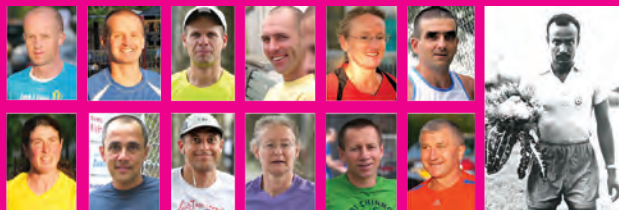


A view of the 17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Train Your Life For Perfection

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>
20 July 2013 (morning)

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

One of my favorite runners is a man named Johnny Miles (1905-2003) who came from a small town in Nova Scotia, Canada. He was a naturally talented

runner and his father decided to train him so that he could enter the Boston Marathon.

When Johnny arrived in Boston in 1926 he is just 21 years old. He has no real idea of how to run this thing he has trained so hard for. His father says he should simply trail the favorite in the Race, a man named Clarence DeMar who had won the race the three previous years. Quite to Johnny's surprise, world-famous marathoner Albin Stenroos from Finland has also enrolled in the Race.



Johnny Miles

Day 35

Five Weeks In

By Sahishnu, 20 July 2013 (evening)
www.3100.ws/blog

Day 35 was the last day of a seven day heat wave which shook up the field of twelve and showed that strength and determination are hallmark traits of a super-long distance runner. Sarvagata Ukrainskyi led all comers with 63.66 miles. Only four of 12 reached past 60 miles. Battle scars abound from the relentless barrage of heat and humidity that plagued the last week. Temps again stayed in the mid-nineties to discourage any attempt at speed and repetition. Only evening showers brought the air quality back to a tolerable level. Atmavir Spacil, the leader after five weeks, was able to bring some joy to the group as he celebrated his 35th birthday with gifts to all his comrades including flowers, framed photos and special drinks. He has 800 miles left to bring his run to a conclusion. Of course, there are a few people who think they can get there before him. Thus, a little drama for the last 17 days of life on the road — without ever leaving the neighborhood.

The local press were ecstatic — before them, they thought, was an epic battle between DeMar and Stenroos, the two greatest marathon runners of the day. Nobody knew this kid from Nova Scotia, who simply followed the great ones until they fell apart. Johnny unexpectedly found himself alone in front of the pack, not really knowing what was going to happen next and whether the other two would come back and challenge him. Eventually a car came by with some marathon officials who yelled out to him. "You've got it, kid, You've got it." Johnny Miles went on to win the Race and set a Course Record of 2:25.

Yesterday was brutally hot and humid at the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. It was, once again, a day when runners were trying just to keep moving. Not a day to worry about how many laps are to be

completed — but just how to finish the one in front of them.

Sometime yesterday lead-runner Ashprihanal was passed by Atmavir. It is eerily similar to two years ago when Ashprihanal's great, soaring first-place flight to the finishline was shockingly interrupted. In 2011, on Day 39 of the Race, he was overwhelmed by this devilish New York weather. He continued [after some brief downtime and several low-mileage days] and then battled for another 350 miles in eight days just to make it to the finishline — a heroic and supreme effort by anybody's reckoning.

What Ashprihanal now faces is much more formidable — for what stretches out in front of him is the reality of 870 more miles. Yesterday he walked all day and today he is doing much the same. In the days ahead the weather is supposed to improve and perhaps his wings will come out and he will fly once more.

The truth is, this Race is always much more about what we *don't* see than what





The runners walk and sing Happy Birthday to Atmavir at the start of today's running



Atmavir receives a 21 flower salute from the morning singing group (he offered the roses to the singers for prasad)

we do. For each runner here, the weather conditions yesterday were simply so shocking it was hard to really grasp how anyone could go on. Yet Ashprihanal completed 74 laps — he managed this with a courage and strength that we have grown accustomed to over the years.

With each new lap he walks Ashprihanal is entering a new and unfamiliar world within himself. An experience that is challenging him in a way that he has never had to face before. Nevertheless, the destination has not changed — it has always been, and will continue to be, his own perfection.

*Train your mind
For transformation.
Train your heart
For contemplation.
Train your life
For perfection.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Two God-Amusement-Rivals: My
Heart-Song-Beauty And My Life-Dance-
Fragrance, Part 13" (Agni Press, 1996)

Nidhruvi completed 2,000 miles in the depths of a very hot afternoon yesterday. "I had a deep feeling. For four or five laps I was totally concentrated. And I chanted all the time 'gratitude.'"



Nidhruvi, with
2,000 miles behind her

was that they had to overcome and go through — to make them stronger." She prayed, "that they don't lose hope and, somehow also, stay happy." She tells me, "If you are a true runner then you have to go through everything. You have to accept these kind of experiences." Of Ashprihanal's difficulties, she says that she has spoken to him and noted that he seemed happy and at peace. "I was very surprised and pleased with him."

Of her own experience Nidhruvi says, "After six or seven days I started to lose weight. I think I have lost 7 kilos [15.4 lbs] — my helpers are trying to fill me up like anything. I have to really force myself to eat and especially to drink."



Sarah with a bright smile
ready to face the bright day



Atmavir talks with Sulochana,
she is pioneer in ultra-distance running
(in the late 1980s she set the then world record
for the most mileage ever run by a woman over
50 years old — completing 655 miles in 13 days)

There is a little breeze sweeping lightly over us as we run. "It is blissful. It is just bliss. This cool wind — I am eternally grateful for, to have one day to be able to breathe. I hope it lasts for some time. You know, it is New York and it is summer time. New York is known to be really humid and what can we do. It is really tough and rough, but we have to go through it and we have to finish this race."

Of passing 2,000 miles Nidhruvi says, "There is no celebration before 3,100. I celebrated at 1,000 — it is special. 2,700 is special and I will just be grateful inwardly. I have to reach 3,100 then I can start celebrating."

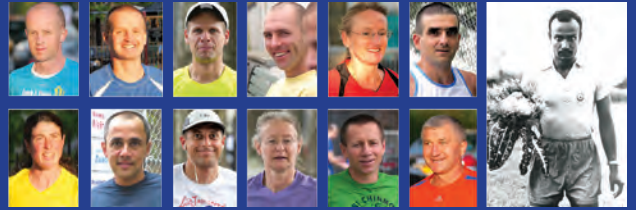
*You are looking for
The perfect seeker.
Why not train yourself
To be that perfect seeker?
Start with yourself.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-
Plants, Part 222" (Agni Press, 1995)

A view of the

17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



What Concerns Me

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

21 July 2013 (morning)

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

"I am taking it as an expression of the Supreme's Concern and Love." For the better part of the past seven days, Yuri has forced himself to slow down, to drink more often, and take more breaks. In short, to behave in a manner that he has never before had to do in any previous race. But then, he has neither run the 3,100 Mile Race nor experienced the steamy torture and torment of a New York summer.

The fact that Yuri is not, in any way, resentful or disappointed by this extraordinary situation is a mark of the true courage and inner strength that he has within him. He impressively demonstrated his outer strength for four straight weeks and achieved daily mileage totals that for a first-timer were not just good, but excellent. But when the fifth week arrived at the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race, it literally changed the map for everyone here.

All the runners have struggled over the past week here. It has been seven extremely challenging days in which the unbearable weather has tried to dismantle and shatter the hopes of all the runners. The power of nature is a force to be reckoned with — particularly when it decides to unleash its might against the puny plans and wishes of mankind.

For Yuri, he can at least be satisfied that he has banked a lot of miles before his troubles started. He now has just under 1,000 miles to go and 17 days in which to do it. History says this is a very do-able thing: a simple mathematical equation that is easily solvable — that is, if his body heals and he can average 58 miles per day in those 17 days remaining.

When asked if he is concerned about what lies ahead, Yuri replies, "I am not concerned about difficulties. What I want to do is make the Supreme happy in His Own Way." He adds, "But

Day 36

Picking Up Pieces

By Sahishnu, 21 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

The worst heat wave in two years has passed and the 12 runners are still about their business. There is a sense of relief but the engines are not firing on all cylinders. Except for four runners the others failed to make 60 miles. Vasu Duzhiy from Russia climbed into second place with a day-leading 65.3 miles. Nidhrui Zimmerman again led the ladies with 63.1 miles. Now is the time that will show us who has the strength and make-up to reach the lofty goal.

I would really like to finish the distance this time."

WHAT CONCERNS ME

Failure does not concern me.

What concerns me is God-satisfaction

In God's own Way

In my aspiration-life.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from

"Transcendence-Perfection"

(Agni Press, 1975)

Yuri tells me that every morning, he feels "very good. But later in the day in the afternoon my well-being degrades a little bit and my pulse speeds up. This is because of the high heat and temperatures." He is reluctant to call the last few days "difficult" but says "they have been challenging from a physical point of view."

I have seen Yuri talking with both Vasu and Sarvagata. "They have been telling me that pleasing the Supreme is the first thing, all the rest is secondary.



Sri Chinmoy running in early 1980s

Photo by Bhashwar



Yuri



Baladev



Pranjal



Nidhruvi



Vasu



Ananda-Lahari



Sopan



Kevin (in red cap) doing a double-marathon and getting a "glimpse" of what the runners experience every day



Surasa



Corrina, Kevin and Dan on the Course

I continue to try to remain inside my spiritual heart."

He says he is receiving lots of encouragement from his friends back home. "They are supporting me very strongly. This Race is akin to an acid test, not just for the individual, but also for the entire humanity."

In case there is any temptation to feel sorry or concern for Yuri, he himself is unwavering and says, "There is not a single moment, there is not a single second that I regret being here. It is the highest experience that I have had in my life, and that is why I am here. I am very, very, very happy person."

* * *

Kevin says, "Corrina, my research partner, and I are trying to explain how this race happens. What compels them to do it? What keeps them motivated? How does the community come together to support it? It is a fantastic and mysterious kind of thing. It is so powerful."

They have been at the Race since the beginning conducting a study of the event and its participants. "Our method, in academic terms, is ethnography."

Kevin has made a rather brave decision to run all day today. He says, "One of the things I think is really important is not just sit on the sidelines, literally, but to try and do something. Try and emulate it." He started at 6 a.m. with the runners but thought it would be more respectful to run in the opposite direction of them. His goal is to complete 96 laps — or 52 miles — before the end of the day. He says, "I

know even if I do one full day it is still not going to capture the whole race. But at least I can have a small glimpse."

Kevin says, "We have been really surprised at the drama that we see. Every day people are going through things. Like Yuri having this traumatic [heat-related] medical situation." He mentions a number of other things then adds, "but at the same time it is very calm. There is a calm that sets over here every day." He says, "We get back to Manhattan, which is far more hectic, and we still feel this immense calm that no one else seems to have on the streets. It really effects 'the Kevin' and not just 'the researcher'."

He discusses all the things, as a grad student, he and Corrina have to face and feels that besides creating a great research paper that they both will get something personal out of it as

well. "I want to bring back a little bit of this spirit and bring it back into my own life. That is not a very scientific thing to say. It is transcending the boundaries of the research. It is also what I am feeling personally, as a subjective being." He adds, "One of the things that has really surprised us is how deeply personal we have experienced this race. I think it is impossible to come to this race and talk with people and not feel some deep energy. I think about it all the time."

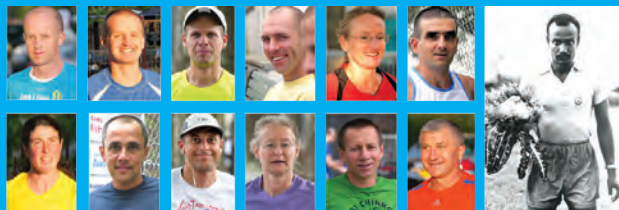
*If you do not have concern
For God the man,
How can you have concern
For man the God?*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,
Part 40" (Agni Press, 2004)

A view of the

17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Elevate To Your Highest Height

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

22 July 2013 (morning)

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

*Your goal is the highest
Self-transcendence-height.
No lesser goal must you accept!*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,
Part 3" (Agni Press, 1998)

It seems to be long time ago now, yet, it was just seven years ago that the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race experienced what could be called one of its most historical moments. 2006 was a magnificent year for the Race and was so in particular for 50-year old German runner Madhupran Schwerk. He set the record for the 3,100 mile distance

that remains untouched. He completed the Race in a remarkable 41 days and 8 hours (41+08:16:29).

It was no fluke either. This was, after all, the fourth time Madhupran had run the 3,100 Mile Race (1998, 2002, 2004 and 2006). In 2002, he had set the previous record, which was already a mind-boggling 42+13:24:03. Four years had passed since that remarkable effort and it would seem unlikely, if not impossible, for the now 50-year old man to best the time.

Madhupran, however, was and is a consummate runner in every way. He learned a lot from this hard patch of ground here in Queens and he was stronger each time he came and ran. Yet, if there is one additional key to his success that year — some potent antidote to all the adversity that comes with orbiting 5,649 times around this little cosmos — it would be the constant presence of his helper, Helmut Schieke.

Helmut is a most unique individual and who just may be the greatest multi-day helper in the world. Thus, you have a perfect pairing that ultimately led to this incredible record. In a video of the Race, Madhupran says, "We are a good team. Everybody can see it."



Helmut keeping Madhupran running strong

To become a great runner is one thing — and to become a great helper is another. Helmut came to this job in a predictable way, he was an experienced multiday and ultradistance runner himself. In 1990, Helmut ran a formidable, world-class ranking 260 km [161.5 miles] in a 24-Hour Race. His race experience was a terrific boon, but for a helper to become great they need a lot more. Allan Young, who is also one of the best helpers in the world, said of Helmut, "I saw him and it was almost as though he was reading his [Madhupran's] mind."

In this edition of the 3,100 Mile Race, the presence of a helper makes a marked difference. Both Surasa and Nidhrui have almost constant help on and off the Course and the interaction between runner-and-helper at times appears seamless.

Silvy, is just one member of a very strong team supporting Nidhrui. Until Silvy came here, she had no experience either as a distance runner nor as a helper. But for her, the job of helping Nidhrui thrusts her into that very

Day 37

Storms Aplenty

By Sahishnu, 22 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

With lower temperatures but highly humid skies, the 3,100 Mile Race crept along for another day. Five made it past the comfort zone of 60 miles, led by the overall leader Atmavir Spacil with 68.6 miles. Several storms hit the area, a big one at noontime and another at midnight with random drops of rain falling in between the marks on the clockface. With the mercury only reaching 83° the runners tried to take advantage of the better conditions. Yet the feeling of the group is a palpable determination to continue and do maximum miles while the race is still continuing. With only 15 days left, the passage of summer continues. Eight are on pace to make it to the end, but all 12 share in the wonder of digging deep within oneself and seeing what's left.

special world of anticipating what she needs to do, what she should fix before it becomes a problem, and also simply supporting her runner as selflessly as possible.

The one extra ingredient that, perhaps, a helper needs most is an endless supply of encouragement. Something that cannot be measured and yet you know it when you see it.

Yesterday in the British Open, American golfer, Phil Mickelson won the tournament in the final round by coming back from 5 strokes behind the leader. Some say it was the best round of golf he has ever played. As his caddy, Jim MacKay, has carried 43-year old Mickelson's bag for 21 years now. Phil said of his caddy, "He is the only guy on the golf course that wants me to play well. He's the only guy trying work his tail off for me."



Sopan is running better today. He says, "Sometimes you forget how tough this race is." As to why he does it, "it felt like the right thing. That is all. That is the only reason I am here."



So much to take care of... runners prepare for a long day of running



Vajra a helper-supreme for each and everyone



Sopan attends to a little foot care



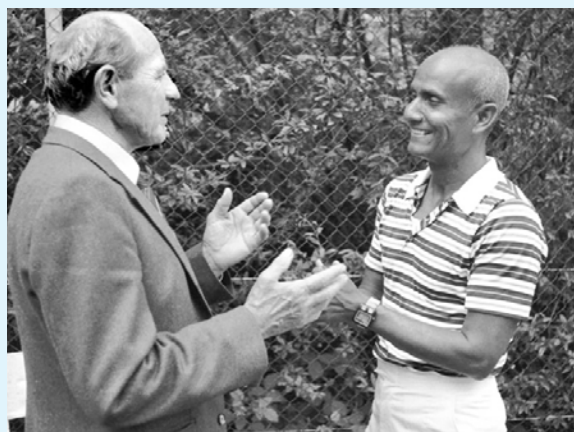
Race director Rupantar keeping constant tabs on everyone and everything



Someone checking in with Yuri on mobile phone



Pedro keeps everything and everyone running smoothly



Sri Chinmoy meets with Emil Zátopek, the Czech long-distance champion who won five Olympic medals (1948 and 1952)

When Zátopek was doomed to disappointment, his wife encouraged him, inspired him and elevated him to his highest height. Then again, when his wife needed encouragement and inspiration, he helped her not only cheerfully, willingly and unreservedly but also successfully.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from "Emil Zatopek: Earth's Tearing Cry And Heaven's Beaming Smile" (Agni Press, 1980)

ENCOURAGEMENT

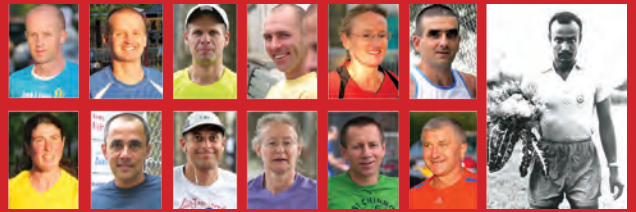


Irena helping Surasa



Nidhrui with helper, Silvy

A view of the 17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

Why Not?

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

23 July 2013 (morning)

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

"Why not?" This is Ananda-Lahari's answer to my long, circuitous question. It is simple, it is clear, and yet to me — and probably to most of us — it is still unfathomable. I have always been

puzzled by this 37-year old runner from Slovakia. He has completed the full distance at the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race five times. But for the past two years he hasn't succeeded in completing the distance.

What I don't understand is how there is never a shadow of doubt or disappointment that ever drapes itself down across his features. I know that if it were me, I would feel the pant-and-paws of failure-dog hounding my every step. But Ananda-Lahari's steps are neither dogged by doubt, fear, remorse, or — fill in the dark blanks — any negative feelings at all. So when asked how it is he always appears to be so happy and content all the time his answer is, of course, "Why not?"

He says, "I am not frustrated. I am just doing what I can." He then quotes to me from the Bhagavad-Gita:

*Your right to work only,
but never to the fruit there of.
Let not the fruit of your action
be your object,
nor let your attachment be to inaction*

"I am doing my best. I am here from morning to night. It is not as though I am lying around in the van and waiting for midnight to come and go home. Still, I move as fast as I can. You should learn to be happy under any circumstances."

He adds, "I don't know what I can do to be able to run. I am walking as fast as possible. That's it."



Sri Chinmoy running track with Pulak

*Not what happens to you
But how you accept it
Is of paramount importance.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,
Part 21" (Agni Press, 2001)

Sarvagata had a difficult day yesterday. Mileage-wise, it was his worst day of the Race so far (85 laps). He says that the first year he ran here was like taking a "fast elevator ride straight up to heaven". The second year he was told to "take the stairs". This year, he feels that God is leading him "by the hand for another kind of experience".

He has 740 miles more to go. So anything can happen for this man who won the 3,100 Mile Race his first year of running it (2011) and placed 2nd in 2012.

"Last year, I was here 18-hours a day." Today, Arpan turns 61-years old and just last year he was one of the runners of the 3,100 Mile Race.

Day 38

The Essence of Running

By Sahishnu, 23 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

The day dawned a little cooler than previous days and inspiration seemed more readily available. Our band of 12 runners have been giving it their all since the first day, and with only two weeks remaining, running is still their language and their conviction. There is no turning back. Vasu Duzhiy was day leader with 64.75 miles; he was closely followed by Pranjai Milovnik (62.5) and Ashprihanal Aalto (62.01) who is starting to regain energy after the seven-day heatwave. Most of the runners have lost weight and trimmed down to thin proportions. Now the furnace which has propelled them is craving fuel (fat is the best fuel right now and the only thing available that the body can utilise over a period of days). So eat they must, right to the end. Their own fortitude and inner conviction will carry them as far as possible. Should be an interesting two weeks.

For many, many years on his birthday, Arpan would run the same number of miles as the number of years old he was. An injury will not make it possible for him to do his usual "age-athon" this year. Though he says he is thinking of perhaps biking 61-miles later. "I haven't been running much at all, in terms of mileage, all year."

I ask him what he sees when the runners go by. "It is like an inner journey. It is hard for them to express it outwardly.

If they don't smile, it doesn't mean that they are not appreciative or happy. They have to be so focused inwardly that it is hard to outwardly express that. We are coming from a normal way of life. They are in a different consciousness."

"Sometimes it is painful, but there is an inner joy. Your body is always trying to pull you away from that. The physical reality and the mental reality is different."

Arpan adds, "Being on the route is a whole different way of life. I love it. My

body doesn't always love it. Sometimes the mind gets frustrated. But it is a really great thing that they are physically able to do it."

*The human mind asks,
"Why? Why? Why?"*

*The divine heart asks,
"Why not? Why not? Why not?"*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-
Plants, Part 144" (Agni Press, 1991)



Today's 6 a.m. start is dark and damp



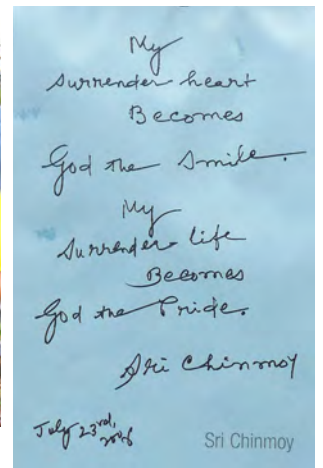
Ananda-Lahari



Ashprihanal enjoying the change of weather



Sarah, Vasu and birthday-boy Arpan recite the Daily Prayer



Brahmata performs music



Nirjharini, team leader of the cooks for the 3,100 Mile Race

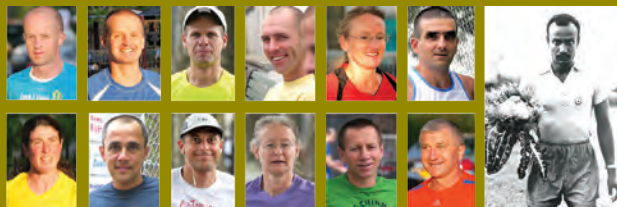


Sarvakamya checking in with Sarvagata

A view of the

17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Give Yourself

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

24 July 2013 (morning)

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

Mario is one of the unsung heroes of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. "I am trying to support them. Everybody comes here because they want transcendence, to reach a spiritual goal. I give a little piece of myself to help them reach that goal." He comes most nights to give massages to the runners — and far from just offering up a small portion of himself he has, in fact, contributed an invaluable service to the Race — and much, much more.

Mario says, "I have good skills. I am a registered nurse. I was a professional cyclist and I learned how to massage professional cyclists. So I use my skills to massage professional athletes and now I am giving my service to the Sri Chinmoy group."

I have seen Mario here and at the ultra distance races in Flushing Meadows Park many times. He is one of those people who is extraordinarily good at what he does, is blessed with what appears to be inexhaustible energy and, then quite simply, selflessly offers what he has and is unreservedly. His skills have been much appreciated by all those he has treated. During the very dangerous spell of hot weather, his medical knowledge altered what could have been significantly much more traumatic outcomes.

I am curious why Mario is here during the day when he usually comes



6 a.m. starting line of Day 39

at night, he replies that he has the week off of work. I am impressed that instead of going on a well-deserved vacation he opts to come to help out at the Race more frequently. Today, as he often does, he has brought his two children. Far from being bored or restless, they immediately start to play with a soccer ball on the field nearby as if it was the most natural thing in the world to spend your vacation in a place where 12 runners just keep going around and around.

There are many others who offer their services to the Race — both in small ways and also in other contributions that stretch way beyond boundless. What the twelve

Day 39

Three-Quarters, A Dollar...

By Sahishnu, 24 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

In some sort of strange twist, we find our race at the three-quarters point. The 12 are still at running in circles, and the group was blessed with a cool night for the first time in over a fortnight. Vasu Duzhiy brought day honors to his table with a 68 mile day. He is only 25 laps behind the lead and is looking strong as ever. Ukrainian Yuri Trostenyuk reached 62.5 for the consolation prize and his best day in the last twelve. Nidhruvi Zimmerman and Surasa Mairer continue to run consistently and have comfortable mileage cushions. With 13 days left there is nothing else to do but run until you reach your goal. Even those who know they will not make it to 3,100 still have a goal to reach, and each new day is a chance to do better or best. As has often been stated in our race lore of multadays: there is no loser in these events. By toeing the line you are a winner. You are challenging yourself and your capacity, thus you cannot lose. Good luck runners and go the distance. Soon...

runners are giving of themselves here each day cannot be measured. Maybe, then, it is not so surprising that others see and feel, 'if this is what they are giving, can I not give of myself as well?'

Mario says, "Everybody is working in the same way. We are all on the same road. So they are helping me also to get higher on my spiritual level and I am helping them. Because they are doing something for me also."

*Because you are good,
You give yourself
Smilingly.*

*Because you want to be perfect,
You give yourself
Unconditionally.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-
Plants, Part 106" (Agni Press, 1986)

Vasu did a remarkable 116 laps (64.76 miles) yesterday. Like a few other runners here, he appears to be gathering more and more strength each day that he runs.

The other day he spoke, via a video conference call, with members of his mediation group back in St. Petersburg. Vasu says, "I was very inspired and

happy." They were able to see him and get a glimpse of this distant, wonderful world that Vasu has taken up for the past 38 days. He tells me the closeness was such that he felt them running with him on the Course — encouraging him and also giving him strength.

"I felt so much aspiration and inspiration from everybody. They love me and I love them."

As we run together this morning Atmavir is just in front of us. I ask Vasu, now that he is getting closer in terms of mileage to this lead runner if he is focusing on this. He says, "I like Atmavir. I am trying to do my best. I do not need competition. I want to please the Supreme in His Own Way."

Of Ashprihanal, who is just 15 miles behind Vasu, he says, "Ashprihanal is faster than me." Ashprihanal is improving each day now [since having some heat-related problems] and he could easily pass Vasu. Vasu says he feels that whatever the outcome is it is "all God's Will and God's Grace". He adds, "Ashprihanal told me that Somebody in Heaven pushes a button for every runner. So, this runner can run fast and this runner must go slow. It is just a game."

When asked if he is thinking of the finish line or another special mile marker he says, "No, I just am trying to be happy.

I think about Sri Chinmoy and meditate and pray and sing. Sometimes I ask people to tell me stories about Sri Chinmoy to inspire me." He adds, "I feel that this is a big opportunity for us to make our inner progress."

"You learn by watching people. You learn how to cook by watching how your mommy cooks — it is the same with my children." I have asked Mario to tell me why he has brought his kids with him. "I want to put my children around me to watch what I am doing. Why is Poppy helping these people? Why is Poppy doing massage? They watch me and little by little they get their own skills." Pointing at his daughter, he says, "In the future, you are going to have a wonderful massager over here."

He speaks candidly about the situation a few days earlier under the severe weather conditions, "They were in crisis. They were completely dehydrated. We tried to get them back to their normal stage." I.V.s were administered to the runners and Mario says, "We gave it to them just to recuperate because the weather conditions were extremely, extremely hot and they got dehydrated. We have to help them as much as we can, and we have the skills. We have the technology to help them."

He describes how he believes it comes down to genetics. "Some absorb fluids in different ways." Simply put, if you sweat more then you have to drink more to keep your fluid levels in balance. "Every single athlete is different. We have to think that way. Every person is an individual and unique."

*Give to all something:
Give to Heaven your earth-cry,
Give to earth your Heaven-smile,
Give to God your surrender-life,
Give to yourself your promise-light.*

*Thus
Give to all something.*

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



Mario



Baladev and Nidhruvi

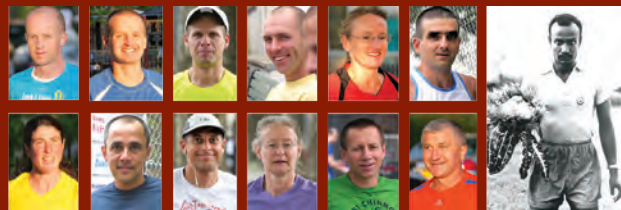


Utsahi helping a runner trim their shoes



Vasu and helper, Nicolay

A view of the 17th Annual



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

What If They Never Stopped?

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>
25 July 2013 (morning)

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

It was probably a crazy idea to imagine in the first place. What if the Race always continued on and the runners never stop running on the Course?

I realize that it is one thing to allow the image to harmlessly percolate around and within my own imagination — but quite another to go and publicly write it out. I apologize should

any of you be disturbed or shocked by this idea. I would not blame anyone for dismissing it immediately, for it flies in the face of not only the human body's physiology but also against most scientific research on just how much physical, mental, and emotional stress the human organism can cope with. Then, of course, you would question the capacity of this small volunteer-run organization and its ability to maintain manpower and resources in this way forever. Now, if you have somehow managed to clamber up this peak of formidable logistics, we still have to mention the New York weather....



Sri Chinmoy hill-training on 150th Street

Day 40

On It Goes 2.0

By Sahishnu, 25 July 2013 (evening)
www.3100.ws/blog

With half the field going past sixty miles today, the race had a normalcy with not much variation. Atmavir Spacil assumed the day leader emblem with 66.4 miles and lengthened his lead as well. He is averaging 65.25 miles per day (105.01 km). With eight days before his probable finish a week Friday, he looks the strongest. Vasu Duzhiy is 19 miles back but could probably finish on that same day next week if he can maintain his energy. Today was cool and overcast, downright cold; if you recall that just a week earlier it was 30 degrees hotter during the daytime. The runners keep going and giving what they have left. Sarah Barnett passed 2,000 miles for the first time in her multi day career. And with just 12 days left the effort is still there for everyone. Good luck to all ultra runners.

Despite the complete absurdity of it, I know that I am not alone in harboring this phantom vision of the eternal.

It is possible that the real source of this fantasy has arisen because of the grinding fatigue that comes with enduring the almost-biblical past 40 days. There have simply been too many short sleepless nights and too many long restless days — and this could all be hallucination. Yet there is something about it that continues to haunt me: what these twelve runners are doing (and have been doing here for 17 years) is beyond the borders of impossibility. So, then, what is to stop us from extending the limits even further? To literally push our conceived boundaries to the brink where limitations and impossibility disappears forever? To truly live and manifest Sri Chinmoy vision of complete self-transcendence?

Am I suggesting that one day in the near future that the "3,100 Mile Race" banner be switched and replaced with

Atmavir Spacil	2543	Yuri Trostenyuk	2349
Vasu Duzhiy	2529	Nidhrui Zimmerman	2341
Ashprihanal Aalto	250	Sopan Tsekov	2242
Sarvagata Ukrainskyi	2465	Baladev Saraz	2163
Pranjal Milovnik	245	Ananda-Lahar Zuscov	2082
Surasa Malier	2401	Sarah Barnett	1954

The ever changing mileage board at the start of Day 40

one that reads "FOREVER". No. But if we are to accept transcendence — even in small ways — in our own lives then we have to look at "impossible" things and barriers in a much different way.

*Mind, never stop surrendering!
Heart, never stop climbing!
Life, never stop transcending!
Soul, never stop dreaming!*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-Plants, Part 76" (Agni Press, 1984)



Baladev and Atmavir



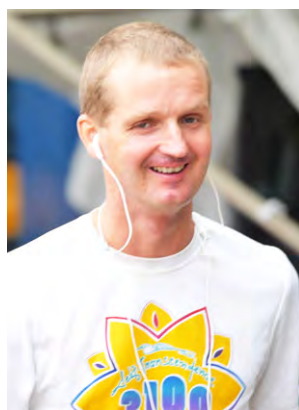
Pranjal

Pranjal tells me this morning about his daily running streak, which he has maintained now for five years. When asked why, he says, "For me, it is much easier. When you know you have to run, it is much easier to [do it]. There is no excuse, even when you are tired or sick, or anything. You know that you have to run."

I boldly ask Pranjal what he thought of simply running here and never stopping. He says, "When I was running the first time here (in 2005), I was even praying that the Race be extended. To make it a 4,800 Mile Race." He took him nearly 60 days to complete the distance back then, but says "Still, I was thinking to go on. One more month." He said that he mentioned this to another runner — who suggested Pranjal must be crazy since they themselves were counting the hours until it finished.

Pranjal and I talk about a few other matters: he describes the change of weather as "Nice. When it is cold you can just put something on, that's it. But when it is hot what can you do?" He says it has sometimes been this cool during the early stages of the Race but never so far into it."

He says, "Yesterday I had a pretty good morning but then I slowed down." He feels that overall his performance is slowing down. "I used to do 118 laps [64.75 miles daily] or something like that, now I am doing 114."



Ashprihanal



Nicolay waiting for Vasu with fresh picked grass for his socks



Vedisha updates the board

I mention that some runners seem to, on the other hand, get stronger. Pranjal says, "I think it is a balance between your weight and your muscles. When you are lighter, you get faster. But in my case, I get lighter but I am also losing a lot of muscle. Because I am big I have to eat more. I have to eat something like 15,000 calories. It is just impossible to eat that much here. Smaller people don't need to eat that much. So they don't lose that much muscles."

This is Pranjal's ninth year running the 3,100 Mile Race. He talks about the particular moments of feeling an



Nidhruvi has a special moment with friend Pranika, who visits the Course with Nishtha

exceptional sense of belonging. He says they don't happen every day or every week but at least a couple of times during the whole race and "You just feel it. You are happy to be here."

*Once you start
Running towards God,
Never stop, never stop!*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,
Part 29" (Agni Press, 2002)

Days 31-40 ... see page 27 for Days 1-10; page 49 for Days 11-20; and page 71 for Days 21-30

please confirm these numbers with the official daily statistics at
<http://3100.srichinmoyraces.org/3100-results-2013>

Runner (alphabetical by first name)	Day 31	Day 32	Day 33	Day 34	Day 35	Day 36	Day 37	Day 38	Day 39	Day 40	Runners per day average (Days 1-40)
Ananda-Lahari Zuscin	1709.51	1757.26	1802.26	1845.61	1891.71	1939.46	1986.11	2032.76	2082.15	2128.25	53.2
Ashprihanal Aalto	2105.2	2151.3	2193	2233.62	2279.72	2326.91	2383.99	2446	2507.47	2566.74	64.2
Atmavir Spacil	2067.33	2133.19	2188.07	2245.14	2300.02	2359.29	2427.89	2489.36	2543.69	2610.09	65.3
Baladev Saraz	1745.73	1803.91	1860.98	1916.41	1963.61	2017.04	2061.84	2114.53	2163.37	2217.7	55.4
Nidhrui Zimmerman	1849.46	1911.47	1972.39	2033.3	2094.77	2157.88	2219.35	2279.72	2341.18	2401.55	60.0
Pranjal Milovnik	1970.19	2032.21	2090.93	2145.81	2204.53	2267.09	2330.75	2393.32	2455.33	2516.8	62.9
Sarah Barnett	1609.63	1650.79	1693.05	1735.85	1780.86	1823.11	1863.72	1905.98	1954.28	2003.67	50.1
Sarvagata Ukrainskyi	2006.96	2075.01	2141.42	2196.85	2260.51	2313.74	2360.39	2410.33	2465.76	2526.68	63.2
Sopan Tsekov	1819.27	1869.76	1920.25	1958.12	2009.71	2068.98	2127.15	2184.77	2242.95	2301.12	57.5
Surasa Mairer	1914.76	1976.78	2037.69	2098.06	2158.98	2219.9	2281.36	2340.63	2401.55	2459.17	61.5
Vasu Duzhiy	2031.11	2093.12	2151.3	2207.27	2268.74	2334.05	2397.16	2461.92	2529.97	2590.88	64.8
Yuri Trostenyuk	1942.75	1998.18	2047.57	2079.95	2112.77	2168.86	2228.68	2286.85	2349.41	2410.33	60.3

Total mileage for the 12 runners in 40 days: 28,732.98

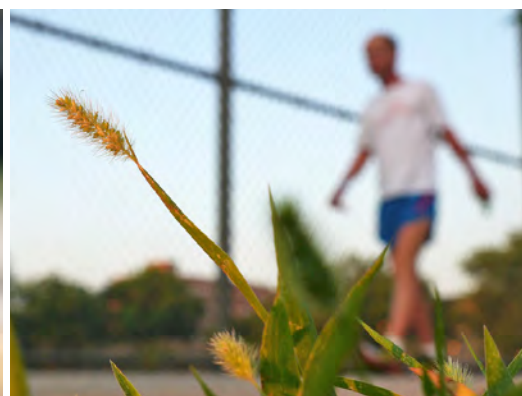
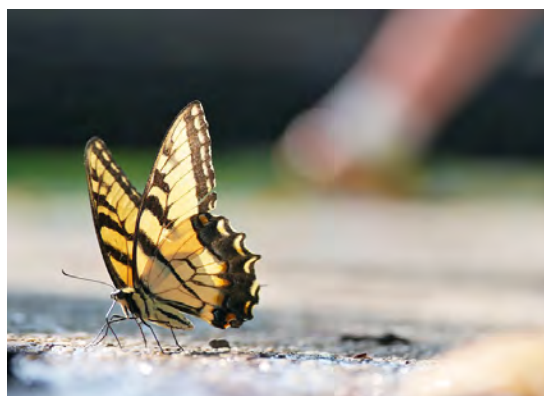
Day's top mileage, men
 Day's top mileage, women

Note: The equatorial circumference
 of the earth is 24,901.55 miles!

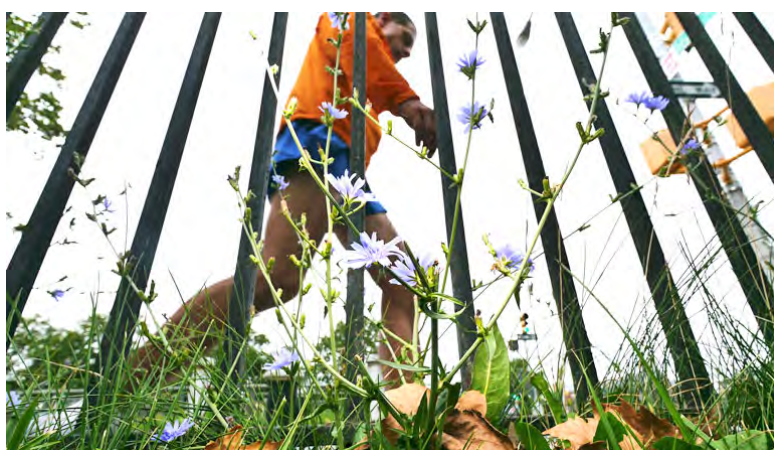
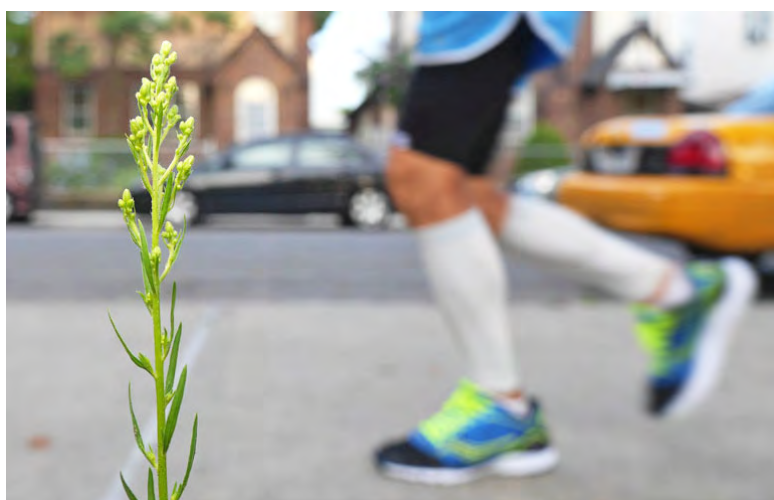


Scenes around
 the Course ...
 nature is there if you
 look hard enough

(all photos by Utpal)

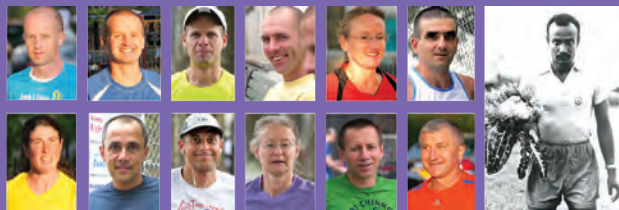


Did you know?
There are more great photos
and recorded interviews
with the runners on the
web version of these pages!



A view of the 17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Every Day

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

26 July 2013 (morning)

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

I know that the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race inspires many people around the world. Aside from those living in the neighborhood, there are a few who are within commuting range of Queens and make their regular treks out to the Race. But many, many others live too far away to come and experience it in person.

For those people, the only way to connect to the immensity of the Race is to somehow weave together all the little fragments of information — the bits of data and the frozen images — into

something that becomes real and not just an abstract, meaningless event taking place in New York.

Many form an inner connection with the Race's powerful and sacred message of self-transcendence. It is a connection that does not require a plane ride; a car full of gas; or a good pair of running shoes. It requires only an open mind and a receptive heart — and that most incomprehensible and yet necessary thing — a yearning for perfection.

Every day the Race receives mail from its friends and admirers. Sahishnu showed me a letter from Victor in Tokyo, which is just about as far away from New York as it is possible to be. Victor is a runner who is trying to become a better runner. He wanted to let the runners here know that at the end of June he ran up Mount Fuji. It was an act which was — for him and the thousands who have also done it (though perhaps at a slower pace than

Victor) — a pilgrimage. A pilgrimage that has been tradition for over a 1,000 years.

Victor writes, "The 3,100 Mile Race is also clearly much more than just a very, very long race. The sacredness and spirituality of what you are all doing was an inspiration while I was running up Mt. Fuji, it's an inspiration during my normal every day runs, and it's a real inspiration, not just in running but in every day life, too. So I offer my gratitude to you for the inspiration your effort gives us, and everyone from Tokyo wishes you the best."

My Lord,

You want me to run every day.

Do You ever run?

"My child,

I run not only every day,

But also at every moment.

Do you know why?

I run constantly

From one end of My Creation

To the other end.

If I do not run ceaselessly,

My Creation will become inactive,

Inert and uselessly idle.

At every moment I run

To awaken and energise

My entire Creation."

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"My Race-Prayers" (Agni Press, 2006)

Day 41

Brilliance

By Sahishnu, 26 July 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

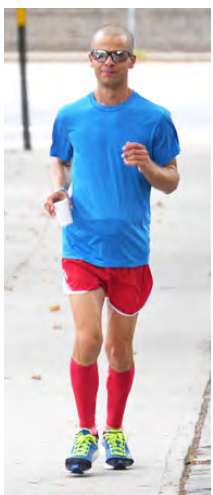
After 41 days of struggle with the elements, super high mileage on the legs, doubts and fears, Atmavir Spacil looks poised to get this horse in the barn. Mr. Spacil took day honors with 69.6 miles and was as smooth as silk on the tough concrete surface. With only 420 miles to go he is poised to finish on Friday of next week as his lead continues to widen. Pranjali Milovnik shuffled into fourth place with a routine 61 miles. He is aiming for his ninth straight finish. Five of the dozen topped 60 miles as the overall fatigue level is wearing on everyone. Their cheerful spirit, determination and inner strength are keeping them moving forward as the days wind down. Eleven days remain. Keep it going, great souls all.



Sri Chinmoy on his final lap of the 47-Mile Race in 1980



A trail of pilgrims at Mt. Fuji



Atmavir



Baladev



Pratibha tending the garden she planted for the runners

"Everything that happens here is 100% God's Will." Baladev feels very strongly about this and wants to share it with me. "When a runner has an injury or some bad thing, everything is God's Will. It is not good and bad — everything is experience." He adds, "We have the highest protection here. Of course, we must pray for this protection."

"When something happens we must offer gratitude because the Supreme is using us for this experience. " Baladev says, "I think it is funny for others who are not here. Because they think this happens or that happens: this is bad and this is good."

Surasa comments about the unusually cool weather, "it is a very strange feeling — to run and be dry. For the past 40 days here we have been sweating. This is the first day that we have not suffered from this kind of thing".

*If you are determined to run every day
An unfaltering life-race,
Then soulfully multiply
Your heart's mounting flames.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-
Plants, Part 146" (Agni Press, 1991)



Gannika and Surasa recite today's prayer



Mahatapa keeping the board up to date



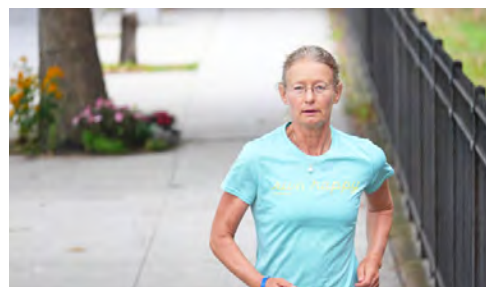
Gannika and Surasa recite today's prayer



Nipura and new friend



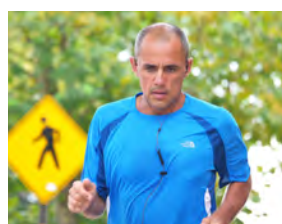
Rupantar plays with an app that translates



Surasa



Sopan hears "Bulgarians are good runners"



Sarvagata



Some happy tunes