



## NOTES OF STATISTICAL INTEREST

from the 2007 race

The 2007 race will enter the history books as one of the biggest events ever, with one of the deepest and fastest women's fields ever, and a close and fast men's race. Read on.

### Registration Information

Although registration information from the 70's and 80's is sketchy at best, the 2007 race was, in all likelihood, the "biggest" equinox in nearly 40 years in terms of participation.

- This was the second consecutive year of increasing number after a post 2002 decline
- Five hundred fifty-eight runners registered for the marathon, a number exceeded only by the 2002 total of 569 registrants.
- Four hundred seventy-seven runners finished, which was three higher than the previous recent high of 474 in 2002
- For the first time since at least 1995 there were more women entrants (286 v. 272) and finishers (246 v. 231) in the marathon than there were men
- The biggest classes were the 18-29 groups, with 62 women and 67 men, 129 total
- The biggest masters classes were the women's 45-49 class with 43 entrants, and the women's 40-44 class with 42 entrants. The biggest totals for men were 29 in the 40-44 and 50-54 classes, and 27 in the 45-49 class.
- Total men and women entered were very even from ages 30-34 through 50-54.
- The Equinox Relay showed explosive growth, increasing to 89 teams and 267 individuals in 2007 from a previous high of 64/192 in 2005.
- The total number of participants for the two components of this event was 825 entered and 741 finishing, exceeding the previous high total of 747 entered (569 marathoners, 178 relayers) and 645 finishing in 2002.
- The finishing percentage in the marathon was a fairly typical 85% of registrants. Since 1997, this ratio has ranged from 83% to 88%.

### Finish Distribution

The highest finish density occurred between 4:30 and 5:30, with 69 runners per half hour. From 4:00 through 6:00, 260 runners finishes, an average of 65 per hour.

Twelve runners – 10 men and two women, finished under 3:30.

### Multiple and Consecutive Winners

Both of this year's winners were first time winners, so there was no change in the list of multiple/consecutive winners. After two close calls in the prior two years, Matias Saari became the 25<sup>th</sup> man to win one of the 44 Equinox Championships, and Equinox rookie Shelley Johnson of Anchorage became the 27<sup>th</sup> woman to win.

Winning Times

Johnson was the 3<sup>rd</sup>-fastest female winner, continuing a trend of fast winners over the past 10-12 years. Saari was the 11<sup>th</sup>-fastest male winner, continuing a recent trend of faster winning men's times over the past 6-8 years, after some slower years in the 1990's.

Victory Margins

Johnson's victory margin of 3:05 over Denise McHale of Whitehorse was the 9<sup>th</sup>-closest ever. Saari's 45-second edge over Harald Å was the 8<sup>th</sup>-closest ever – one of eight times the men's race was decided by less than a minute.

Course Records

There were no course records set this year. It has been 23 years since Stan Justice set the men's record of 2:41:30, and five years since Susan Faulkner set the women's record of 3:18:16.

Age-Class Records

Four age-class records were established this year:

- Wayde Leder broke Bob Murphy's 50-54 record of 3:16:14 (2004) with a 3:14:29
- Champion Shelley Johnson 3:21:07 was a new record for 30-34 women. (former record: Julie Udchachon, 2004, 3:22:56)
- Amy Dalton established a new 45-49 record with a 3:36:59 (former record: Jane Lanford, 2001, 3:44:55)
- Doris Cooper obliterated the 70-74 women's record with an outstanding 5:58:41 (former record: Phyllis Church, 2006, 7:03:38)

Year-by-Year Age Records

Ten new year-by year age records were established.

Noteworthy records included Jim Meyer (from Michigan, formerly from North Pole) breaking Hugh Heacock's 31-year-old record for age 67 men, Jim Decur knocking 24 minutes of Pat Kalen's one-year old age 59 record, and perennial top finisher Dorli McWayne improving Equinox legend Marci Trent's 35-year-old age 54 record by 21:29. McWayne now owns the records for ages 51 through 54. DeCur has the men's records for ages 53, 55, 56, 57, and 59.

New Men's Records

<u>Age</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Old Record Holder</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Diff.</u>
10	Noah Tsigonis	206	7:01:00	no prior record					
50	Wayde Leder	7	3:14:29	Rocky Reifentstuhl	2002	11	3:19:30	5	5:01
59	Jim Decur	27	3:40:41	Patrick Kalen	2006	55	4:04:45	1	24:04
67	Jim Meyer	138	5:09:51	Hugh Heacock	1976	74	5:17:52	31	8:01

New Women's Records

<u>Age</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Old Record Holder</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Diff.</u>
30	Shelley Johnson	1	3:21:07	Linda Huyck	2002	3	3:28:17	5	7:10
45	Amy Dalton	4	3:36:59	Laura McDonough	2006	1	3:50:50	1	13:51
46	Debbie Cropper	5	3:38:21	Jane Lanford	2001	7	3:44:55	6	6:34
54	Dorli McWayne	14	3:59:45	Marcie Trent	1972	3	4:21:14	35	21:29
70	Doris Cooper	140	5:58:41	no prior record					
72	Barbara Wuttig	236	9:01:37	no prior record					

100 Fastest Women's Times

The cutoff time for the top 100 times dropped 90 seconds, from 3:51:34 to 3:50:04. The first seven finishers all made not only the top 100 times list, but also moved into the top 50 all time. Johnson ran the 4<sup>th</sup>-fastest ever, McHale also slotted into the top 10 with the 9<sup>th</sup>-fastest ever, and Kristen Bartecchi Rozell ran her 2<sup>nd</sup>-fastest ever to move into 28<sup>th</sup> place. Amy Dalton (35<sup>th</sup>), Debbie Cropper (38<sup>th</sup>), Molly Yazwinski (43<sup>rd</sup>) and Go Runser (45<sup>th</sup>) were the others from this year's list.

Getting bumped from the list were Jane Lanford's 3:50:22 in 1997 and her 3:51:25 in 2005, Kat Betters' 3:50:27 in 1999, Christine Cannard's 3:50:48 in 2005, Laura McDonough's winning time of 3:50:50 in 2006, Maryellen Laberge's 3:51:02 in 1990 and Jamie Blythe's 3:51:34 in 2004.

### 100 Fastest Men's Times

The standard for men to be included on the top 100 list improved by just under half-a-minute, from 3:04:30 to 3:04:05. The first three finishers of this year's race had top-100 times. Saari and Ås moved into 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> overall, and Kevin Brinegar's third place time was just out of the top 50 (54<sup>th</sup>).

Mike Romine's 3:04:13 in 1970 (good for 2<sup>nd</sup> place) was bumped from the list after a 36-year stay. Harlow Robinson's 3:04:13 in 2004 (another runner-up time) and Roger Burleigh's 21-year-old 3:04:30 all disappeared from the list.

### 25 Fastest Men and Women

Third-place Bartecchi Rozell was already on the list (she dropped this year from 12<sup>th</sup> fastest to 14<sup>th</sup>-fastest), but every other woman in this year's top seven also moved onto the list of the 25 fastest runners ever to run the event: Johnson is 4<sup>th</sup> on the list, McHale 6<sup>th</sup>, Amy Dalton 19<sup>th</sup>, Debbie Cropper 20<sup>th</sup>, Molly Yaswinski 23<sup>rd</sup>, and Go Runser 24<sup>th</sup>. Only the 2002 race saw an equal number of runners join this list.

Gone from the list are Trish Livingston (3:40:11, 1983), Dianne Munson (3:40:23, 1986), Colleen Personett 3:41:19 2003, Jane Lanford (3:41:51, 2003), Mary Lindahl (3:43:07, 1981), Moon Sun Stone (3:44:15, 1987)

Kevin Brinegar and Matias Saari remain in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> on the list, but this year's runner up Harald Ås moved into 7<sup>th</sup> place on this list, bumping Rick Solie (2:59:46 in 1982) from the list.

### Sub 3:45 / Sub 3:00 Clubs

Kristen Bartecchi Rozell was already a member of the women's sub 3:45 club, having "joined" as the 22<sup>nd</sup> member in 2000. The other six runners in the women's top seven also joined, becoming the 30<sup>th</sup> through 35<sup>th</sup> members. Bartecchi became one of only eight women with two sub-3:35 times, and one of only nine with three sub-3:45 times.

Saari (3) and Brinegar (6) both added to their portfolio of sub-3:00 times. Harald Ås was the only runner to join up in 2007, becoming the 28<sup>th</sup> member and the first to join since Saari in 2005. Brinegar and Saari are two of only eight men with multiple sub-3:00 performances. Stan Justice (6) and Bob Murphy (5) remain the only runners with multiple sub-2:50 performances.

### Benchmark Times/Depth of Field

This year's race saw the 2<sup>nd</sup>-highest ever number of women under four hours – 14 this year, v. 15 in 2001. In addition to the aforementioned top seven, Jenny Mahlen (3:55:07), Jennifer Campbell (3:56:09), Amanda Copus (3:57:14), Claire Connelly (3:59:00), 2006 Champion Laura McDonough (3:59:19), Maria Bray (3:59:22) and pacemeister Dorli McWayne (3:59:45) all met the sub-4:00 standard.

Had Heather Best run 1.1 seconds faster, there would have been 15 women under 4:00 this year. 2007 also equaled the most sub-3:45's ever in a year – 7 this year and in 2002. Any way you look at it, this year's women's field was one of the fastest and deepest ever.

This was the third straight year with multiple sub-3:00 men. This was the first such streak since there were multiple sub-3:00 finishers from 1978 through 1986.

### Fast Top 10 Times

New to the statistical archives this year is a list of the ten fastest finishers all-time in each of the top 10 places. This seems to be the best way to determine the strength of the field as a function of both speed and depth at the top of the field.

This list also is a good way to determine what the true “Glory Years” of the Equinox Marathon were or are, for men and women. Years when most or all of the top 10 finishers are ranked among the all-time top 10 for their positions indicate a strong field. Several such years in a row, or nearly in a row, make an argument for a “Glory Years” era. See the attached graph for further commentary on this topic.

The whole women’s top 10 made this list. Besides the top seven that have been mentioned several times, this included Jenny Mahlen (8<sup>th</sup>, 3:55:07), Jennifer Campbell (9<sup>th</sup>, 3:56:09) and Amanda Copus (10<sup>th</sup>, 3:57:14) made this the 6<sup>th</sup> year from which all top 10 finishers are on the list (also 1998-2002).

Ås and Brinegar were the only men to make the all-time fastest top 10 list.

### Who Da Man? / Who Da Woman?

Kristen Bartecchi Rozell used her 3<sup>rd</sup>-place finish to move up from a 3-way time for 19<sup>th</sup> place to a tie for 10<sup>th</sup> with Dianne Munson.

Matias Saari moved up from an 8<sup>th</sup>-place tie with Bill Gardner into 5<sup>th</sup> place, just ahead of Allen Doyle. Kevin Brinegar solidified his hold on 3<sup>rd</sup> place on this list with his 3<sup>rd</sup>-place finish.

### New Legends?

Matias Saari made a good argument for joining this list by finally winning the Equinox, buttressed by his status of three consecutive sub-3:00 races. No changes in the women’s list.

### Oldies But Goodies

Laura McDonough (12<sup>th</sup>), Dorli McWayne (14<sup>th</sup>) and Jane Lanford (19<sup>th</sup>), held up the honor of the women’s over-40 set at the 2007 Equinox, with McDonough and McWayne recording sub-four times.

Wayde Leder (50, 7<sup>th</sup> overall, with age and Age-class records), Jim Decur (59, 27<sup>th</sup>, age record), and Andy Holland (51, 30<sup>th</sup>) were the top guys from this list in 2007. Rocky Reifentstahl suffered through a sub-par run, failing to run under 4 hours for the first time in more than 10 years, and running over 3:30 for only the third time since 1997.

A couple of newcomers may make this list in the near future. Mark Lindberg, age 44, was 4<sup>th</sup> overall in 3:05:14, improving 23:36 from last year. John Weddleton, age 49, ran a 3:26:09 for 12<sup>th</sup>. In 2003-05-06-07, John placed 10<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> and ran sub-3:30 each year.

### Split Times Notes

A cursory inspection of the split times tables reveals some interesting numbers. I believe the three key numbers to look at are 1) the time for the climb, from the St. Patrick’s Road/Ester Dome Road intersection to Ullrhavn; 2) the time for the out-and-back, and 3) the time for the “Run In”, from the top of the Chute to the Finish.

This year’s women’s field was way faster than the 2006 field on the climb. Eight women climbed the Dome faster than last year’s fastest woman (38:18 in 2006). The first three women in the field were among the 20 fastest runners up the hill – male or female. Only six men ran up the hill faster than Champion Shelley Johnson, only 12 ran up faster than runner-up Denise McHale, and only 13 ran up faster than third-place Kristen Bartecchi.

The eight fastest women up the Dome were the first eight finishers. Furthermore six of the first eight finished in the same position as they were ranked up the Dome; only Molly Yazwinski and Go Runser flip-flopped their

positions. Karen Williams and Dee Daniels were the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>-fastest up the Dome, but both faded to 17<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Maybe too hard up the hill?

Seventh-place finisher Go Runser really started cranking it up after she reached Ullrhavn, recording the 4<sup>th</sup>-fastest Out-and-Back among women, and the 3<sup>rd</sup>-fastest women's Run-In, but these fast times did not help her gain a single place after reaching the summit of the Dome. Did she go too easy at the start?

Johnson and McHale were the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>-fastest on the Out-and-Back, including all men, so it must be concluded that their best relative advantage is on continuous uphill, such as climbing the Dome. As average speed increases, the men perform better relative to the best women.

Denise McHale made a fairly rapid descent from the Chute to Gold Hill Road, flying down the hill fast enough to catch back up with leader Shelley Johnson. However, once they reached the flatter and more gentle terrain of Gold Hill Road and the Cloudberry/Powerline section, Johnson's superior speed took over, and she averaged 6:50/mile for the rest of the course, gaining 39 seconds a mile on McHale to cement the win.

The men's times are particularly interesting in comparison to the 2006 pace. Champion Matias Saari went out much more slowly than one year earlier, when he and Mike Kramer took it out pretty hard. Saari was 37 seconds behind 2006 pace at Ballaine/Yankovitch, 1:37 behind at Yankovitch/Miller Hill (he lost 18 second/mile during this section), 2:05 slower at St. Patrick's/Ester Dome Road, 2:44 behind at Ullrhavn (11 seconds/mile slower), and he lost another 19 seconds on the way to the Turnaround, arriving there 3:03 behind his pace of one year earlier. Then he started picking it up.

From the Turnaround to the top of the chute, he ran 15:23, 49 seconds (21 seconds/mile) faster than '06, and built a 13 second lead over runner-up Harald Ås. When he returned to the Ullrhavn summit, he really cut loose, plummeting wildly down the treacherous Chute and maintaining the pressure all the way to Gold Hill. His per-mile pace for that drop was an amazing 5:28 (30 seconds per mile faster than the 5:59/mile he ran in '06) – it takes some people that long or longer to descend just the chute, which is less than 1/3 of a mile. Over that stretch he laid another 48 seconds on Ås to achieve his maximum lead of 1:01.

Saari, after being 3:03 behind his 2006 time at the Turnaround, ended up 2:20 ahead of his 2006 time at the finish. That means he ran nearly 30 seconds/mile faster from the Turnaround to the finish in 2007, compared to 2006. Is there a lesson in pacing strategy here?

Ås's pace of 5:39/mile from the top of the Chute to Gold Hill was remarkable in itself. Ås gained three seconds per mile after reaching Gold Hill Road, but that only narrowed Saari's lead from 61 seconds to 45 seconds. Ås's 2:51:08 is the 2<sup>nd</sup>-fastest Equinox debut ever, behind only Pat Cross' then-course record 2:42:20 in 1983.

The award for most improved pacing goes to fifth-place finisher Benji Uffenbeck. In 2006, Uffenbeck was 7<sup>th</sup> at Ullrhavn (1:33:10) after ascending the Dome, compared to 6<sup>th</sup> this year (1:33:29). However, after that point, his performance in the two years headed in two different directions. His Out-and-Back time in 2007 was 35:23 v. 40:59 in 2006. This year he descended from Ullrhavn to Gold Hill in 28:45, more than 15 minutes faster than 2006 (43:59). This year he cruised in from the Henderson/Gold Hill intersection in 34:45 (7:22/mile), just a little more than half his 2006 time of 1:06:46 (14:09/mile).

This year he moved up one position from the top of the Dome to the finish, from 6<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. Last year he dropped 50 places, from 7<sup>th</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup>. That's quite a difference in performances from one year to the next.

Fourth-place Mark Lindberg paced himself very well – he was ranked 4<sup>th</sup>-fastest for five of the eight segments we timed, was 3<sup>rd</sup> for one section and 5<sup>th</sup> for one section. The most he deviated from that slot was when he recorded the 7<sup>th</sup>-fastest for the descent of the Chute and Henderson Road.

Take a look. You'll never run out of things to analyze.