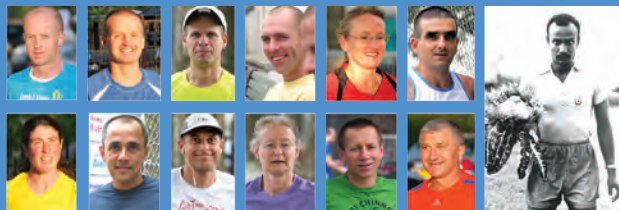


A view of the
17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race

June 16 – August 7, 2013

Excerpted from
[http://3100.srichinmoyraces.org/
history-3100-mile-race](http://3100.srichinmoyraces.org/history-3100-mile-race)

*Please visit the website for the "roots" and more
history of the Race*

The Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team is proud to offer the Seventeenth Annual Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. In this grand test of endurance and survival, a small group of athletes attempt to negotiate 5,649 laps of a .5488 of a mile course (883 meters) in the timespan of 52 days — an amazing challenge. This is the longest certified footrace in the world; runners must average 59.62 miles per day to finish within the 52-day limit. The serious athlete must have tremendous courage, physical stamina, concentration and the capacity to endure fatigue, boredom and minor injuries. The predecessor of this very race was the 2,700 Mile Race (held in 1996), in which five intrepid runners finished the distance well within the 47-day time limit. In 1997, Sri Chinmoy, race founder, upped the distance to 3,100 miles. Two runners finished the inaugural 3,100 Mile race in less than 51 days, showing that athletes indeed believed in self-transcendence.

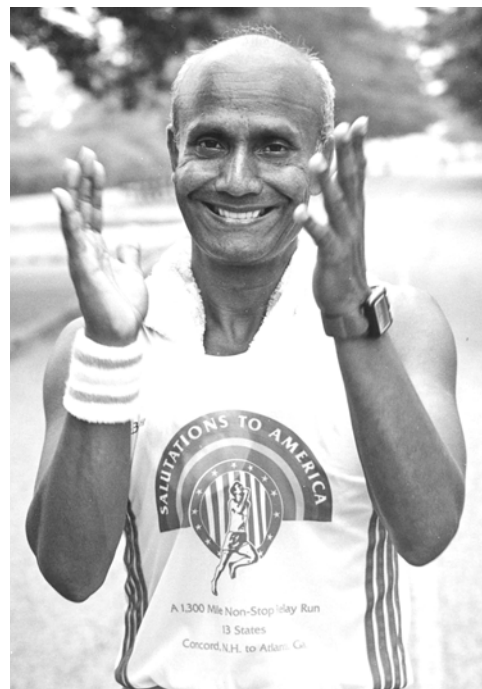
The cornerstone of Sri Chinmoy's philosophy is the expression of self-transcendence — going beyond personal limits and reaching new levels of inner and



outer perfection. Whether it is in the athletic world or any endeavor, for someone to transcend his previous achievements is inner progress and an expression of a new determination, which can only bring us closer to our destined goal — real satisfaction. We offer our best wishes to all the seeker-runners who share a dream of going where few have ever gone. The seventeenth running of this 3,100 Mile Race will be testament to the new horizons of the running world, as 12 runners will toe the line. This is another step is mankind's inevitable progression, according to the remarkable vision of Sri Chinmoy:

*"Run and Become.
Become and Run.*

*Run to succeed in the outer world.
Become to proceed in the inner world."*



Sri Chinmoy

Our Race-director, Rupantar, says ...

Wow! Has it already been 17 years since the first Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race? I do not think I have missed more than a couple of the 6 a.m. starts in all those years, and yet, it still amazes me, that these pioneers (as Sri Chinmoy calls them) still make it to the start every day by 6 a.m., in spite of the pain and lack of sleep: and they do it with cheerfulness and a smiling face. I think those of us who have had the privilege to help at the race come away with a real sense of why Sri Chinmoy loved this race so much: it truly manifests what self-transcendence is all about.

Runners, 2013 Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Ashprihanal Aalto, 42, Helsinki, Finland

One of the world's best endurance runners, Ashprihanal has run 23 multi-days in the last 16 years. He is an eleven-time finisher of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race, finishing in first place seven times and is one of only three men ever to average 70 miles a day for the 3,100 mile distance. Ashprihanal's best time is 43 days+04:26:32, averaging 71.78 miles (115.53 km) per day. He is ranked 2nd all-time in the Race.



Sarvagata Ukrainskyi, 40, Berdansk, Ukraine

Last year, Sarvagata finished second place in 46 days+03:42:17. In 2011, in his first attempt at 3,100 miles Sarvagata emerged victorious in 44 days+13:38:52, averaging 69.56 miles (111.96 km) per day, which is the fastest first-time performance. He has been running 11 years, with eight multi-day races completed. He is ranked 5th all-time in the 3,100 Mile Race.



Atmavir Spacil, 35, Zlin, Czech Republic

Atmavir has run 13 multi-day races with six finishes in the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race, including his personal best in 2009 of 45 days+03:44:21 in 2009. From his first time finishing in 2007 he improved by over seven days. He is ranked 7th all-time in the Race.



Pranjal Milovnik, 41, Bratislava, Slovakia

A multi-day race veteran, Pranjal has run the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race eight times. His best was in 2010 with a time of 47 days+04:19:49 (65.68 miles/105.72 km per day). In 2005, he completed his first 3,100 Mile Race in 59 days+12:20:48. Since that year he has improved by over 12 days, an amazing result. He is ranked 12th all-time in the Race.



Ananda-Lahari Zuscin, 37, Kosice, Slovakia

Ananda-Lahari is a five-time finisher of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race, with a best of 49 days+14:25:37. Just six weeks prior to the beginning of this year's race he finished 2nd place in the Self-Transcendence Ten Day Race with 662 miles. This will be his 12th multi-day race and eighth attempt at 3,100 miles. He ranks 19th all-time in the Race.



Sopian Tsekov, 32, Sofia, Bulgaria

Bulgaria's finest multi-day race specialist, Sopian was the youngest ever to complete 3,100 miles in 2005 at 24 years of age. He has a best of 50 days+13:48:57. He has two finishes to his credit and is ranked 24th all-time in the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race.



Vasu Duzhiy, 48, St. Petersburg, Russia

In the summer of 2012 Vasu finished an inspiring double event: in April he finished second place in the Self-Transcendence Ten Day Race (713 miles) and then finished the 3,100 Mile Race in 51 days+10:47:39. He is the only Russian to ever complete 3,100 miles. He ranks 26th all-time in the Race.



Surasa Mairer, 55, Vienna, Austria

In 2011, in her second attempt, Surasa completed the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race in 53 days+15:54:25. She is only the second woman ever to complete the 3,100 Mile Race. She holds the women's world record for 1,000km, 700 miles and 1,300 miles and has never lost to another woman in her multi-day racing career. She is ranked 29th all-time in the Race.



Baladev P. Saraz, 37, Slovakia

This will be Baladev's fifth attempt at 3,100 miles. In 2009, he completed the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race in 54 days+14:26:40. In 10 years of running he has completed eight multi-days and numerous ultras. In April, he competed in the Six Day Race and completed 356 miles. He is ranked 31st all-time in the 3,100 Mile Race.



Yuri Trostenyuk, 49, Vinnitsa, Ukraine

This will be Yuri's first attempt at the 3,100 mile distance. Yuri is a four-time winner of the Self-Transcendence Ten Day Race, with a best in 2012 of 731 miles. He has been running 14 years and has completed seven multi-days, including 455 miles for six days. He says he has been dreaming of participating in this race for years.



Sarah Barnett, 37, Adelaide, Australia

This will be Sarah's first attempt at the 3,100 mile distance. She won the Self-Transcendence Ten Day Race in 2012 with 697 miles (1,122 km). She has won multi-day races in Greece, Sweden, Monaco and the USA and has steadily built her mileage up in anticipation of this race.

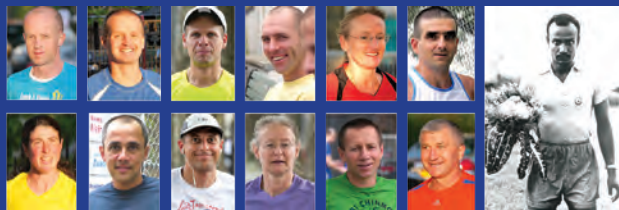


Nidhruvi Zimmerman, 47, Vienna, Austria

This will be Nidhruvi's first attempt at the 3,100 mile distance. As a pioneer of women's multi-day running, Nidhruvi ran eight multi-day races between 1995 and 2002. Some of her best are a 448 mile-six day split in a longer race; 1,000 miles in 14 days+22 hours in 1997. She ran the Self-Transcendence 1,300 Mile Race four times and in 2000 she placed first for women in 18 days+20 hours. Last year she ran 607 miles in the Ten Day Race.

A view of the 17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Miracles Large and Small

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

15 June 2013

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

The subject of miracles is not one that Sri Chinmoy would often speak of. His path was and is not about swaying people with spectacular showy phenomena. Sri Chinmoy wanted to inspire people from within and was not interested in tricks that would only entertain the mind but briefly. However, for anyone who spent any length of time with him, it was obvious that on a regular basis many events took place in and around him that were simply miraculous. And yet in so many ways we accepted these things so readily because he himself simply did not believe in or accept that anything was impossible. Furthermore,

there was no task that was too difficult to accomplish if one simply accepted the philosophy of 'never give up'.

Sri Chinmoy first inaugurated the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race in 1997. From its inception, until even today, it continues to be an athletic challenge of such staggering immensity and difficulty that it is almost incomprehensible that anyone could even complete the distance, let alone attract 12 runners — as it has in this its 17th year. No matter if you have seen it up close or on the internet from the other side of the world, this race can never be fully experienced or understood unless you are one of the runners.

Self-transcendence occurs in each step they take in this seemingly impossible journey of 3,100 miles. Yet for those of us who watch this great miracle unfold we can still allow it to uplift us and inspire

our own lives in ways that we could not have dreamt were even possible.

Run not after miracles!

All miracles

Are shockingly fragile.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-
Plants, Part 82" (Agni Press, 1984)

The day before the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race begins, the runners, race directors and helpers gather for a meeting. Rupantar, a race director, reminds the group that Sri Chinmoy "really, really loved the Race. It embodies his philosophy. He got so much inspiration from the Race."



The day before the 2013 edition of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. Most of the runners gather and hold the inevitable banner of victory.



Sri Chinmoy during his long-distance running days

Photo by Bhashwar 1979

2013 Runners, alphabetical listing

	Name	Age	Country	Best Finish	Number of Finishes	All-Time Rank
1.	Ananda-Lahari Zuscin	37	Kosice, Slovakia	49days+14_25:37	5	19th
2.	Ashprihanal Aalto	42	Helsinki, Finland	43days+04:26:32	11	2nd
3.	Atmavir Spacil	34	Zlin, Czech Republic	45days+03:44:21	6	7th
4.	Baladev Saraz	36	Slovakia	54days+14:26:40	1	30th
5.	Nidhruvi Zimmerman (female)	47	Vienna, Austria	first attempt	--	--
6.	Pranjal Milovnik	40	Bratislava, Slovakia	47days+04:19:49	8	12th
7.	Sarah Barnett (female)	37	Adelaide, Australia	first attempt	--	--
8.	Sarvagata Ukrainskyi	39	Berdansk, Ukraine	44days+13:38:52	2	5th
9.	Sopan Tsekov	31	Sofia, Bulgaria	50days+13:48:57	2	24th
10.	Surasa Mairer (female)	55	Vienna, Austria	53days+15:54:25	1	29th
11.	Vasu Duzhiy	47	St. Petersburg, Russia	51days+10:47:39	1	26th
12.	Yuri Trostenyuk	49	Vinnitsa, Ukraine	first attempt	--	--



Sri Chinmoy, in his youth in India, at an award ceremony for a sporting event.

Race directors Rupantar, Sahishnu, Bipin and Sandhani brief the runners and helpers.

Below, the runners are joined by some of the helpers who will be dedicating their summer to the longest certified footrace in the world (Certificate Code: NY12013JG).





Surasa (above) challenges the distance for the third time, she is joined this year by two other women, Nidhruvi and Sarah.



Asked what type of help was needed for the Race, Rupantar responded that aside from financial help "which we always need" that "we could always use more help. The more people who come out, the better." He says that the biggest need "is counting. Counting is very important." He adds that this year they have a good medical team and cooking crew.

Even though we have talked many times during the Self-Transcendence Six and Ten Day Races I cannot recall ever interviewing Australian Sarah Barnett while she was seated. "I am definitely happier when I am moving." Sarah says, then laughing adds, "It is also nice to relax at the end of the day too." Clearly, she hopes to make the most of the nighttime break in the Race.

Sarah's appearance at this year's 3,100 Mile Race is something she has wanted to do for many years and so just being here is something of a dream for her. Besides the Six and Ten Day Races in New York she has also competed in many other very prestigious multi-day races around the world. She says of this Race, "It is definitely way beyond anything I have ever done in terms of miles and time out on the course."

Sarah first got introduced to multi-day races about 15

years ago when she came to help a runner in the Self-Transcendence 1,000 Mile Race. She laughs, "I wasn't a very good helper. I think I am a better runner."

"I think as soon as you come to one of these races you feel how special it is. You notice how the runners are getting through the difficult periods. You sense that

it is very spiritually awakening for the runners and you just want to be part of it."

Sarah recently struggled with a foot injury which, she describes, as a very first in her long running career. "This is a new thing for me to see if I can run through pain. I have never had to do this in the eight years of running multi-days. I have had X-rays and I have a heel

spur and a tear in the fascia under the foot and every step is quite painful. I am desperately trying to find some shoes that will cushion it enough. I am just trying to meditate as much as I can and ask for some help."

This leads to the obvious question of why Sarah has come here at all with such a glaring physical problem. "Ultimately I felt I would be more sad sitting at home than actually coming and having a go at it. At least I can start. If I get through a few days or even a week, at least I have tried." She adds with a laugh, "I think sitting home would be even more depressing. So I think I am going to try it."

I am curious as to how Sarah sees the Race as a whole. She says it is not just the mileage — but that you are out there for two months. She marvels how just being in New York that special things happened "I went into Manhattan last night and suddenly I ran into two of the other runners. Out of the whole city of New York I just ran into Ashprihanal and Sapan. So we all went and tried on shoes for about two hours. It sort of feels like a family."

For the first time in the 3,100 Mile Race history there are three female athletes running at the same time. Sarah says, "I think it helps. I feel we are representing women. I think it is really positive and I am sure we will help each other get inspiration. I am like the little baby. The other two girls are a lot more experienced. I think it will be awesome, actually." She adds, "My only aim is to finish. I can't expect anything more. Even if I have to go to midnight each night and walk. This is my only goal."

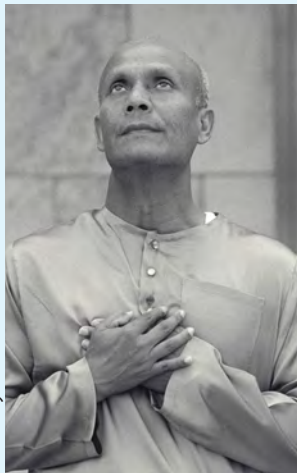


(Above, clockwise) Atmavir, Baladev, Sarvagata, Ananda-Lahari, Vasu and Yuri enjoy a relaxed, happy afternoon before the Race begins the next morning. Sapan, Pranjal and Ashprihanal managed to avoid the camera today.



*The miracle of miracles –
A tiny, feeble man
Embodies God-Life.
In him has ceased
The wild music
Of ignorance-life.*

— Sri Chinmoy,
excerpt from
"A Soulful Cry Versus A Fruitful Smile",
(Agni Press, 1977)



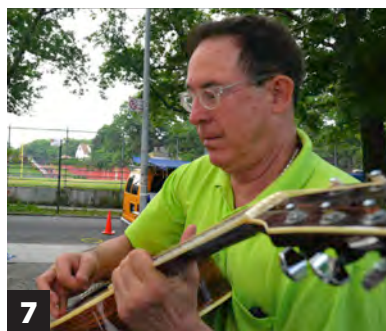
Question: When we attain a divine consciousness, is it better to say that the divine consciousness attains us or that we attain it?

Sri Chinmoy: When we attain the divine consciousness, it attains us and we also attain it. There is a meeting place where the two come together. Reality is all-pervading. Suppose right now we are on the first floor; this is our reality. God, who embodies the universal Consciousness, is on the third floor. So God comes down to the second floor with His Compassion and we go up to the second floor with our intense cry to attain oneness with His Consciousness. God embodies the highest divine Consciousness and He also

embodies our inner cry. So God, who is within us in the form of our inner cry, carries us to the second floor; and God, who is outside us in the form of the infinite divine Consciousness, comes down to the second floor. God climbs up with us and God climbs down with the divine Consciousness. When both the seeker and God arrive at a particular place, the seeker enters into the divine Consciousness and the divine Consciousness enters into the seeker. With our personal effort and God's Grace we go up and with His Compassion and Love God comes down.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from "Canada Aspires, Canada Receives, Canada Achieves Part 1"

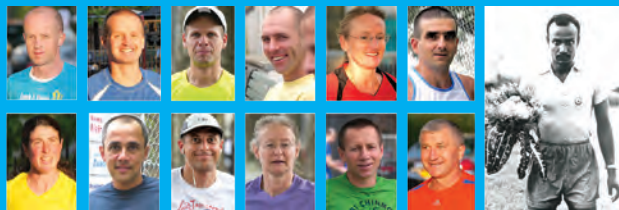
Some of the Race's service heroes: (1) Medur shows his one-ness; (2) Rupantar the film maker (view at <http://3100.srichinmoyraces.org>); (3) Karnayati removes litter from the course; (4) two enthusiastic volunteers from Pennsylvania talk with Sahishnu; (5) Sangit Surabhi performs for the runners; (6) Jagadata, part of the crew; (7) Kodanda plays guitar for the runners; (8) Nidhrui arrives with two valiant helpers; (9) Galya, who ran the Race in 2009 and 2010, chats with Vasu and Sarvagata; (10) sweeping debris from the Course.



A view of the

17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



The Divine Journey

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

16 June 2013 (A.M.)

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

Each year at the start of the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race I experience a profound moment of realization. I am but a tiny part of this great event and yet each and every year when I am there, doing what I do, I feel myself become more alive inside. It is almost as though up until then I have been lost in some unconscious slumber and that simply by being on the Race Course I am catapulted into wakefulness. I sense a new awareness, not just within myself but also the world around becomes imbued with a radiance and glow that I had somehow not been aware of up

until then. Many of the helpers on the Race Course this morning also confirmed the sense of brightness and newness and clarity they experienced as well.

At the starting line on this first day, Sahishnu says "We dedicate this Race to the founder of the Marathon Team and the founder of this Race, the visionary of the Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team and that would be Sri Chinmoy himself." He spoke of the commitment of the Marathon Team and said it is "because of you runners. Your determination, your perseverance, your



A moment before the beginning of Day One

dedication on the road, after years and years of training. Years and years of racing and years and years of discovering yourself. That is what will bring you to the goal."

Ashprihanal, who has spent eleven summers here running the Race — winning it seven times — decided not to run last year. He says, "I turned into a rock climber last year. I went to Austria to do a series of climbing and then to Peru

Day 1

The Race Begins, Again ...

By Sahishnu, www.3100.ws/blog

At precisely 6:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time in New York on Sunday June 16, twelve runners moved away from the starting line on a journey of millions of steps, thousands of mood swings and dozens of dreams dancing in their minds and hearts. The world's longest footrace that occurs annually in a quiet Queens neighborhood, the Self-Transcendence 3100 Mile Race began its 52 day sojourn around a .5488 of a mile (883 meters) side-walk course. The event started in 1997 by Guru Sri Chinmoy (1931-2007) attracts the finest super-long distance specialist to attempt a baffling 18 hours a day of running (there is a 6-hour curfew at midnight). Runners must maintain an average of nearly 60 miles per day in order to finish within the time limit. Vasu Duzhiy from Russia reached 79.02 miles just before midnight to garner Day 1 honors. He was closely followed by veterans Pranjal Milovnik (Slovakia) with 76 miles, and Atmavir Spacil (Czech Republic) with 75 miles. Nidhrui Zimmerman from Austria led her compatriot Surasa Mairer by one lap (69.14 miles to 68.6) to pace the large women's field (3 runners). All the runners reached over 62 miles on the first day, so hope is blooming early. Stay tuned.

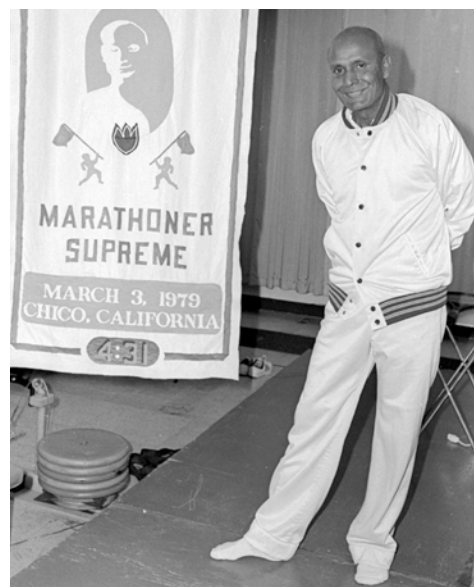


Photo by Bhushwar 1979

Sri Chinmoy ran his first marathon in Chico, California on 3 March, 1979 in a time of 4:31:34

to do some mountaineering." He spoke of needing a "change". When asked if there are any similarities between rock climbing and running he says that the surfaces of both sports are equally hard. "You have to transcend yourself. I am sure there are many things in common."

He has run around this block more than 62,000 times over more than a decade of running here. At the start this morning, Ashprihanal says, "I wasn't afraid, I wasn't anxious, there is not much stress in this Race anymore. You know that you have done it before. You know what to expect. It is very good."

* * *

Several years ago, Nidhruvi was running in the Father's Day Marathon which was taking place just across the street from the 3,100 Mile Race. When she was asked at the time whether she was running the whole Marathon she said, "I don't know. Actually, I planned just half because I am quite injured I haven't been running. I haven't practiced long distance for a few years."

Her story is very much a dream come true. For, as of this morning, she is now participating in a Race she has wanted to run for a long time. In 2012, she ran in the Self-Transcendence Six and Ten Day Race and did extremely well. "That was my big comeback." As for being part of the 3,100 Mile Race, Nidhruvi says, "I never, never, lost sight of it. To run this Race was always my dream, all these years. And even though I had injuries and there were times when I thought that maybe I was not supposed to do it. But I had it always in my heart. It always came back to me again and again. So I never really gave up. Then I thought, If I really want to do it, I am getting older and older. I don't want to start the Race when I am 50 (she is 47). I like to be fast in everything. So I wanted to do it as soon as possible."

Nidhruvi describes that how by running the Six and Ten Day Race last year in Flushing Meadow showed if she had the capacity to run the 3,100. "I ran the Ten Day Race and even though there were difficulties, I was very happy. It



Ashprihanal



Nidhruvi

showed me definitely that I could go to the start of the 3,100 Mile Race. It gave me a lot of confidence." She adds that during that Race "I also had a very special dream" that gave her confidence as well. During the race she had problems but she says that she ran easy and was cheerful. "I was so happy it was a great race. That is why I am here today."

She is also modest about her participation here this year. She feels that she is not as fit as she would like but feels inwardly that being here for the Race is the right thing for her to do. "I am so grateful."

* * *

"I feel spiritually with the ideas of Sri Chinmoy, that humans can transcend their limits." said the Consul General of Bangladesh, Monirul Islam, who made a brief visit to the Race this morning with his family. "Humans are humans, they are not limited by any religion, race, culture, or country, or state, what ever it is. We are unlimited. What Sri Chinmoy believed in, I do too. That brought me here, and I felt that I should be with all of you."

He is only here for a brief time and the Race has only begun so I ask him if it is possible at this point to grasp what



Mr. Monirul Islam (right), Consul General of Bangladesh with Khourshedul.



he sees happening here. "It is a matter of feelings — not a matter of understanding. If we look with our material eye we don't understand. We have to see it with our inner eye. What it is and why they are here. Then we feel their feelings. They want to have oneness with one idea, which is universal, eternal, and endless. That is why they are here. They want to be united with that endless thing. So I feel like that. They are running to meet the endless thing. And that endless thing is God, who we came from and to whom we shall return. Our destination and our origin, I believe, are the same. So they are running for that destination."

The divine journey

*Is the continuous, eternal journey
That is not only nearing God-Reality
But is actually bringing God-Reality
To itself.*

*And this journey is not only the soul's
Continuous preparation*

*In us,
But also the soul's full blossoming
For us.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from "Silence-Seed And Sound-Fruit" (Agni Press, 1975)

A view of the 17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Our Journey's Goal

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

17 June 2013 (A.M.)

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

*If our journey's goal is success,
Then we will be totally fooled.
If our journey's goal is progress,
Then God will be proud of us
And we shall be proud of ourselves.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-
Plants, Part 267" (Agni Press, 1998)

Vasu set the pace yesterday on Day 1, something he also did last year when he ran the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race for the first time.

Vasu tells me some of his experiences after last year's Race, "I have a job in a big factory and my boss was surprised [upon hearing about the Race]. Some friends at work contacted newspapers and they had interviews with me. Two newspapers printed articles, with many photos from the Race."

He continues and says that once he returned home "For three months I didn't run. I was strong after the Race and was able to work again after two days. But Dr. Kumar advised me not to run for three months." He says that it was after this period that he visited Moscow from his home in St Petersburg and was able to run for 3 hours. From then on, he was able to resume his training. He says that even last year he



Sri Chinmoy training

Photo by Bhashwar 1979

was already thinking of coming again to run this year. "Sahishnu inspired me that I should run this race ten more times. I hope to do it."

Last year, Vasu had a very bad blister on his foot so I ask him whether he can avoid such injuries this time. He laughs and says, "I hope, but I don't know. Yesterday I had a little problem but I treated it and hope it will be better."

Day 2

A Little Heat, A Lot of Heart

By Sahishnu, 17 June 2013 (evening)
www.3100.ws/blog

A deceptively warm day presented the first test for the runners today, as the euphoria of a new race, a new adventure started to wear off a little and physical reality stared everyone in the face. Atmavir Spacil from Czech Republic cruised to a 72.44 mile day to climb within three laps of leader Vasu Duzhiy. The Russian also ran 70.24 miles to hold first place at this early juncture. A few of the veterans experienced sore legs and queasy stomachs throughout the day as the mercury approached the high 80s. Austrian Surasa Mairer wasted no time in reclaiming the women's top spot with a 65.85 mile day. First-timer Yuri Trostenyuk of Ukraine moved into third position overall with a solid 68.05 mile effort. Late evening breezes cooled the area as thunder showers are expected for the next 24 hours.



A few hours into Day 2 at the Race, Ananda-Lahari strides past the mileage board



Sarah performs the task of taping her foot

Sarah started the Race with a foot injury and says it troubled her most of the day. However, she says optimistically, that it became better around 9 or 10 o'clock at night, "So at least I got a few nice hours in. It is total grace because I think medical science would say it is not possible to run on an injured foot all day and then suddenly at 10 o'clock be okay. So it is all an experience of grace."

Nonetheless, Sarah continues, "I have to be careful with it. I have to keep taping it up. Arpan showed me a really good taping method. I just need to protect it a lot. I think it is going to be okay." Despite all this, she makes it clear that

she is thrilled to be here and says, "The race is just awesome."

Pranjal finished 76 miles on his first day and when I ask him about it he tells me that he did not even notice his mileage.

"I feel that my muscles are okay. I don't have any problems with my bones or anything, or blisters so far."

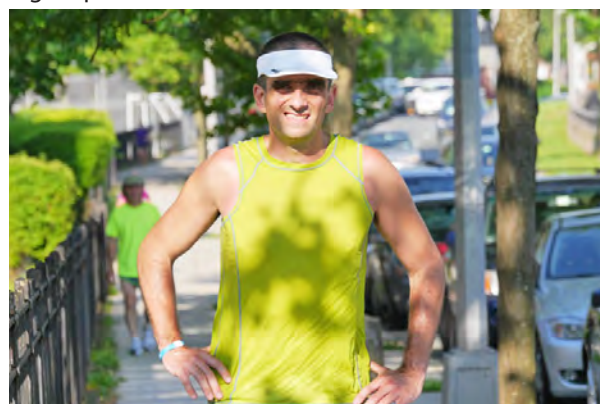
Noting that this is his ninth year running the Race, Pranjal says, "Usually the first few days your body starts to adapt to this rhythm and sometimes it is harder."

He tells me that something happened to him yesterday that never happened before. He says that he threw up, which he amusingly called a 'Grahak.' Nicknaming it after his fellow 3,100 mile runner and friend from Australia who, in Pranjal's mind at least, did this quite often during last year's race. "He was a master of that."

He says it happened to him around 8 o'clock last night. It slowed him down for a while, then he felt a little bit better. "But I lost a lot of energy because I couldn't digest. I got sleepy. By 11 pm I started to feel a little bit better. Still even now I feel that it is not all okay. It is probably because of the heat. I was sweating a lot and I was drinking. It is quite humid now but otherwise it is not bad."

*My sweet Lord,
Something inside me is making me feel
That You are my journey's start
And You are my journey's only Goal.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from "Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 93"
(Agni Press, 1983)



Pranjal

The bright bell tone of the singing bowl radiates outward like a warm gentle breeze. Its sound is light, clear, and soothing. Its music reaches well beyond your ear and then on into some internal place — calm, deep and still within the listener. Utsahi smiles as he gently stirs his wooden mallet in a methodical even tempo around and around the worn outer rim of the bowl. Something many other hands have probably done for more than a century. Today the listeners are the runners who slip by and are only briefly caught up in its spell.

It gleams as it rests in the palm of Utsahi's left hand. To get it to sing is not difficult but one's touch has to be precise.

Utsahi says of the bowl, "It was made with a lot of care. You can see all the little marks that the artisan put on it just to show that he loves the bowl. And he created a sound that is unique in this world. This

sound you cannot hear anywhere else. Only *this* bowl will create *this* sound. It is like our souls. Each of our souls has a sound and we have to make it play."

"All singing bowls are unique and all the runners are unique as well. And being unique we all have to express what we are here for — our journey's goal. The bowl wants to sing. The runners want to run. The bowls are happy when they play their tunes that they have been made to play. And the artisan, God, has made them special, with special ingredients. There are between 7 and 10 different metals in this bowl. So we are all like that. We each have special ingredients that we



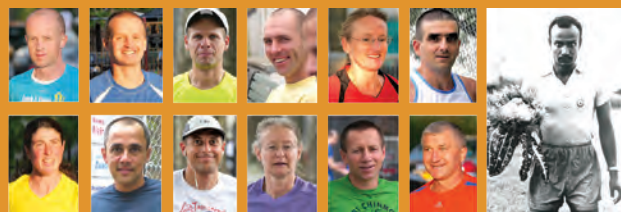
Utsahi makes a bowl sing as Atmavir runs by

are made of. And when we do what we are supposed to do, we are happy."

Utsahi continued, "When the runners do what they are called to do, they are happy. So maybe there is a relationship between the race and the bowls."

A view of the 17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



You Must Be Very Strong

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

18 June 2013 (A.M.)

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

In 2010, when Surasa arrived in America she was asked by the Immigration officer what was the purpose of her visit. She told the officer that she had come to run the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race and would spend every day that summer running. He was, of course, surprised and said, "you must be very strong." Surasa a veteran of many, many multi-day races remembers that she was a bit shocked by his words. For she did not think of herself as strong or particularly special. Perhaps there was part of her that simply thought that it wasn't such a miraculous thing for one to run 3,100 miles. For she simply felt so strongly deep within herself that this was the thing she was supposed to do and that was that.

During that Race Surasa had a bad case of shin splints and within the

first few weeks it became clear that her chances of making the full distance before the cut-off had slipped away. Time, always a relentless adversary, would not surrender to her dreams.

Where so many would crumple under the burden, Surasa prevailed. She was so determined to do her best that she persevered, despite the pain, and finished that year with 2,700 miles.

In 2011, she returned to the Race and had no such problems or injuries. Surasa appeared to run efficiently and with regimented precision. Finishing the race in an excellent time seemed to be well within her grasp. Then on her 47th day of running, with just 320 miles left to go, her right calf was struck by a pain of such severity she could not move forward even one step. This would break the spirit of most of us. Snatch away all one's hope and extinguish the last bright beams of joy and then simply toss what remains into an abyss of despair. But this

is where Surasa did not go, nor did she ponder this option for even a moment. The next day she returned to the course and somehow completed a total of 12.8 miles and the day after that she completed nearly 30 miles. Each step hurt, each mile she completed was one more hard-fought victory of her inner self against the limitations of her body. The following days she managed to increase her miles and on the final night of the Race — with just a couple of hours to spare — she crossed the finish line triumphant.

Surasa this summer will be running — and only running — so if, per chance, you meet that same immigration officer who asked her if she was strong, you can answer for her.

Day 3

Rounding Into Form

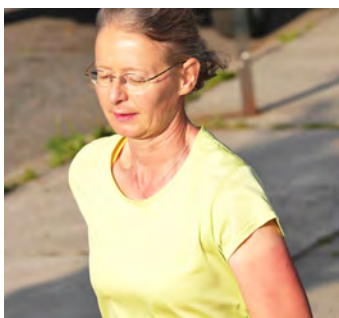
By Sahishnu, 18 June 2013 (evening)

www.3100.ws/blog

As the race progresses the runners always develop a sense of fitness and the effort that mark their faces recede and their smiles increase. Atmavir Spacil was smiling today as he led the group with 70.24 miles, his third venture past seventy in as many days. Both he and Vasu Duzhiy have the exact lap total of 397. Surasa Mairer climbed into fourth place overall with a 63.66 mile day. Also showing signs of true form was perennial favorite Ashprihanal Aalto — the Flying Finn reached 68 miles today. Another runner to watch is first timer Yuri Trostenyuk of Ukraine, who reached 66.9 miles to move into third overall. All 12 runners are averaging at least 61 miles per day. There is room for improvement too, regardless of foul weather or soaring temps. But with three moderate days in the forecast good running should be the norm and plenty of miles, too. Stay tuned.



A moment of meditation at the starting line on Day 3 prepares the team for the day of running.



Surasa runs on and on ; Kagni and Niharika, two friends from Finland give support to Ashprihanal; Pedro sets up the drink table while Roxy cheers the runners on ("Ruff, ruff, ruff for the whole team!")



*Where the heart's eagerness
Is strong, very strong,
Life's obstacles
Are weak, very weak.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from "

*Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees,
Part 5" (Agni Press, 1998)*

Although Surasa did not run the 3,100 Mile Race last year because of an injury she says that she never thought that the 2011 was the final time she would enter this race. "The whole of last year I was thinking of doing it again, hoping and trying to get fit." But, Surasa adds, "If I had the feeling that my body is not strong enough or if the injury is not really healed then, of course, I would not come."

As for what compels Surasa to run the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile

Race, she says, "It is just inspiration from inside. Whenever I think about the race I get such happiness so then I want to do it. I am just happy and grateful to be able to do it again."

* * *

"It is pretty amazing that he is here and we are very proud of him." Both Kagni and Niharika from Finland are here at the Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. They are getting a chance to enjoy the event and support their fellow countryman, Ashprihanal, as he runs this Race for his 12th time.

Ashprihanal ran 51 miles (down from 74.64 the previous day) yesterday seemingly not quite into the flow of the race just yet. I ask Niharika, who is a physical therapist, why she thinks that might be. "Last year he did not run and has been

doing lots of climbing. I told him that the muscles are doing totally different work when climbing, even though you are training. It is good, but you need to run too." She continues, "It just takes time for your body to get adjusted to running. He was having trouble running and felt as though [his legs] were kind of stuck. He had a massage yesterday and now he can run. Now the body starts to get used to this." She adds that the hot weather is another factor.

When Kagni is asked what is like to be on the Race Course she says, "the energy is nice. There is a nice inspiration from the runners. They transcend themselves and every lap is different. Ashprihanal tells us he goes through a lot of things. And he is always cheerful. It makes him very, very happy when he is able to run." Niharika adds, "this is like self-transcendence in reality. It is not only a word. Here you see it every lap and for the whole race. It is amazing."

*My strong, very strong
And extremely strong heart-muscles
I have developed
From my constant soul-obedience.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"My Christmas-New Year-Vacation
Aspiration-Prayers, Part 3"

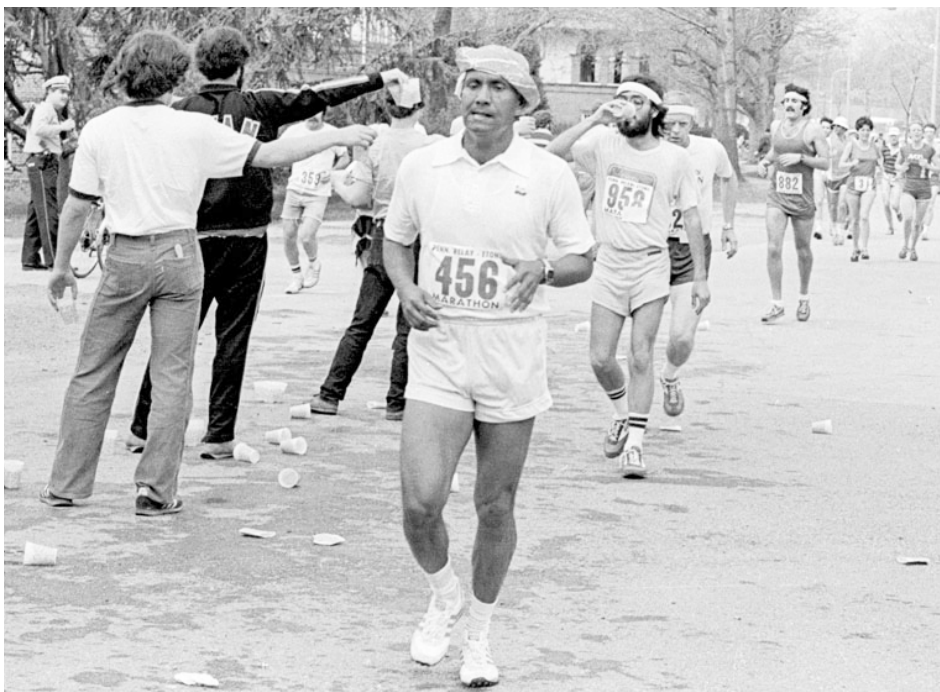
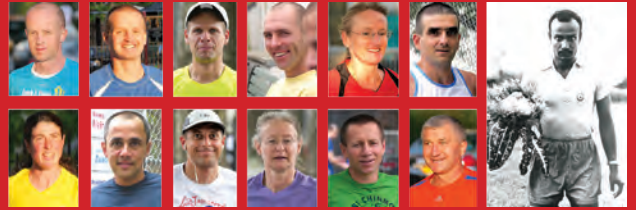


Photo by Bhashwar 1979

Sri Chinmoy completed 241 races, including 22 marathons and 5 ultramarathons. He began long-distance running in 1978 at the age of 46.

A view of the 17th Annual

Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race



Searching For God Within

By Utpal

<http://perfectionjourney.org>

19 June 2013 (A.M.)

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

"Today I had a very good meditation and I am very happy. It was a regular half-hour, but on the run. It was amazing, I never had it before." Sarvagata is still very much glowing from the experience. The morning is perfectly still and the dim, glistening brightness of dawn is now opening up to reveal a full-sun bright morning. I feel very much that I have somehow come along at just the moment when the door to his heart is wide open and I have stepped by chance into some sacred still place within him.

Sarvagata is well into his fourth day of running this year's Self-Transcendence 3,100 Mile Race. Soon he will complete his first 200 miles and perhaps by tomorrow he will complete 300 miles. In the long days ahead the digits beside his name on the mileage board will gradually increase. I suspect, however, that none of those statistics will mean as much to him as these precious moments of meditation.

Experiences that do not follow any measurable timetable seem both perfect and ironic at the same time. Perfect, in that runners like Sarvagata have come specifically to the Self-Transcendence Race to open a pathway to reveal the divine within

themselves. And yet it is an ironic undertaking as well — for this is not some remote, silent cave where the search for peace and transcendence is sought out. Instead it is in a sometime raucous, public place that these 12 runners have embarked upon one of the most difficult tasks in all creation.

This is the third summer Sarvagata has spent here in the quest for self-transcendence. In his first year he quickly moved into an almost continuous trance-like mode of running. Seemingly detached from the world around him and devoted fully to the road and task in front of him.

Quite often his face seemed twisted in a painful grimace but when asked about this, Sarvagata said it was not pain at all that sharpened the features of his face — instead it was that he was crying out for the Supreme, and for Him alone. Sarvagata ended up winning the Race that year.

Last year, the outer experience shifted dramatically. Sarvagata was not the lonely monk lost in his solo journey

Day 4

It's A Beautiful Day/Race/Life

By Sahishnu, 19 June 2013 (evening)
www.3100.ws/blog

With relatively cool, clear, spring-like weather, the entire field ran past at least 60 miles each for the second day in a row. Vasu Duzhiy just nipped Atmavir Spacil by one lap (71.89 to 71.34 miles) to claim day honors. They both have 289+ miles, a fine 72 miles per day average. Surasa Mairer maintained fourth place overall with another 63.6 mile effort (261.1 miles in 4 days). Yuri Trostenyuk from Ukraine also looks surprisingly well in third overall with 273.3 miles total.

I am a morning runner.
God gives me His Beauty.
I am a midday runner.
God gives me His Power.
I am an afternoon runner.
God gives me His Charm.
I am an evening runner.
God gives me His Peace.
I am a midnight runner.
God gives me His Pride.

— Sri Chinmoy
29 APRIL 2000
NEW YORK



A few runners along the Race Course in the bright morning even before rush hour traffic begins. The prayer that is posted on the fence at the Race this morning.



Sarvagata blending the inner and the outer. Sarvakamya offers a bright smile.



"This is my 12th year at the school." Yesterday Nilda, a teacher at the nearby school, donated some plants and flowers for the Race's garden and now enjoys seeing Parvati planting them. "They are beautiful, they make life more exciting."

into the beyond. He said that he found himself having to confront the world around him. For him, the Race became a blend of the inner truth that he sought and the outer reality that he could not escape from. Sarvagata no longer could simply exist in the tranquility and solitude of his inner self — instead he needed to accept and be part of the outer world in a way he had not been required to do during the previous year that he ran the Race.

Yet it was in this face-to-face experience with the world that Sarvagata gathered strength and a better understanding of how the outer and inner can and must exist simultaneously. He could still continue to search for God within, but he also had to accept that God had to be found and appreciated in the world around him as well.

He gently laughs as he talks about the meditation experience he has just had. He jokes, "It was so nice. You should try it."

When the Race began on Sunday it seemed to me that Sarvagata was not in his usual strong and rhythmical running form. He says that even today he is still adjusting to the Race. "I can't say that I am used to it yet. Yesterday I had a pretty tough day." Nevertheless, he feels strongly that he is being directed inwardly in just how and what to do out on the course — that he is a vessel and the Supreme is piloting him.

"My health and my consciousness — I think every ones — is being regulated by the Supreme. Even if somebody has an injury at the very beginning, it is for the best for that person. So I am trying not to worry about it. For the

moment I am happy with what I have. Which is a pretty rare thing for me. Usually I want to have more than I have. You know, more speed and something else."

Sarvakamya says she is happy to be back at the Race helping Sarvagata, her husband. She admits, "sometimes it is so challenging that I never could have imagined it. Life here is so concentrated. You can make really big progress when you come through all the challenges. It is really special."

She describes how that intensity caused her to think that when the Race finished last year that "never, never, never will I come here again." Then, Sarvakamya adds, "But then when you go home then you see all the progress that you made here. You want to come back. Even if it is really difficult sometimes."

She describes the feeling of oneness here on the Race Course and how



Sarah makes her way through the crowd of school kids

many of the runners — despite the suffering and pain they are enduring — have not abandoned their sense of humor and joy. "It is so inspiring here. There are moments when you really feel the sense of life here."

*God is within me.
Therefore, I am precious.
God is for me.
Therefore, I am courageous.*

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from
"Ten Thousand Flower-Flames, Part 39"

Question: Since God is within us and we know that one day we will realise God, why is it necessary to practise Yoga?

Sri Chinmoy: One day we shall realise everything which is natural. God is natural and so naturally we shall realise Him. That is true, but it means that we shall have to wait for Eternity. God has given us a conscious mind and conscious aspiration. If we don't want to use our conscious aspiration, then we can wait. God is not compelling us or forcing us. We can sleep if we want to. But if we consciously pray and meditate, then we will go faster. Everybody will reach the Goal, but he who sleeps will not reach the Goal as fast as he who is running. One day everybody will realise God because in God's Cosmic Vision, He will never allow anyone to remain unrealised. But it will take a very long time. Again, if we want to wait, no harm; we can wait.

— Sri Chinmoy, excerpt from *"Flame Waves, Part 12"* (Agni Press, 1978)

