



STRETCH

Becky Quinn



STRUNG OUT



A mile out of Simnasho

Reservation welcomes runners to Simnasho Mini-Marathon

When two inches of snow covered the roads the night before the marathon, the town of Simnasho grew tense. But by late morning the roads had cleared, the skies threatened no more than drizzle, and Simnasho students, their parents and one nervous teacher heaved sighs of relief.

The First Annual National Simnasho Mini-Marathon was on, and neither rain nor chill nor unconditioned bodies would prevent the fifty registered runners from tackling the hilly 14.5-mile course from Simnasho, to Kah-Nee-Ta Village. Sixty-two joggers similarly overcame odds to join in the 3.2 "Run-For-Fun."

Every sweat-soaked body limbering up behind the starting lines meant that the Simnasho kids were \$10 closer to taking their educational trip to southern California. As it turned out, the benefit run only broke even financially, but the attention drawn to the little town of Simnasho, the friends made, and the community support offered, gave momentum to the grade schoolers' plans.

The 12 students are scheduled to board their south-bound jet on March 22. When they return on March 27 they will focus their energies on paying back the money they owe for the 1,000 leftover marathon T-shirts.

While the Simnasho kids dreamed about Disneyland and the San Diego Zoo, over a hundred runners saw no farther than the finish line at the Kah-Nee-Ta Village Day Use Area. Once they received their packets, containing a T-shirt, number, raffle ticket and map, runners left the carnival atmosphere at the Village and boarded buses for Simnasho. The backwards look at the mini-marathon course only increased their determination.

In the quiet moments before

the race, the Simnasho Grade School vibrated with the energy of flexing, stretching bodies and the high expectations of the runners. A surprising number of entries said they hadn't worked out in recent months or had never run the distance. But only a handful quit before the finish line, still proud of their attempt.

1:20 p.m. — Indian Time — Tribal cop Tony Suppah's pistol fired and the primed runners burst across the starting line in a pack. A few yards later they began to separate and establish the strung-out pattern of a long distance race. Every hill and every mile served to further separate the men from the boys.

Down below, three miles past their destination, several dozen more people lined up in two groups for the Run-For-Fun. A lighter, more festive mood prevailed as men, women and children of all ages began and ended their run while the marathoners continued to put miles behind them.

Encouragement came in the form of water, kind words and time checks as runners entered their ninth mile. Most had their water "to go," while others hesitated, grateful for the excuse to stop. Still others seemed not to see the water at all as they pressed on.

A long, downhill stretch leveled out at the Warm Springs River and suddenly around a bend in the road, cheers and balloons rose from a friendly crowd of spectators. Horns honked, hands clapped but the runners' eyes were still fixed on the finish line. As the breath returned and the pain subsided, they found themselves amid a warm and welcoming mass of people, many of them locals out to offer their good will to strangers.

First across the line was an 18-year old from Redmond, Neil

Tierney, with the time of 1 hour, 25 minutes and 54 seconds. The first tribal member to finish was Ralph "Cuddles" Queahpama, 33, whose time was 1 hour and 35 minutes. The first of three women to complete the race was Jeannette Sullivan of Bend, who did it in 1 hour, 47 minutes, 12 seconds. Joel Craig, 9 was the youngest to finish.

Over half the marathon runners were tribal members and an estimated three-quarters of the Run-For-Fun were from Warm Springs. Two locals took second place in the Run-For-Fun: Davis Sohappy, 13, in the men's division and Brenda Lee, 25, in the women's.

While the last runners straggled in, the crowd shifted to the Village commons area, where a raffle was in progress. Many local businesses donated over 250 prizes for the event.

Weary runners showered, or relaxed in the hot village pool at reduced rates, Kah-Nee-Ta's part in supporting the marathon. Mingling with the visitors, Kah-Nee-Ta manager Bill Pauli beamed — "Isn't it wonderful?"

The trophies did not arrive in time for the award presentations, some complained about the high entry fee, and about 1,000 surplus T-shirts were boxed away, but generally organizers were pleased with their first go-round. Simnasho teacher Rich Little and his students stood by throughout the event, often forced to be idle as their community pitched in and made the mini-marathon happen.

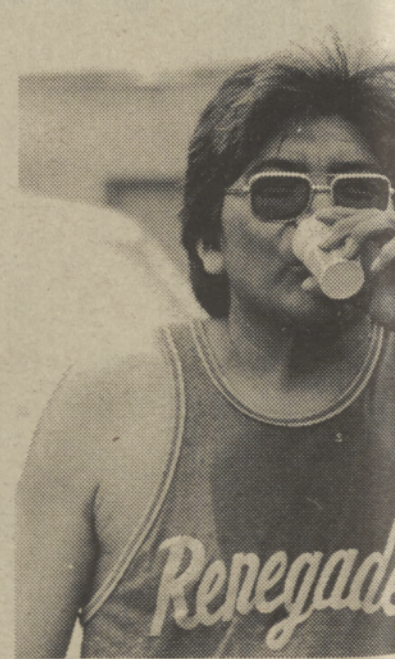
Next year? Another run and another trip, says Little. But this year the trip will be possible with a \$1,000 grant from Johnson-O'Malley and lots of hard work when the kids return. If successful, kids and parents will see that every household is equipped with a quilt made of mini-marathon T-shirts.



CHEERING ON



Fox Leonard encourages Rodney Strong



SWEAT AND JUICE

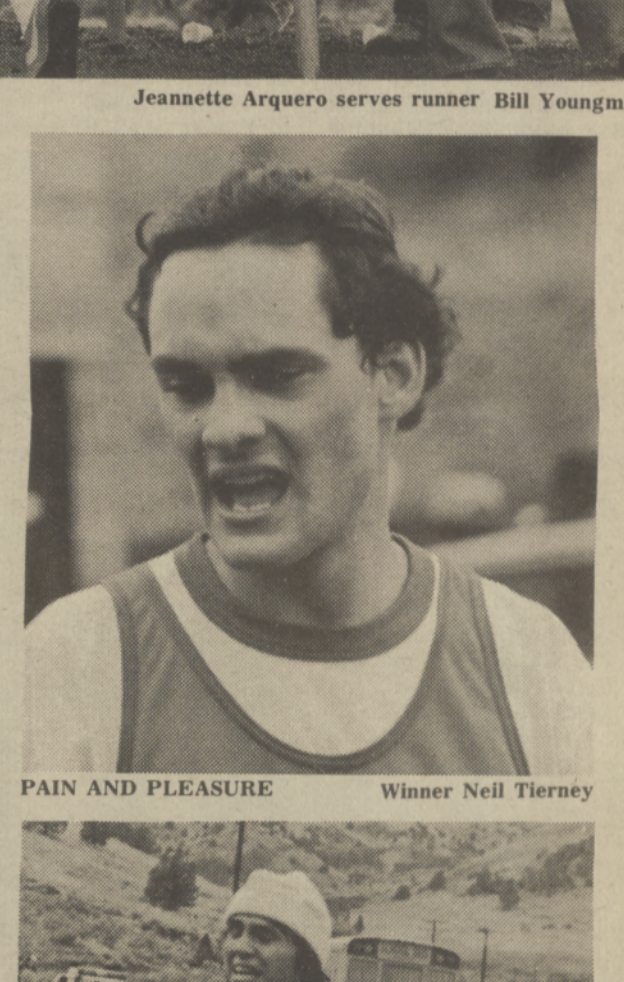


Sutterlee "YOU'RE ALMOST THERE"



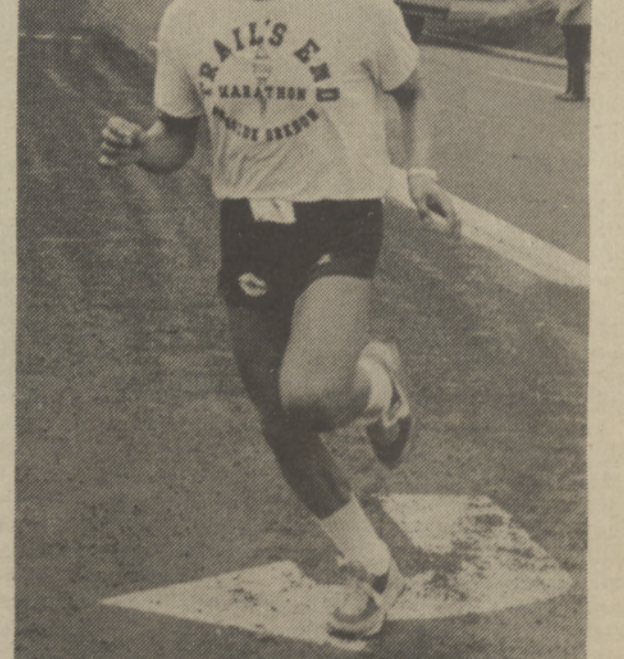
SORE FEET

Bobby Eagleheart



PAIN AND PLEASURE

Winner Neil Tierney



HOME STRETCH

Ralph Queahpama

Students at the Simnasho School staged a 14.5 mile run to finance a trip to southern California. In so doing, they kindled state-wide interest in their community and established a reservation tradition.



WATER TO GO

Jeannette Arquero serves runner Bill Youngman

Some were faster than others

Grand prize and trophy winners for the First Annual National Simnasho Mini-Marathon held March 3 were:

Mini-Marathon, 14.5 miles
Men, 18 and under — 1) Neil Tierney, Redmond, 1:25:54; 2) Stan Webb, 1:35:07

Women, 18 and under — 1) JoAnn Ahern, Madras, 1:55:59.

Men, 19-30 — 1) Ismal Caballero, Bear Springs Ranger Station, 1:29:05; 2) Lanny Wilbur, 1:30:05.

Women, 19-30 — 1) Jeannette Sullivan, Bend, 1:47:12; 2) Carolyn Brunoe, Warm Springs, 2:48:38.

Men, 31-45 — 1) Warren Finke, Portland, 1:26:31; 2) Denis Barger, Portland, 1:32:56.

Run-For-Fun, 3.2 miles
Men: 1) Bill Ortman, Corvallis, 20:06; 2) Davis Sohappy, Warm Springs, 21:56; Women: 1) Kelly Bembry, Redmond, 24:29; 2) Brenda Lee, Warm Springs, 27:02.

Photos by Cynthia Stowell

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