

LAS VEGAS TRACK CLUB NEWS

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I THINK my brain is coming apart. Either that or I got a sprained anatomy. No kidding, it used to be so simple trying to keep track of the distance runners around here. Just a few guys in dirty sweats plodding around and looking haggard a lot. But that's all gone. Nobody even knows what tired means anymore. Every race a new record. Take Aaron Goldman. This guy is clearly a mental case. Last year his best time for 15 kilometers was 57 minutes and change and he was happy. He used to tell his wife Peggy how happy he was. "Peggy," Aaron would say, frowning his brow, "I'm happy." So his first try at the distance this year Aaron goes 57:55 and things look normal. Right? Wrong. The next week he does 55:05 and last Saturday 52:02. Now, I've heard of improvement but this is ridiculous. At this rate Aaron will be the world's greatest runner by early January. Of course, Jose Garcia had a 15 kilometer series of 52:57, 50:59 and 49:38, but Jose is 22 and doesn't know any better. He thinks running is all there is to living. But Aaron is 39. You'd think he would know what he's doing is impossible. Mike Neal isn't helping anyone's sanity, either. Mike had a series of 55:23, 54:14 and 51:55 last Saturday and any of those times would run most of his fellow over-40 runners out of gas. Like I said—it used to be so simple. Last year's best 15 kilometer time was 53:35 by Doug Clarke. Five guys have beaten that this year and I wouldn't be surprised if the whole club did by December... One more little shot about Aaron. You remember him—raced a train while training for the Pike's Peak Marathon. Little things like that. Anyway, in the 15 kilo race of Oct. 9 Aaron stepped on a loose Gatorade wrapper during the first of three laps around the Valley High parking lot. It promptly stuck to his shoe and there was our hero, flapping along like some wounded bird trying to take wing. He didn't dare stop to remove it (a guy could be trampled to death) so he tried the next best thing. It was on his right foot and he kept trying to step on it with his left foot. You ever try that in the middle of a race? It ain't easy when you're walking. So naturally he failed. Tripped a couple of times—but failed to get the wrapper. So Aaron ran the whole race with that wrapper on his shoe. Step, flop, step, flop, step, flop. Honest to God I'm cracking up. I need a vacation bad... Garcia won the SNAAU 5-mile championship on Oct. 23 with a 25:40 effort, breaking the club record of 26:13 held jointly by Dick Greene and Nick Kitt. Dick hit 25:55 for second and Bruce Brown's 27:03 was third... Hal Hammon made his first start of the year in that particular race and ran 30:46, a personal record. For you guys with injuries Hammon should be an inspiration. A year ago his doctor told him to forget about running because of a bad knee. Hal wasn't having any of that. He ran through the pain and things began to get better, so good he decided to run the Las Vegas Marathon last February. His doctor wanted to have him committed when he found out what Hal was planning. "You'll never finish," said the learned MD. Hal finished in 3:32.07 and he's been going strong ever since... In that same 5-miler Dick Walsh had a PR of 34:47, his first time under 35 minutes. Here's another guy with guts. Dick ran his first 5-miler in September of 1970 and it took him over 59 painful minutes. Nobody would have blamed him for never running another race. But this 48-year-old guy was tough — and now he's broken the 7-minute barrier ... The LVTC youth program is doing well. Race director Dalby Shirley now has enough runners for separate boys and girls 3-mile races and last Saturday five kids moved up to the 5-miler. Jathan Ward, 12, did 32:54 and Lacie Ward, 13, ran 35:15. Lacie's a girl but she's making it tough on the fellas. Tina Jaramillo and Veronica Salazar, a pair of 11-year-olds, ran 25:16 and 27:58 respectively, in the 3-mile. Another 12-year-old, Ephraim Briscoe, ran a 19:52 in the boys 3-mile... Dr. Lawrence Lamb, writing the "Doctor's Mailbag" column in the Review-Journal last week, has this to say... "Often it is said that athletes die young from heart disease. It is true that a number do—but the catch is they do not continue to be athletes. This seems to be particularly true of football players. In high school and college they are very active. Soon they no longer play football but continue to eat as much as they did before. Before they reach 40 years of age they are former athletes who are now fat slob... most overweight, out-of-shape men are more likely to have heart attacks than more active lean men. Having been an athlete 10 or 20 years earlier doesn't help... you may hear comments about "athletic heart." Good physical conditioning does slow the heart and increase its capacity to receive and pump blood. This makes its external size larger because its volume capacity is greater. This is a sign of health, not disease. Because certain heart diseases cause the heart to enlarge there is a common misconception that all enlarged hearts are evidence of disease. Nothing could be further from the truth."

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LORD-GIVE-ME-STRENGTH DEPARTMENT:

Saturday, Nov. 6 — 10 mile SNAAU district championship, 9 a.m. Valley HS
Saturday, Nov. 13 — One Hour Run, SNAAU championship, 10 a.m. Valley HS
Saturday, Nov. 20 — North Las Vegas Turkey Day Races (watch the papers for starting time and place).

(That's—gasp—it)