08	1032.29	1097.60	1165.10	1229.86	1294.07	64.7

Total mileage for the 12 runners in 20 days: 14,897.73

Day's top mileage, men

Day's top mileage, women



It would take someone in a car 20 days, driving 12 hours a day, to make the same distance (14,851 mi, 241 hours according to Google Map) as this group of 12 runners have ran

(A) Jamaica, Queens, NY

(B) San Diego, CA

(C) Seattle, WA

(D) Chicago, IL

(E) Mt. Pisgah, Pennsylvania

(F) Dallas, Texas

(G) Nevada

(H) Oregon

(I) Wyoming

(J) Cincinnati, Ohio

(K) Denver, Colorado

Add Destination - Show options

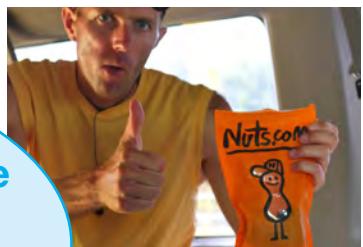
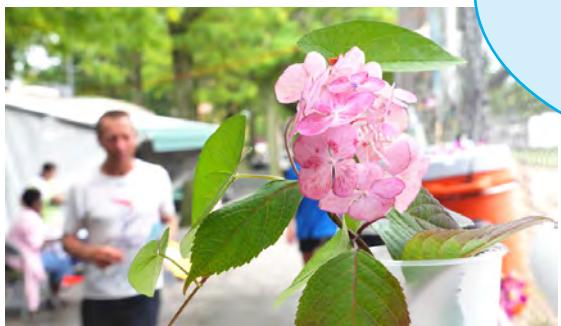
GET DIRECTIONS

Suggested routes

US-50 W

14,851 mi, 241 hours

Scenes around the Course ...



A view of the

17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

Saints of the Road

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

6 July 2013

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

They are all saints of the road.

Do you not believe it? I will tell you a secret: even sometimes they do not believe it to be true. How is it possible to have twelve saints in one place, doing this one same thing, when the rest of the world sometimes seems empty of saints?

Of course, I cannot prove this theory of mine to be true. How do you even begin to prove the existence of God — let alone prove that God is working powerfully through these twelve selfless souls? To prove that the divine is actually present here, you have to look beyond what your physical eyes see — you have to touch the luminous truth which is within each of us.

Yes, God is everywhere and in everything. But from time to time He can be experienced in miraculous ways — just to remind us that, we too, can find God. Not on some distant shore but right now within our own hearts.

Perhaps someone might say 'I know this runner very well, I have met that runner. This person is no saint. You are all imagination, you are telling us a tale that is not and cannot be true.' For those who personally know these runners I say, 'You were not wrong. At that time you knew them, perhaps their faults and problems were clear and obscured the God-miracle deep inside them. But see each of them now,' I ask. 'See what all these days and all these miles have done

to them. Do not be distracted by the pain you see etched in hard lines across their faces. Do not judge them by bodies racked by fatigue, feet blistered with wear. They are constantly moving. There might be moments when their physical looks as though they are barely alive. No matter, the God within is being revealed just the same.'

The divine in each one is now more powerful and more present than the human. For the body cannot do what they are doing. The runner cannot reach where they are going. Released from the chains of our world which says so strongly to us that we 'cannot do this and we cannot do that.' They are proving each day that they can conquer impossibility — and, yes, we can too — should we be brave, and should we dare never, ever to give up in seeking out our own goals.

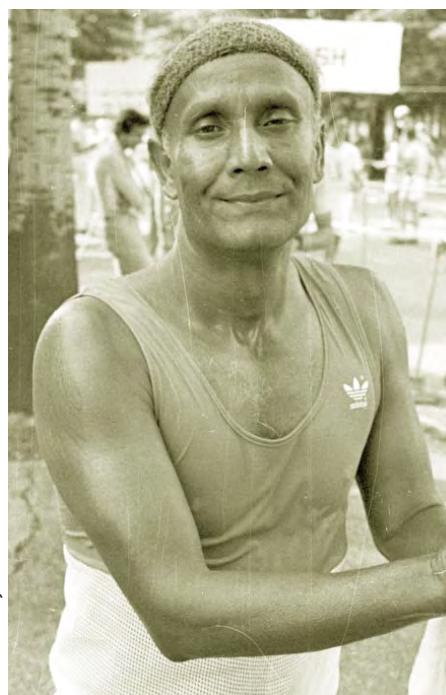


Photo by Bhashwar

Sri Chinmoy, after a race, in 1981

Will they remain saints after all is said and done? Now, that is a good question — and I do not know. But I will ask you this. Do you, too, want to be a saint?

The last thing

*A true saint wants to hear
Is that he is absolutely perfect.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 36"
(Agni Press, 1982)

Day 21

Heat Wave Day Three

By Sahishnu, 6 July 2013 (evening)
www.3100.ws/blog

With sunny, cloudless, heat-drenched pathways of mid-summer NYC urban swell, the 3,100 runners endured their third tough day in a row, a certified 'wave' of HHI touching 100°F and more. Yet, wave or no the mileage train must not be missed. Just use caution, smarts, and lots of makeshift and home-made remedies. Somehow, a fit Ashprihanal Aalto reached 70.24 miles today, leading the pack of seven runners who crested 60 miles or more. Atmavir Spacil moved back over 60 for the day after a three day [<60] absence. Sarvagata Ukrainskyi throttled it back a bit with 64.7 miles after four straight averaging 72.3 miles per day. Surasa Mairer went past 1,300 miles for the fourth time in her running life. She is holding firm in seventh overall, first lady. With a couple more days of hot temps the runners will be again tested. But with wisdom, a lot of ice and some solid running they hope to survive another day. Survive and move on, as a famous coach once said. Our hopes and prayers are with the runners challenging their best efforts and reaching new goals, one day at a time. Wave on...

Yuri tells me, "Yesterday was a very special day for me, I felt so much joy and happiness. I saw the fireworks inside my soul just as everybody saw them up in the sky." A couple of days earlier was the 4th of July — not only a big day in New York but across the length and breadth of the country. For much of the night almost no matter where you looked fireworks were going off all across the city and creating a light show. For Yuri it was a new experience, one that fit into a long, long day of running as well. He adds, "this was happening inside me, not just in the evening but all day as well."

Yuri adds, "Yesterday was a very hard day because it was very hot. But when I concentrated on America's soul, I felt a very big support." He admits that the weather back in his home as very different from what he is experiencing here. "Outwardly I need to do many things to balance my physical. More drinking and also to run more conservatively."

Despite the difficult conditions at the Race, Yuri still manages to accumulate good mileage results each day. I suggest to him that he sometimes moves so powerfully and steadily that he looks like a tank. He says, "We have to look inside the heart, inside the soul. We have to look there for what we do here — and how we do it."

As we are running together, Vera provides the translation. By coincidence both Vasu and Sarvagata are nearby on the Course. Yuri says, "I feel support from all of Oneness Dream Boat Shore runners who are taking part in this Race. I feel that all of them here at this race has their own unique office. You have only to knock at their heart door and you will immediately feel their love and support. One of my favorite prayers on this Course is 'Oneness Dream Boat Shore'."

To be a saint

*Is to raise the consciousness
Of the entire humanity.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,
Part 34" (Agni Press, 2003)

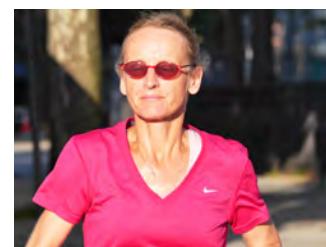
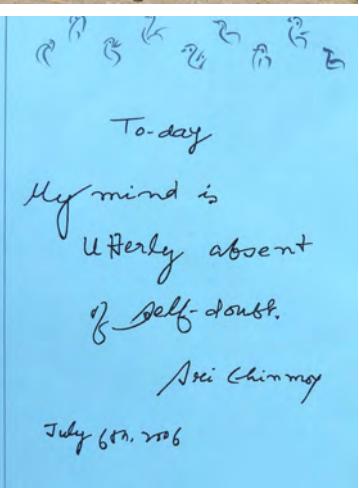


Top: The twelve runners a moment before the start of Day 21.

Above: Yuri in an intense moment and then in a blissful one.

Above, right: Surasa powerful and consistent.

*Right, clockwise:
Databir, Vajra and Abakash—
pioneers of self-transcendence;
Sarah; Nidhravi; and Vasu.*



Echoing Sri Chinmoy's prayer, Nidhravi speaks of a few rough days and says "I guess everybody has to go through these times to grow and become stronger, and more secure. No self-doubt, never give up."

A view of the

17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

Doing the Same Miracles

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

7 July 2013

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

"It is one of my favorite places to run." As Suprabha says this, the dawn is greeting us with an incredible gentle glow. The twelve runners have just set off on their 22nd Day of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race and she has obliged me this morning to do a lap of the Course with me. Suprabha lives in the Washington, D.C. area so doesn't come to New York that often. So one can naturally assume that she doesn't get to run here that often — at least not now.

But it wasn't that many years ago that this was not just her favorite place to run but, in many ways, the very epicenter of her life's journey. For thirteen consecutive summers (1997-2009) she spent circling this block and when I dare to even comprehend just how many laps and miles she ran here my mind shuts down. Later, using a small calculator, it spat out a gigantic trail of numbers. Looking at her lightly jogging along now, it all just seemed so unbelievable. How was it possible that this petite little woman could have run so many miles here? The tally? 40,300.

Suprabha tells me, "Well, mostly I just feel something here. Of course, if I zoom in, I can pick out special moments. But it is just really nice to be here."

It is nice to spend a little time with the runners. It just brings it all back. Mainly I just feel grateful to be part of the Race. Not just all those times, but that I can still come back and feel part of it."

Suprabha says she feels the presence of Sri Chinmoy here just as much now as before and she says, "doing the same miracles. That is one of the most beautiful things about the Race — you can always feel that Sri Chinmoy is here."

She continues, "I don't think anyone will ever fully understand the 3,100 Mile Race. Everybody, I think, feels *something*, and feels how vast and beautiful it is. Because it really offers something to everybody. So many people can be part of it and be touched by it."

Suprabha then relates a story about the great Ted Corbitt. One summer he visited the 3,100 Mile Race while Suprabha was running it. She said that when Sri Chinmoy learned that Ted was visiting with the runners he came to meet with him.

According to Suprabha he apparently asked Ted, who was by now quite



Sri Chinmoy with great man and ultramarathoner pioneer, Ted Corbitt

elderly, why he hadn't participated in the Six and Ten Day Race that had taken place earlier in the spring. Ted told Sri Chinmoy that at this point in his life he was having difficulty even walking, let alone entering multi-day races. Sri Chinmoy told him that racing was not something Ted was doing for himself — it was something he did for the world.

Suprabha adds, "I think it is really true. Maybe we don't even know what the Race is doing. That is what I feel. But it has to be reaching very far, it is very expansive. I think we are really lucky to have the Race."

Day 22

Wave is Breaking

By Sahishnu, 7 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

Three weeks and a day from the start, the dozen runners are still moving forward. Having passed through the first real test of summer heat, Ashprihanal Aalto led eight runners past 60 miles (70.24). He has run over 70+ for seven of the last eight days. Atmavir Spacil had a revival of sorts with 69.14 miles and a zip to his step not seen in a while. Pranjal Milovnik slipped past a blister problem to get back to 62.56 miles. The two Austrian women Surasa Mairer and Nidruvi Zimmerman have done well in the heat so far and are exhibiting a smoother style than weeks passed. Sopan Tsekov is 7 and a half miles behind the cutoff line for mileage. He has been looking much better and is running consistently. Tomorrow (Monday) Ashprihanal will be the first to the halfway point. Good luck to all the runners. May they dream of finishing in style if not in substance yet. Reality awaits.

*In the world of
Unbelief and disbelief,
Our faith in God itself
Is the miracle of miracles.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
“Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,
Part 8” (Agni Press, 1998)



*Suprabha visits the Race.
She ran 40,300 miles on this very Course*



*At this moment, Surasa and Vasu
seem cool ...*



*Pranjal?
Not so much...*



*Fashions attempt to
contend with the sun*



*The
Haddock
family
brought
goodies
— and
goodwill
— for the
runners.*

Surasa tells me that the first time she was involved in a race was many years ago when she helped out at the 1,300 Mile Race. “At that time I was helping Shamita. I was just a helper. It was my first time at such a race.”

She says, “I was so happy and I was sure that I would come back again and help. But many people said to me. When are you going to run? I said no, no, no. I am just a helper. I cannot do that.” But the next year instead of helping Surasa ended up running. “Because my runner could not run.”

I asked what Surasa sees in Suprabha. “I see divinity in her when she is running. She is just so dedicated and is trying to be a good instrument. For me, she is always so divine.”

Pranjal says of the heat and humidity, “It is always hard to be really focused — and you have to be when you are running in this kind of weather. You have to have very high determination — and then to keep it throughout the Race is really, really hard.”

He adds, “The determination cannot come from the mind, because the mind gets tired after some time. It has to come from a deeper source. It is only then that you can use it in this kind of Race. Every day here is really, really hard.”

“In the beginning I have to accept that this is the thing that I am going to do, until the end of my life. When you feel you have no choice it makes it much easier. So we know we have to run and there is no other option. It doesn’t matter that I am tired or if I have an injury.”

< 54 >

Sopan says, “Most of the day I had to deal with a blister that has been giving me trouble the last five or six days. That is why I have been running 60.9 miles one day and 50+ the next. [The blister was] small, and at first sight, insignificant — but placed at the wrong spot under the arch of my left foot where the skin is very tender. No matter how you fix it, it hurts a lot.”

Two weeks ago Jason Haddock read about the Race and had to come see it for himself. He is a distance runner from New Jersey and in two weeks will compete in his first 100 mile race in Vermont.

When he originally came he says it was out of a sense of curiosity. He was also hoping for some tips in which he could use in his upcoming 100 mile race. Jason says the best inspiration he has received here that he can use in his own running is, “staying in the present moment. I think it will be extremely powerful for me.”

Jason tells me that he was so moved by the experience of the Race that he brought his whole family back with him. He ran a few laps with some of the runners and says. “You can just feel the peace and the energy from them.” He adds, “The runners are very attuned to their inner self. If you are lucky, they will share some of that with you as they go through their journey.”

He adds of the atmosphere of the Race, “It is almost hallowed ground. You are not coming here for a competitive, cut-throat type of physical event.” What you are coming for is “very rewarding, satisfying.” He adds further, “an entitlement that people have the liberty and ability to do with their physical bodies. It is very touching.”

Do you want to enjoy a miracle?

It is very simple.

Always say “Yes!” to God!

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
“Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,
Part 1” (Agni Press, 1998)

A view of the 17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

Patience is Running

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

8 July 2013

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

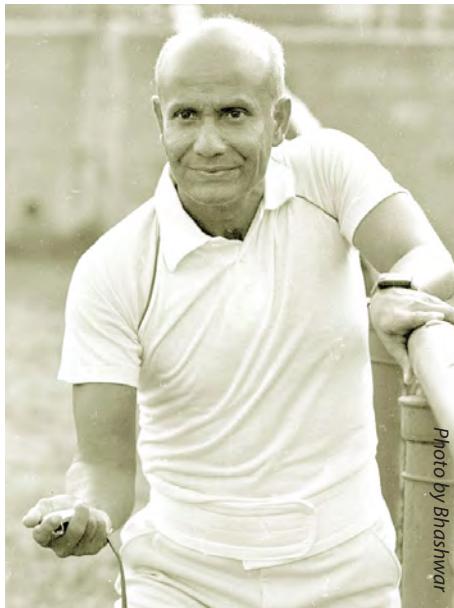
In the very early hours of Sunday morning a solar-powered ultra-lightweight plane landed at JFK airport in New York. The "Solar Impulse" — the first aircraft capable of flying day and night without fuel (shifting to battery power when the sun goes down) — had first begun its historic flight across continental America back on May 3. It's two Swiss pilots took turns commanding the aircraft on its multiple hops across the country. The total distance was 5,649 km (3,510 miles) and took 105 hours of flying time to accomplish the new record.

One of its pilots said, "I try to enjoy each moment. I really try to appreciate where I am, what I am doing. I'm not in a hurry because I cannot land early. So, time is not so much an issue — it's more the way to get to the destination, which is very interesting." And pilot André Borschberg says, "There are no limits. The only limit is the pilot."

Solar Impulse is a stunning technological breakthrough and one that slipped a little bit under the American news radar. One other story that almost went unnoticed was Nidhruvi as she passed the 1,300 mile mark this morning at the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. I ask her what this milestone means to

her, she replies, "It means I am going to a new territory."

The last time Nidhruvi had completed 1,300 miles was at her last big race 11 years ago. She laughs as I suggest that event in 2002 at Flushing Meadows Park seems like several lifetimes ago and says, "Since then I haven't done so many miles." The 3,100 Mile Race has also opened up a new best for this 47-year



Sri Chinmoy eagerly timing a race in 1981



old Austrian phenom, transcending her longest race of 19 days — today is her 23rd straight day of running.

Nidhruvi says, "This is a different race. Actually, you cannot compare it. This is a totally different race."

As we run along there is a cool breeze brushing lightly up and over us as we head down the Grand Central Parkway Service Road. It is a small thing but very important to these twelve runners who spent the past few days being cooked in the heat from morning to night. "God, thanks so much. I am so grateful for this wind and a little coolness." Nidhruvi adds, "Almost all of us have this skin rash. So this helps a lot,

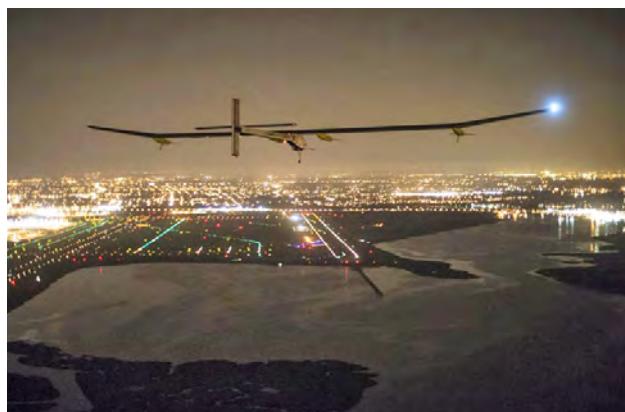
Day 23

Reaching Halfway

By Sahishnu, 8 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

On a warm summer day that was a little less oppressive than the previous four, three men went past 70+ miles to lead the group in its 'paces with miles'. Sarvagata Ukrainskyi led the brave contingent with 72.44 sweaty miles, followed by Ashprihanal Aalto and then Atmavir Spacil. Eight of 12 reached 60 or more. Ashprihanal went past the half-way point for the 12th time in his remarkable endurance career (1,550 miles= 22 days+10:30:48). As he succinctly said, "There is no turning back now." (!!!) Three men should get to that special mark tomorrow (Tuesday). Meanwhile everyone is recouping from the hot spell as blisters and fatigue are vying with the thousands of miles already run to try the wills of our intrepid warriors. And run they must, and run they will. Stay tuned...



Pioneers in flight and pioneers in running have self-transcendence in common



Nidhravi enjoying the moment and noticing how by simply reversing the numbers 1 and 3 it would all be over



Yuri, with Manogita, has been feeling a bit out of focus with New York's brutal heat



the wind blowing through our clothes and helping to keep them dry. So it feels really good."

Patience is running with you.

Patience is running for you.

Therefore, yours will be

The ultimate success-victory.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-
Plants, Part 72" (Agni Press, 1984)

The last two days have been extremely tough for Yuri. "I was running as usual but the sun was so strong — I had not counted on this and so I got a serious problem." Despite this he has persevered and still managed to complete 100 and 101 laps those days.

I have asked Manogita to help translate my questions this morning. Yuri tells us, "I got very strong dizziness." He adds, "Now I am getting better. I just need two or three days and then I will be totally okay."

He says that it was actually a good experience for him and that he learned a lot from it. He feels he understands the inner level of this Race more and appreciates now, more than ever, the oneness between the runners. "The inner experiences I have had are very, very good."

Since the beginning of this year's 3,100 Mile Race twenty-three days ago Sarvagata says that he has gotten stronger and more fit. He says that coming

here is "perfect fitness training for weight control. I have lost 10kg [22lbs]."

His initial problems seem to be over. "I have had some small things — like everybody here. But they are not crucial. It bothers me only at the end of the day. But it is okay."

Sarvagata says that during this year's Race "I am really trying hard to remain happy, no matter what my speed is. I am trying to be positive. I am satisfied with myself so far." He laughs at his own statement and adds, "Not too modest, right?"

Sarvagata tells me that so far the weather and sun have not been too problematic for him. "I would have had a problem if I had been stubborn like I was before." He feels that all the experiences the runners have here are meant to teach lessons and expand the runner's awareness of not just themselves but also the greater world around them. "It is a basic educational program for the human being — not just for runners, for everybody."

He adds, "You know your goal is pretty far and you have to reach it. So maybe you have to slow down a little bit. Think about it. Change yourself a little bit." He adds simply, "I will do my best."

"I woke up a couple of laps ago." There are times, particularly in the morning when Sopan seems to be absent from the shuffling body going around and around the Course. "I am not a morning person. I have a hard time waking up. It takes me a few laps to warm up."



Sarvagata



Sopan

He is moving well now and for this he says, "I am grateful because this morning I could hardly run. I have had this blister for the last four days so I have been stepping sideways on the side tendon. So it became very sore. In the morning when the tendon is very stiff I can hardly step on it." He adds, "So I am grateful. Actually it is pretty amazing, because after a few laps it warms up. In the morning I couldn't step on it."

He speaks of the encouraging messages he gets from around the world and says, "it is really cool."

*If you can have a free access
To patience-light,
Then you can run very fast
On the high road to Heaven.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from "Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 57"