

STARTING LINES

BUZZ • FACES • PLACES • STUFF

ATHLETES HELPING HAITI

How D.C. is pulling together to lend a hand



Results For Haiti

Results The Gym will be sponsoring a relief team to Haiti in the summer to help Haitians rebuild. Results has experience in this area, having sponsored two previous relief efforts: in August 2005 in Sri Lanka to help rebuild homes devastated by a tsunami, and in April 2006 in Biloxi, Miss., to aid victims of Hurricane Katrina. For info, call 202-234-5678 ext. 8206 or resultsforhaiti.com.


Shoes For Haiti.

Soles4Souls is a Nashville-based charity that collects donated new and gently-worn shoes for distribution to needy people around the world. Shoe donations for Haiti can be made through local running stores. Visit the charity's website at soles4souls.org to link up with local partners.

Washington Sports Club.

In addition to making a direct \$20,000 donation to the American Red Cross, and assisting its own staff that was affected by the disaster, WSC and its sister clubs have been coordinating donations made by their members and offering spinathon classes. Learn more at mysportsclubs.com/articles/news/work_out_to_help_out_haiti.

PACING The Recovery.

Pacers Running stores are using their races from February through April as platforms for channeling aid to Haiti. Runners can buy "Running for Haiti" bibs to wear in events, and Pacers will match any donation up to \$5,000, with all proceeds going to the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund. Learn more at runpacers.com. 

National Marathon Hits the Big Time

D.C.'s hometown race is making a name for itself

It was 2005. The D.C. running community was still smarting over the controversial collapse of the short-lived springtime D.C. Marathon. A new group, The Greater Washington Sports Alliance, stepped forward to replace it with a new race, named the National Marathon (nationalmarathon.com). About 2,400 runners competed in March 2006 in the first running. By 2009, attendance had reached 8,000.

Now, entering its fifth year, the National Marathon on Saturday, March 20, along with the half-marathon and the new three-person half-marathon team relay, is expected to attract 12,000 runners. Designated the fastest loop-course marathon in the country, based on its median finishing times, the National Marathon has ambitions to be a truly first-class, destination event, on par with the best marathons in the world.

"I'd like the National Marathon to become known as an incubator for Olympic hopefuls," says race director Bill Reifsnnyder, who has added some new features to make the event friendlier to the average runner, too. The race website features a new "Runner Central" page with training tips and advice. There will also be a seminar series at the race expo with various speakers. The National Marathon has also become involved in the lives of D.C.'s youth by partnering with Teens RUNDC to challenge high school-age students to train for and complete the marathon or half-marathon. 

Photo courtesy of United Nations Development Program

The National Bike Summit runs in Washington, D.C., March 9-11. Find out more at bikeleague.org. ::

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[WINNER'S CIRCLE]

GIVING KUDOS

Meet two athletes who have accomplished great things



Hilary Cairns

Age: 39.

Lives in: Washington, D.C.

Family: Married to Malcolm Lester; three kids.

Profession: Lawyer, specializing in child abuse and neglect cases in the D.C. Family Court.

Charities of Choice: On the Advisory

Board of Back on My Feet, volunteer for ACHIEVE Kids Tri, Inc. and Girls on the Run.

Sports Background: Tennis player growing up and in college, ran middle-distance track in college, took up triathlon in 2005 after enduring a series of running injuries.

2009 Running Bests: 37:20 in the 10K, 18:15 in the 5K and 29:58 for the five-miler.

2009 Multisport Highlights: First open-category overall winner at the Dextro ITU World Championship Triathlon; second at The Nation's Triathlon; first overall at Diamond in the Rough; first overall at NorthEast Triathlon; first in her age group at the Philadelphia Triathlon; and seventh overall at Duathlon Worlds.

Goals for 2010: Improve triathlon bike split, break 1:23 in the half-marathon, PR in every triathlons ("Heck, might as well aim high," she says), and manage to touch her toes.



Omar Nour

Age: 31

Where I live: Washington, D.C.

Family: Single, and loving it!

Sports: Triathlon. "My first triathlon was The Nation's Triathlon in 2007. Four months before the race, I was about 40 pounds overweight and had ripped two suit pants getting into my car. I decided that was enough. I signed up for the race and got hooked," he says.

Racing Highlights: The 2009 Dextro International Triathlon Union (ITU) Triathlon, where he finished in 1:58:47 in the Olympic distance; first in the Taneytown Cyclocross MABRA Championships in his first cyclocross race.

Goals for the Future: "I'm the first Egyptian triathlete in history to compete in the ITU circuit; I want to eventually be able to race at the highest ITU level. My goal is to give the London 2012 Olympic Games a shot. Thanks to all my sponsors and coaches."

omarnour.com

[ONE COOL JOB]



RACE DIRECTOR PERKS: BOB FLESHNER, FAR RIGHT, CONGRATULATES 2009 AMERICAN ODYSSEY RELAY FINISHER D.C. MAYOR ADRIAN M. FENTY (2ND FROM RIGHT).

Meet Bob Fleshner, From Lawyer to Race Director

Some people run away to join the circus. Bob Fleshner ran away from the circus to find his dream job. He was in-house counsel for the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, but he wasn't satisfied. "It was a great job," says Fleshner, "but it taught me that I really didn't want to be a lawyer." After trying out several other jobs, Fleshner decided that he'd had enough of sitting behind a desk. "It was time to follow my passion."

That passion was for racing. Fleshner is now the director of the American Odyssey Relay, a 200-mile race from Gettysburg, Penn., to Washington, D.C., that fielded more than 100 12-person teams in 2009, its inaugural year.

"I interact with people every day who are as passionate about running and sports as I am, and it's a blast," he says. "I also have to deal with lots of bureaucracy, but it's worth the hassle."

Race director is only one of the hats Fleshner now wears; he's also a personal trainer and a partner with the Headfirst College Advisory Team, which assists high school student athletes who want to continue playing sports in college.

In hindsight, does he have any regrets? Nope; he's looking only towards the future. "I'd like to make the American Odyssey the premier relay race on the east coast, along the lines of Hood to Coast and Reach the Beach," he says.

Not everyone else gets what he does, though. Fleshner was at a dinner party not long ago when one of the guests asked if he was still out of work. He gently explained that he was self-employed, not unemployed. "I love what I'm doing and look forward to it every day," he says. "It's really true that if you do what you love, you never work a day in your life." **CM**



Competitor Radio **SOUND BITES**

"I just decided one day that I wanted to run 15 miles around Big Bear Lake, and I did it in my basketball shoes with my dad. That's when I knew I wanted to be a runner."

—RYAN HALL, OLYMPIC MARATHONER (WITH A 2:06:17 PR)

For full interviews with Ryan and other endurance sports legends, visit the archives of competitorradio.com.

The United States Olympic Committee fields 45 sports teams with a budget of \$150 million. The New York Yankees paid their 24 players \$208 million last year.

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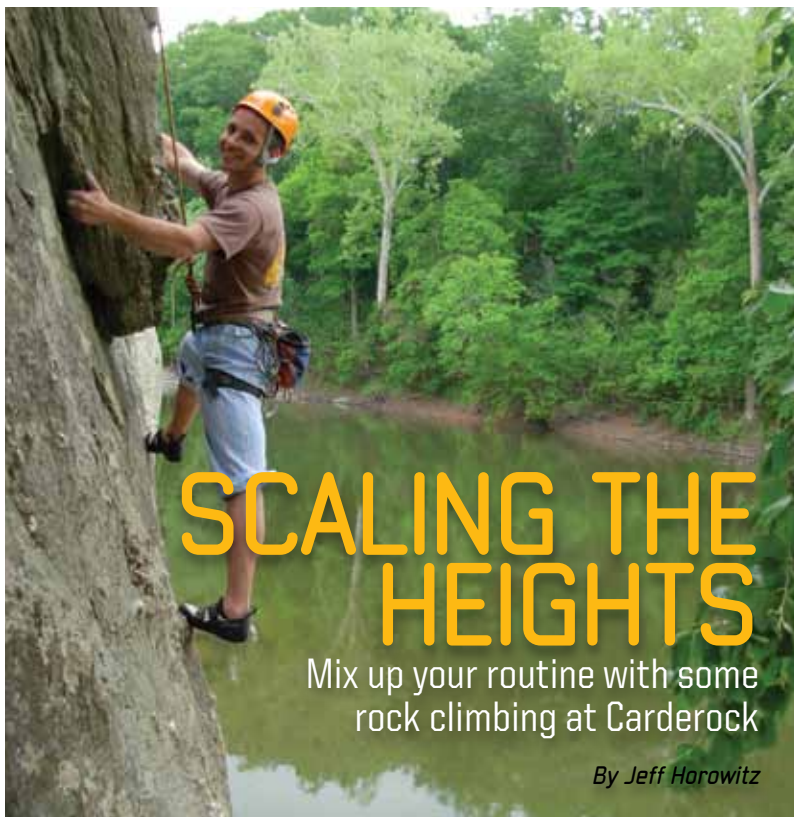


Photo Richard Leffers

SCALING THE HEIGHTS

Mix up your routine with some rock climbing at Carderock

By Jeff Horowitz

Got a hankering for some rock climbing? No need to head out west. Get out your gear and take a short drive over to Carderock, Md. Located on the Potomac River near Vaso Island and the Billy Goat Trail, Carderock Recreation Area is part of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historic Park. There is no fee to enter the park, and once inside, you'll find plenty of bouldering opportunities and many good climbs ranging from 30 to 50 feet, with most falling in around the 35-foot range.

Carderock has been popular with climbers since the 1920s, with its 800-foot-long wall of granite, quartz and shist providing enough slabs, overhangs and cracks to allow climbers to map out more than 100 defined routes, ranging in difficulty from beginner to expert.

Though stable, the rock here may allow traditional climbing protection to slip from their holds. Since the park doesn't allow the placement of any permanent bolts, plan to climb by top-

rope. Suitable tree anchors are easy to find, but be sure to bring enough rope, as some of them may be 25 feet away from the cliff's edge. Many established routes can be accessed from the same anchor, so climbers of differing abilities can share an anchor and climb together.

Info: For more on climbing at Carderock, pick up a copy of *Carderock, Past & Present* by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (1990), or see rockclimbing.com/routes/North_America/United_States.

Getting there: Take the Capitol Beltway (I-495) to the Maryland side of the Potomac River near Cabin John. Take Exit 13 onto the Clara Barton Parkway heading north. Take the first exit and enter the Carderock Recreation Area. Turn left at the stop sign and cross the Parkway. After passing under the C&O Canal, turn right and continue on to the last parking lot. The trailhead to the rocks is on the right, opposite the restrooms. Picnic areas are also located nearby. **CM**

THE SECRET HILL WORKOUT

The best cycling workout you've ever had is minutes from downtown



Any coach will tell you that the best way to build power for endurance sport is to hit the hills. This is especially true in cycling, where practicing proper form while maximizing power output is crucial for strong performance on race day. All that's necessary is to find a challenging, convenient and safe hill to hit for a midweek workout. But as any D.C. athlete knows, finding a hill to climb during the evening rush hour is second only to the quest for the Holy Grail.

No more. Tucked away off Connecticut Avenue is a stretch of road that can make any cyclist salivate and reach for their bike. Tilden Street. Ring a bell? Probably not, and that's the point. Just north of Cleveland Park and below Van Ness, this stretch of road east of Connecticut Avenue is a dream come true for city cyclists: it's scenic, has very few cross streets, is marked with

BONUS TIP: for a good warm-up, ride the 2.5-mile stretch up Connecticut from Dupont Circle, which provides rolling hills and some flat stretches to get the legs ready for the big workout to come.

bike lanes in both directions, and starting at the bottom of the hill at the intersection with Beach Drive and heading west up towards Connecticut Avenue, Tilden Street ascends 170 feet in almost exactly one kilometer (.62 of a mile). Repeat that 6 to 10 times, with an easy downhill recovery spin, for a quick workout that will leave your legs shaking and your lungs aching, but get you home for dinner on time and in one piece. It's a small price to pay for being able to keep up with the pack in the next long ride or race. **CM**

Nearly 15 million people took at least one yoga class in 2009, according to the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association.