

SPORTS

Gray and cold makes for sunny marathon

by Riccardo Sala

Cool and gray Sundays are about as popular with the general public as the GST or persistent telemarketers. For the runners and wheelchair athletes in the Toronto Marathon though, cool and gray was a close to perfect as the weather Sunday could be.

Close to 4,000 athletes braved the emotional turmoil of an early Sunday wakeup call to take part in the marathon and supporting events. Alberto Salazar, marathoner par excellence was there, albeit as runner in the Toronto Olympic Committee 10 km support race. After that race he chummed it up with CKFM deejay Erik Tomas for the television cameras.

One of those 4,000 was Peter Fonseca. A Toronto native, Fonseca trains in Vancouver (the definition of cool and gray) and a lot of the cheering at the Varsity Stadium finish line was for him.

Fonseca came second in the marathon behind fellow Vancouverite Carey Nelson. "The weather was fantastic," Fonseca said, noting "when I came here two weeks ago, it was in the middle of a heat-wave and I was worried (about the heat)."

The Fonseca support contingent was at its most vocal with a Toronto based Portuguese running club. As spokesperson Nellie Pedro noted, Portugal has produced more than its share of long-distance runners, including Rosa Mota and on the local scene Fonseca. Club runner Eddie Raposo finished fifth.

For Carey Nelson, the marathon was an unlikely event to win. Usually a 5000 to 10 000 metre runner, the Toronto Marathon was Nelson's first. The large (\$14,000) payoff "allows me to concentrate on training for the 1992 Olympics," Nelson said.

In the women's marathon, Lisa Presedo of London won, but had to spend an hour afterwards being treated for exhaustion and dehydration. Presedo, too, earned \$14,000 for her effort. She won by less than a second over Toronto's Laura Konantz.

The wheelchair portion of the marathon provided a slightly more diverse group of winners. Connie Hansen from Copenha-



The last stretch; an athlete heads home at last Sunday's Toronto Marathon.

gen was the winner in the women's race. Up until last year, Hansen had the fastest marathon time in the world.

The top Canadian was Chantal Petitclerc from Quebec City. The Toronto Marathon counts as the Canadian championships for wheelchair athletes, and the top Canadian time is the standard which the athletes must achieve in order to receive funding.

Petitclerc pointed out the increased pace of competition in wheelchair racing in recent years. On the national scene, she has had a friendly rivalry with Colette Bourgonje, a Saskatoon native who took the 800 m gold in the Commonwealth games in January.

On the men's side, Luke Gingras inherited the win after leader Marc Gussy went wide on the final approach to Varsity Stadium. A native of Quebec City, Gingras' first win came last year in the Detroit Free Press Marathon. Toronto marked his second win.

Behind Gingras was Ron Robillard. Echoing Fonseca's earlier

comments, Robillard stuck with a turtle-neck sweater. His chair was rusty. When he spoke he was direct, a politicians nightmare.

Robillard is not carded. "I gave up that (being part of the national team)," he said, "and couldn't handle the politics." He was referring to his stint on the national team. He does only road races now, sponsored by Team Sha-

dow, an American company that builds racing chairs.

By one o'clock, the crowds inside the stadium had dwindled and children were in the process of eviscerating the gigantic balloon that adorned the front of Varsity. Straggling marathoners pulled into the finish line even as the announcers kept calling out the names of incoming runners.

Yeomen Football add "win" to their dictionary

by Peter Stathis

It surprised everyone including the team: the football Yeomen broke their season-long losing streak by upsetting McMaster 16-11 last weekend in exhibition play.

Coach Tom Arnott was pleased that the team worked hard for the whole game and avoided taking costly penalties. "We didn't necessarily outplay Mac, but we did out-tough them with big defensive plays." According to Arnott, the Yeomen have an even bigger challenge against Windsor, which he said is an improved team from last year. Windsor has developed a very strong quarterback as well as their receivers and have also introduced the option back into their game. "We will have to keep our defensive line back and play heads up against them [Mac]," said Arnott.

The Player of the Game for the Yeomen was defensive back George Velentzas who had three interceptions, scored two field goals and did all the punting for the game.

The Yeomen are pumped up right now after their first win in almost two years, but coach Arnott said they will have to come back to earth and continue to play hard ball for the rest of year, starting with their first regular season effort against the Windsor Lancers.

Game time is Saturday afternoon, 2:00 pm, September 16 at Esther Shiner Stadium (Bathurst and Finch).

Clive Cohen photo

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