

Road Race Management

The Latest in Road Running
for Race Directors
and Industry Professionals

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Issue 375

Race Day Emergency at Credit Union Cherry Blossom Shows Value of Integrated Communications Network

Runners Understanding When Pre-Race Accident Forces Shortening of Course

By Phil Stewart

Around 5:30 a.m. on Sunday, April 12, I had reason to believe the biggest challenges of this year's Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile were behind me. For reasons that were never made completely clear, the National Park Service, the agency granting the permits for the event, had issued permits to *four* events to occupy basically the same space on the Washington Monument Grounds on race weekend—an Epilepsy Walk with 5,000 participants and the National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade on Saturday, and a Make A Wish Foundation walk and my race, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run and 5K Run-Walk, on Sunday. Plus the organizers of the massive Earth Day rally and rock concert scheduled for the weekend *after* the race were lobbying the NPS to allow them to begin set up for their event *before* the 10 mile was over.

The pre-race challenges involved extra meetings with representatives of all four groups, which led to our drafting "Memos of Understanding" and contracts with each of them outlining what each group could expect from us and what we could expect from them in terms of set-up and tear down activities and timelines. In some instances tents and porta-potties could be shared—and were shared—between the other events and Cherry Blossom, Inc., the non-profit entity which organizes the Credit Union Cherry Blossom. However, each "share" added questions and uncertainties such as "what if the porta-potties don't get cleaned out between the first event and the second event (our race was the second event in all but one of the instances). Fortunately, there was considerable overlap among the vendors being used by all of the events, which facilitated coordination. Representatives from the

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IN THE NEWS

Full Steam Ahead as Hightower Steps Down as Chairman of USATF Board

Citing the need for more time "to actively pursue a new role for USATF at the IAAF," Hightower will assume the role of board vice chair in accordance with the USATF bylaws. Steve Miller will assume the duties as Chairman. Hightower was selected as the USATF IAAF delegate by USATF's Board of Directors despite a 392-70 vote by the USATF membership in favor of incumbent Bob Hersh at the organization's convention last December. Despite an outcry, the USATF Board reaffirmed its support of Hightower at its Board Meeting in March in a 12-1 vote.

IAAF World Championships Head to Eugene in 2021

Departing from its standard selection procedure for the bi-annual meet, the IAAF voted to bring its marquee meet to U.S. soil for the first time ever. Eugene lost narrowly to Doha, Qatar last fall for the 2019 meet. IAAF President Lamine Diack said, "Although this decision departs from the usual procedure, I am delighted that my Council colleagues understood the enormous opportunity presented to us to access a key market and have taken a decision in the interest of the global development of our sport."

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INSIDE

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Dave's Race Director Traits - Rate Yourself!

By Dave McGillivray

Dave McGillivray is the race director of the BAA Boston Marathon. In addition he directs or consults on a number of other major events ranging from the TD Beach to Beacon 10K to the New Balance Falmouth Road Race. He is the owner of Dave McGillivray Sports Enterprises, a complete event management firm.

Ever wonder just how you are doing as a race director? I'm sure every now and then you receive emails, letters and calls from participants in your race(s) expressing candidly just how they feel about the job you have done. But have you ever rated your own performance and skill set? Let's give it a try and see how you do!

Of course, none of this really means anything other than to get you to think a bit about what your strengths are and perhaps what areas you may want to focus on more. I have listed below "Dave's Race Director Traits" — these are what I feel are important for us as event directors to strive for.

None of this is scientific, nor is it a true indicator of your "rating," but the results could surprise you a bit and motivate you to put more of your energy and time into certain areas of event management.

So, here are the rules:

- Read the traits and honestly rate yourself from a high of 5 points to a low of 1 point. Giving yourself a half point is acceptable, too, e.g. a 3.5 rating.
- As stated above, be HONEST with yourself. None of us is great at everything.
- I took the test myself and my score is on page 8. Don't look until you have

taken the test and scored yourself!

- As for scoring, add up the total points, then multiply by 2, which gives you an overall percentage.

OK, let's get started... here are the traits that I feel are important. I emphasize that these are just my thoughts, nobody else's!

- 1. VISIONARY**—I've always said, "the genius is seeing it in the seed." To produce a unique and well-organized event, we must be able to conceptualize and visualize so many things that others just can't. Can you?
- 2. PASSIONATE**—many ask me what I do for work... I say "I don't." I enjoy what I do so much I don't consider it work... it is a passion. How passionate are you about directing races, or is it mainly just for the pay check?
- 3. PREPARED AND ORGANIZED**—the science of winning is being totally prepared, and if you are not prepared for everything you are not prepared for anything. I always pretend an event is weeks before it actually is so that 99% of the work is done in advance. This gives me time to tweak things, respond to unexpected issues and clean up someone else's mess. How prepared and organized are you?
- 4. PATIENT AND CALM UNDER PRESSURE**—if something goes wrong or something unexpected happens, do you freak out or remain calm and look for a solution? I believe "pressure is a privilege," so in reality there should be no feeling of pressure — we all know to expect the unexpected so we have to deal

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Now Available: 2014-16 RRM Running Industry Resource Directory	Organizing Running Events: The Complete Guide to Staging a Successful Road Race
This completely updated publication is loaded with contact information for over 2,000 businesses, organizations and running event directors.	This A to Z Guide is a single-source, complete overview of race directing, designed for beginning and advanced race directors of races of all sizes.
Details at www.rrm.com	Order now at www.rrm.com
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Cherry Blossom

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NPS needed to inspect the site after each event to ensure that damages to the staging area would be billed to the proper group. A conservative estimate is that the coordination among the events required over a dozen additional meetings and over a hundred extra hours of staff and volunteer time.

The “Table Top” Exercise—A Valuable Undertaking

For the second year, we paid the U.S. Park Police to have a “table top” exercise covering emergency preparedness for the event. These exercises involve bringing all the key decision makers from various local and federal agencies together in a large auditorium (over 100 attended) to discuss protocols for disasters ranging from floods to acts of terrorism. (One scenario examined this year included a drone spraying an unidentified spray on runners on the course.) Although responses are not always completely developed for every scenario, the exercise serves to get everyone thinking about the types of emergencies that could arise.

Another benefit of the “tabletops” is an opportunity for all the emergency responders to get to know the race organizers in advance of race day. It certainly is key for race officials to know the individuals who could be making go/no go decisions about the event, and it is good for the officials to see the level of expertise of the race team. All of the individuals who will be working together in the Unified Command Center on race day get a chance to get to know each other as well. While some disasters would immediately trigger cancellation or cessation of an event, there are other situations where discussion and quick planning among representatives from

law enforcement, emergency medical services and the race organizers may be able to save or alter the event. Knowing each other and recognizing faces contribute to enhancing dialogue among key players.

Race Morning

It was still dark—and just 80 minutes prior to our 7:18 a.m. start—when Deputy Race Director Becky Lambros nudged me and said I should take this radio call from our representative in the Unified Command Center. The splendor of the new day with the cherry blossoms at their peak and the excitement of the first clusters of runners emerging from the nearby Metro stop and heading toward the staging area on the Washington Monument Grounds were quickly shattered by what I heard on the radio—there had been a motorcycle accident involving a pedestrian on our race course (the pedestrian was not involved with the race as a participant or a volunteer). If the injuries were serious enough, part of the race course would have to be closed to allow for an accident investigation by police. Already the U.S. Park Police were formulating plans for a revised route. I wanted input into that decision, so I immediately hopped on a Gator for the short ride to the UCC. (The UCC is located about half a mile from the staging area so it would not be affected by any sort of explosion in the staging area.)

Shortly after my arrival, law enforcement officials announced that the injuries were serious enough that there would need to be a full investigation and part of the race course would need to be closed. Together with the U.S. Park Police in the UCC, we immediately began to

consider other routes. Our first hope was that we could find a route that would be as close to 10 miles as possible—however, the best option would involve the Washington, DC Metropolitan Police Department. Since the event takes place entirely on National Park Service property, the DC Police were not represented in the UCC so coordinating this alternate route was not possible.

A second option involved streets that simply could not handle 17,000 runners. At that point, the option which would shorten the course by about half a mile was the only solution. The revised course would be identical to the original course for the first four miles, would be truncated between miles four and six, and would be the same as the standard course for miles 6-10. In an interesting aside, one local media outlet, which had not shown interest in covering the race prior to race day, picked up information about the road closure on a police scanner and suddenly became interested when the story was about a potential traffic jam. Their representatives called the event’s media coordinator five times between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. to find out how the course change would affect traffic.

Breaking the News

Shortly before 7:00 a.m., about 20 minutes before the 7:18 start of the elite women, I took the microphone from announcer Creigh Kelley and said, “This is Phil Stewart, your race director, and there has been an emergency on the course.” The gathered runners went silent. I explained that there was an accident involving personal injury on the course

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and the course would be modified—and shortened—by about half a mile. What followed was one of the biggest surprises of the morning—I expected to be booed; I was cheered instead!

The elite women went off at 7:18 a.m. as planned. The elite men and five additional waves started at 7:30 a.m. with the last wave clearing the starting line at 8:00 a.m. With the full ten mile course, there is about a nine

minute gap between the time the last runners clears the starting line and the first woman returns to the finish line. With the course now less than 10 miles, officials realized there was a possibility that the first woman would finish before the outgoing runners had cleared the starting line. In order to buy time, they shortened the gaps between each of the waves to get all the runners started early. Race officials

also nudged the runners in the final wave to the right side of the road way to open up a lane for the winners should they return before the final runners started. In the end, there was about a six minute gap.

We were fortunate that the section of the roadway that had to be closed did not contain any medical stations or water stops, so runners on the shortened course still had access to the same number of these services.

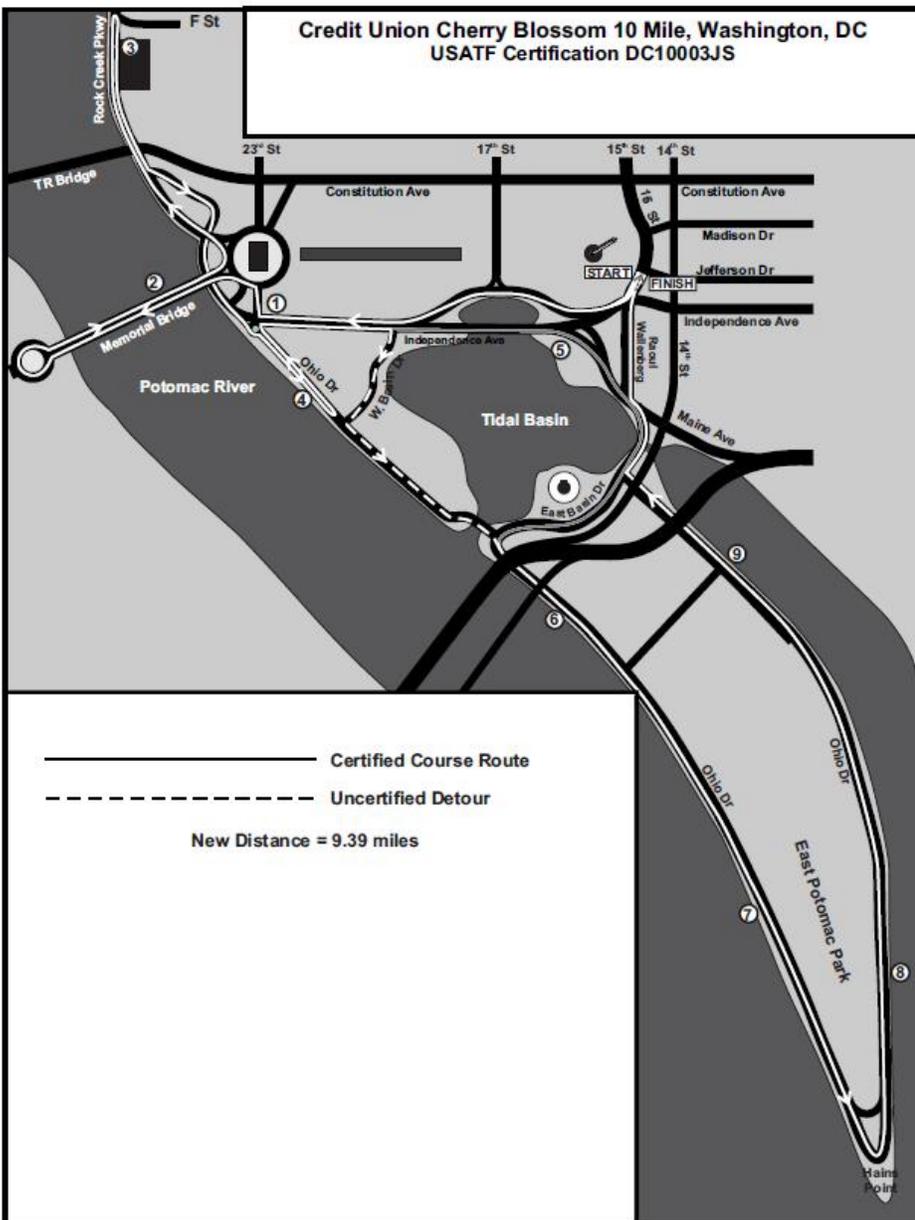
With the runners now safely under way, I knew the first thing they would want to know was “how long was the course.” Many wore Garmins, which I knew almost always compute distances long because runners wearing them cannot run the shortest possible route along which the course is certified. So with the runners still on the course, I placed a call to our local course certifier who said he could come down and measure the route that afternoon.

The Aftermath

The female winner reached the line in 48:35 and the male winner in 43:20. Behind them came the joyous masses whose disappointment at the shortened course had been completely overcome by the beauty of the blossoms. But the organizers still had much work to do.

Social Media: Someone overhead someone saying that the pedestrian hit on the course had died. This message ended up being circulated on Facebook. I had not heard via official channels that this was the case. I confirmed with the police that the individual was still alive and had my social media coordinator remove the post and repost that the individual was still alive.

The Course Measurement and



Bonuses: By late afternoon, the course certifier had completed his work and told us that the course was 9.54 miles. Although the official times and order of finish would always be for the distance actually run, we knew there would be interest in knowing what the projected times would be for 10 miles. Now we could answer this question. First, we determined that, our winners, who had run under perfect conditions—temperatures in the low 50s and without a hint of wind—had projected times of 45:26 and 50:57. American Jake Riley, who finished 8 seconds back, had a projected time of 45:35, which would have destroyed Greg Meyer’s course and American Record time of 46:13. The race advertised bonuses of \$10,000 for the first American to break the men’s or women’s ARs (split if both a man and a woman broke the mark), as well as a \$1,000 bonus for the first male under 46:00 and \$750 for the second under 46:00 (the same bonus applied for the first two women under 52:00). Although the shortened course was due to an incident outside of our control, and not due to an error on our part such as a misplaced cone or an errant lead vehicle, the event’s Executive Committee considered via a conference call whether we should make good on these bonuses. After a spirited discussion, we decided at around 6 p.m. Sunday evening to pay the bonuses. Our Media coordinator prepared a release stating that the event would pay out \$13,500 in bonuses based on the projected times. Advance copies of the release were distributed to *Race Results Weekly*, *Runner’s World Online* and *RunWashington*. The email blast was set to go first thing on Monday morning.

I awoke around 6:00 a.m. on Monday morning and checked my phone. I found a text from the course certifier that had come in about 30 minutes after I retired—he had misplaced the end-point where the runners had left the standard course and his calculations were off—the actual distance of the revised course was now 9.39 miles—just 0.1 over a 15K. I immediately phoned, emailed and texted the three publications that had received the advance copy of the release. Only *RunWashington* had posted it and they instantly removed it. I breathed a sigh of relief that our blast email to 500 media outlets had not yet gone out.

However, even with the revised distance, the first two women were under 52:00 minutes so we paid out those bonuses.

Lessons Learned

- Both the elite athletes and the masses were remarkably tolerant of the last-minute change and seemed to appreciate being told the facts in a calm manner.
- The value of a Unified Command Center where scenarios could be vetted and solutions implemented quickly was crucial.
- The development of relationships among key decision makers at the table top exercise that carried over to race day was very important.
- Have someone continually monitor your social media site and delete and correct any misinformation.
- Keep the content of any press release held very tightly until the press release is issued. This keeps the organizers in control of the story and means that rumors will not be rampant prior to the release

coming out. We were fortunate that the recipients of the three advance copies were understanding.

In Summary

The organizers hope it will be years before an emergency like this happens again. However, it is nice to know that we have developed an integrated communications system that has been tested just in case.



In addition to being Editor and Publisher of Road Race Management, Phil Stewart is the Event Director of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile. ■

News

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Association of Road Racing Statisticians Database Now On-line

The ARRS database currently has more than one million performances by more than 80,000 runners in more than 200,000 races. It is available at <http://more.arrs.net>. Users are encouraged to make donations to help support the website. In addition, the ARRS is looking for a few sponsors who would be willing to help support this website. Contacts: Andy Milroy, AndyMilroy@blueyonder.co.uk or Ken Young, kenyoung@wildblue.net.

A Race with No Finishers

Forty individuals signed up for the Barkley Marathons 100 Mile Run on March 28; no one finished. In fact, no one made it past the 80-mile check point. The event, held in Frozen Head State Park, TN, features 59,100 feet of climbing. Two runners completed the 60 mile “Fun Run.” ■

Track Writer Dunaway Passes On; Harlem Marathon Cancelled

This new feature provides a periodic overview of happenings at events around the world

Long-time track and field writer **James Dunaway** passed away March 15 at the age of 87 in Austin, TX. Dunaway was the dean of track writers during the mid-20th century heyday of the sport, and covered every Olympics from 1956 to 2008. He is one of only a few writers named to the U.S. Track & Field Hall of Fame, an honor he received in 2010.

The **Humana Rock 'n' Roll Dallas Half Marathon** quickly dispensed the 200 free transfers offered to registered runners of the canceled **Cowtown Marathon**, with 600 more applying to gain late entry to the race. Organizers

were able to offer those runners a discounted entry.

The inaugural **Harlem Half Marathon** has been **cancelled** after race organizer **Mark Anthony Jenkins** failed to obtain proper permits from the city. After his fraudulent past was exposed, which included the use of another name, non-payment of rent, a botched bus ride to president Obama's 2008 inauguration, an inflated resume and an online rant against white race directors, it gave pause to those who had initially supported the race idea. The 195 people who had signed

up for the non-existent race were given refunds.

Birmingham, Alabama's myfox.com reports the three leaders of the **Mercedes Benz Half Marathon** went off course near the end of the race, allowing **David Marley**, who had been running in 4th place, to win the race. Race vice chairman **Valerie McLean** said she was surprised the runners veered off the well-marked course and instead followed the lead vehicle as it got out of the way of oncoming finishers. McLean added that race organizers expected competitors "to do their homework" by studying the course layout. ■

Tip

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with it in a calm, patient manner. Others are counting on us. What about you?

5. TECHNOLOGICALLY AWARE—although I don't consider this a necessary skill that every race director absolutely must have, it does help, and at a minimum we should surround ourselves with folks with that skill. That being said, are you making a strong effort to at least try to learn what is out there and available and what can improve your event? The races that seem to have the "edge" these days seem to be those that are also focused on technology. How do you fare?

6. WILLING TO LISTEN TO CRITICS, THICK SKINNED—my sense is that none of us really likes being criticized; however, none of us is perfect either, and the same goes for our events. I don't look forward

to "the morning after" an event, when you tend to get slammed by your critics. Do you listen to those who make sense while also being patient and not overreacting to those who are foolish and just don't know what they are talking about? It takes a thick skin to survive in this business. How thick is your skin and how much reasonable and legitimate criticism can you honestly take?

7. LEADERSHIP SKILLS/CHARISMATIC/MOTIVATIONAL/DEALING WITH EGOS AND PERSONALITIES—when asked what is the toughest part of my job, I inevitably say balancing all the egos and personalities. That is not necessarily a negative comment, just an honest one. We all need to lead our team and get the most out of every one of them. We need to be there for them and inspire them. How would you rate

yourself in this area?

8. CONTINGENCY PLANNER/PREVENTING FIRES—we all seem to do a good job on Plan A, but do you ever spend time on Plan B, C & D... that is, contingency planning, the what if's? Do you spend time doing table top exercises and talking through potential scenarios that could wreak havoc on your race? By investing the time and resources to do this before your race, you could end up saving your race from potential disaster. How do you rate?

9. CAN DELEGATE—if you are like me, you generally like to do it all yourself... then you know it got done the way you like it, and you don't have to waste time constantly following up with people. However, the idea is to surround yourself with good, dependable people that

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Newton Spells It Out; Mizuno Gains Speed

FOOTWEAR NEWS

Newton Running and **Timex** have launched an initiative where runners can plan a running route that spells out a word that explains how they feel during a run, track it on a GPS device, do a map screen grab and submit it on Twitter and Instagram. The results, appearing under the hashtag #RunningMakesMeFeel, will be considered for prizes, including a lifetime supply of Newton shoes. The Run It, Feel It, Spell It Challenge will run through May 1, and winners will be featured in a national print ad campaign later this year. Newton has opened a new 3,300 sf flagship store on the Pearl Street Mall in Boulder.

Mizuno and **Lamborghini** announced a five-year partnership that will place Mizuno running apparel and footwear sporting the automaker's distinctive shield at Lamborghini dealerships and Mizuno retailers around the world. The first collaboration will be the **Wave Tenjin** running shoe.

On the eve of the **Los Angeles Marathon**, title sponsor **Asics** lit up the sky with a series of spotlights marking every mile of the race course. The Asics "Big Race Cup" art installation was the site for numerous pre-race activities. Asics America sales rose nearly 15% in 2014 to \$1.1 billion. Running footwear grew 11.7%, and running apparel was up 75%. Eleven new retail stores were opened in 2014, with another ten planned for 2015.

Asics is forming five teams of six runners each to compete in the "**Asics Beat the Sun**" Relay Challenge around Mont Blanc in June. Each team will consist of three professional and three amateur runners, with Asics selecting the 15 amateurs through a competitive application process. Interested

runners can apply at asics.com/beatthesun, and the winners will be mentored by a professional mountain runner and outfitted in Asics race gear. Asics has also agreed to be the official footwear and apparel sponsor of the 2015 One America 500 Festival Mini-Marathon in Indianapolis.

Under Armour has opened its new Connected Fitness digital headquarters in Austin, TX. The new offices will be staffed by over 100 engineers, data scientists, designers and product innovators who intend to advance the company's digital products, which include **UA Record**, **MyFitnessPal**, **MapMyFitness** and **Endomondo**.

Kip Fulks, one of the original founders of **Under Armour** and former president of product, has been named president of footwear and innovation.

Former 10,000 meter American record holder **Mark Nenow** has been named president of **Sorel**, an all-weather boot brand.

The **New Balance Foundation**, the **100 Mile Club** and **ChildObesity180** at Tufts University have announced a collaboration focusing on increasing quality physical activity for children. The NB Foundation has pledged \$2.55 million in support of the **Billion Mile Race**, which will see the trio invite elementary school children to collectively run or walk one billion miles. Details at billionmilerace.org. New Balance is reissuing its iconic M1300 running shoe. First released in 1985, the new iteration will be manufactured in Maine and priced at \$300.

Brooks, **APC**, **Skechers** and **adidas** all plan to add running shoes featuring knitted uppers to their fall line-ups.

Reebok is reintroducing its Pump technology with the release of the **ZPump Fusion** running shoe. The deflated structureless shoe molds itself

to the foot via a proprietary air-filled cage that gives the user a locked-in, custom fit. The shoe will be available exclusively at Finish Line stores through 2015.

The **Saucony Run for Good Foundation** awarded Rod Dixon's **KiDSMARATHON** \$25,000 to support its work in encouraging good health habits and fitness in children who have obesity-related health problems. Saucony contributed \$10,000 to Dixon's foundation last year.

For the first time, a **Nike** technology-Air Zoom cushioning-is being used in a **Converse** shoe, the **Jack Purcell Signature** sneaker. Nike is the parent company of Converse.

MISCELLANEOUS

The **Running Specialty Group** completed three deals in two weeks to acquire running specialty stores in New York City, Indiana and Utah. The acquisitions bring RSG's portfolio to 75 shops in 16 states. *Footwear News* reports that some analysts believe RSG parent **The Finish Line** has spread itself too thin, resulting in Foot Locker taking business away from them.

Fleet Feet Sports has acquired **Go Run Wichita's** two stores in Wichita, KS. Co-owners Kevin Swinicki and Randy Mijares will exit the business and recent Fleet Feet Sports operating partner training program graduate **Joel Stansloski** will take over management of the stores.

Clif Bar & Company will be opening its first bakery in Twin Falls, ID next spring. The sustainable facility will employ about 200 workers and provide customers organic energy options along with nutrition bars.

Performance and monitoring accessories specialist **Wahoo Fitness**

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is partnering with **Nike** to provide that company with **heart rate monitoring capability for the Nike+ running app. Tom Tom Runner and GPS Sport Watches** will also now be able to connect to Nike+.

Gildan, a quality t-shirt, activewear and sock supplier, is the title sponsor of the **Espirit de She** race series.

MarathonSwag.com has initiated a new payment system that will allow race directors to make three payments for the company's products instead of having to pay 100% upfront.

RunSignUp has acquired mobile race tracker **RaceJoy**.

Alan Culpepper, aided by **Competitor** magazine editor **Brian Metzler**, has written **Run Like a Champion: An Olympian's Approach for Every Runner**. The book spells out Culpepper's "big picture" road to success, which entails not only essential training elements but also identifying motivation, finding the proper work/life/family balance, and understanding running's complementary aspects, such as stretching and proper diet.

CGI WATCH

Jack Furlow has been named CGI President, overseeing its global business. Furlow

was previously Executive VP of Events. **Wendy Godoy** is the company's new CFO and CAO.

CGI will again have a **Rock 'n' Roll** race in **Brooklyn**, this time a half marathon and run on the streets instead of within the confines of Prospect Park. The October 10 race will have a capacity of 17,500 runners.

iHeartMedia (formerly Clear Channel), which operates 858 radio stations nationwide, and **CGI** have entered into a strategic collaboration that will help combine music and fitness in new ways. A custom R 'n' R Marathon Series branded radio station will stream online 24/7, live music provided by iHeartMedia will be heard throughout event weekends, and the company's radio stations will help promote the race series.

Dunkin' Donuts will be the **Official Coffee and Breakfast Restaurant of R 'n' R events** in Dallas, Chicago, Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

CGI announced a new **Military Challenge**, in which U.S. Armed Forces will compete against other active duty personnel and veterans at six events during 2015. The **American Military University** is the presenting sponsor of the Challenge. ■

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you feel comfortable delegating to, and then you can finally begin the process of "letting go." If you have delegated well to the right people who will get the job done, you will succeed much more than if you try to keep it all to yourself. Can you comfortably delegate?

10.RESPONSIVE – how insulting is it when you call or email someone and they don't respond at all. This is one of my biggest "pet peeves." I try to (and mostly do) respond to everyone, all the time. Do you respond to just about all your emails and return all your phones calls?

Okay, you can stop! You're done. Now calculate your score as described above and write it here _____. Feel free to look at my score below now. I didn't do as well as I thought I would. Did you? Perhaps now, too, you see some areas for improvement.

If you score above an 80, you GRADUATE—congratulations! No matter how you score, though, you graduate anyway because our job is secure—not too many other people on the planet probably want it! ■

DAVE'S SCORE = 84

NEW MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL ORDER FORM

Please enroll me/us in a membership to Road Race Management immediately. I understand I will receive *Road Race Management* Newsletter, along with discounts on other Road Race Management publications and services, and discounts from selected running industry vendors.

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