

R2C 07 – Dennis Schmatz

August 4 2007

Saturday was hell (at least temperature wise), but everything else was so cool. This was my main observation as I participated in my 5th R2C Relay. Even though I had 3 rookies on my team, I found myself a rookie too as being a first time team captain. We honestly had very little time to plan during the weeks before, but let me say that everyone stepped right into their role whether driving, navigating, supporting, timing, or (the easiest part) running. Our team number was # 37. A memorable number. If you folks know me then you know I tend to live in the past. And I do trivia very well. Do we have any Mets fans out there ??

Our team (Hill Masters) started off 1st of the 4 HRH teams @ 7:10 AM. We all knew the Babes to Waves would start 5 minutes after us, and thus there would be no dogging for us. The competition heated up real quick, and the temp wasn't doing too bad either. The babes caught us by leg# 3, but to our advantage we stayed within sight of them through leg# 9. It was good to see them pass by in their staging and support vehicles waving back and forth and cheering us as we did them. We'd park near each other at the exchange points too. We could then catch up on just how everyone was doing as well as complain about the heat. By switching back and forth between Steves caravan & my Odysy gave our team the chance to spend some good time chatting about our race strategies, and idle chat whether we were staging or supporting.

By 10:30 AM the temp was already just about tolerable. The hours, in the sun taking, it's toll. The temperature climbed along with our pace times. But, we all had each other right there as a team. At worst we'd call each other just to find out how we were all holding up. This is R2C, and purposely set up to weed out the riff raff, and take us to our limits. Like Bruce says "we wouldn't expect anything less". At the Oasis (leg# 8 to leg# 9 exchange point) We met up with the first of the Boardwalk runners. Here we first found out what had happened to one of the Over the Hill team members on the Beast leg. During the course of the day we couldn't find out any updates, but hoped that John was O.K. and he would be joining us back on the club runs quickly, and speedily (which is exactly how to describe him).

At this point came the worst temps of the day, and some of the worst legs to boot. Also the higher numbered teams were within striking distance, and passed by us (excuse me !! BLEW past us). I think I only counted 2 maybe 3 sandbagging teams, but you've got to expect some of that. right !! The last 3 legs saw Wes' and Bruce's staging and support vehicles driving along with our own. We knew they were now here and finally had caught us. As always they cheered us on and asked if we needed anything as they drove by. During leg# 13 saw our runner (Ron), Mike S.(from Bruce's team), and Tim (from Wes' team) all meet within a few hundred feet of each other. It was now around 7:00 PM, and nothing now left to do but finish this thing. Finally the temp was starting to drop. Kathy took us home for a final overall time of 12 hrs and 52 mins. After all how many people can run 92 miles through hades in that time frame. We were very happy with our time.

Some of the more memorable parts of yesterdays event was the Babes winning an award, I believe the first by an HRH team at R2C. The Over the Hill Runners overcoming the loss of a downed runner by quickly re arranging the legs in an admirable way. The Boardwalk Boys who started 90 minutes behind us and met us (with a smile) right around the 90 mile mark of the relay. Great job to you Captains. All your team members are to be commended. Also kudos to the team (s) who had a designated driver. That was sure an experience for them too. We don't want to forget about our club members who put in their time volunteering (Colin Saville, and Jim Hopta) if I missed any other club members who volunteered I'm sorry.

For any of our club members who've never tried a relay, then you really should. It has much of the excitement of an individual race, but the commraderie is different when a team effort is involved. It's hard to explain. You tend to find yourself wondering where all your other club members are at any one moment, but there is comfort in knowing that we're all in this together, but spread out all over the place. We're sort of rediscovering our limits and

experiences. A pioneer of sort. I forget where I've heard this expression.

If you've run R2C then no explanation is necessary, and
If you haven't, then no explanation is possible.

Cheers
Dennis

P.S. # 37 was the number of the late Casey Stengel, NY Mets manager (another Pioneer)