

# CONFIDENCE THROUGH SPORTS

Published by: The 52 Association, Inc.  
441 Lexington Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017  
(212) 986-5281  
1-800-367-6768

Volume IV

SUMMER

1984

## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR, Lore Bizzarro With a Little Help from Some Friends



The violent storms that swept the East Coast this spring caused floods and general havoc at the Sports and Recreation Center in Ossining. Most of the retaining walls surrounding the property collapsed; the lake created flooding the basketball court and lawns; the walkways around the swimming pool buckled

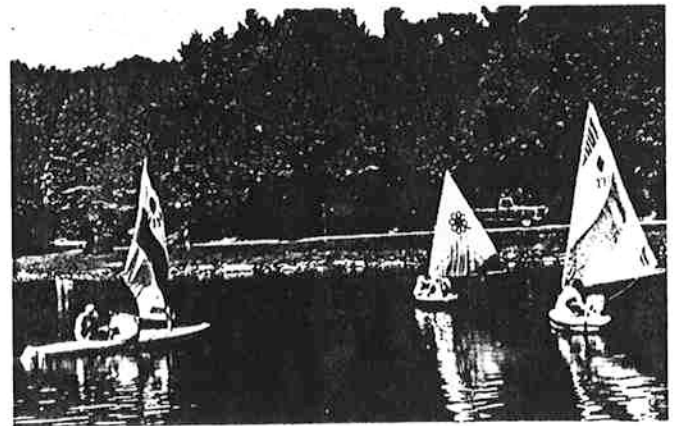
making them impassable for wheelchairs and dangerous for everyone else. The Center, to put it simply, was a mess and Memorial Day weekend—the official opening—was not far off.

It was an emergency that Center Chairman Al Masullo solved with a phone call to James Sullivan, Warden of Sing Sing Prison. Soon prison trustees under the supervision of Sargeant Lavalee arrived at the Center to help repair the damage. Some weeks of hard work and "a hell of a job" later, the Center was ready to open.

We are looking forward to a bigger than ever season in 1984—many new members, more groups, more hospital visits and more special sporting events.

- The Achilles Track Club of New York will demonstrate handicapped running on July 21 and again on August 4.
- The Tri-State Athlete Association will hold a picnic on July 21.
- The Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association will have its annual picnic on August 4.
- 250 to 300 members of the National Amputation Foundation will hold its annual outing on August 19.
- Isabel Bohn and other members of the Philadelphia rowing program for the disabled will come to the Center one weekend (to be announced) to demonstrate boating for the disabled, using both an Alden Shell and a "Rowcat."

Other groups, too numerous to mention, will be coming to Ossining and with a little cooperation from the weather, it should be a grand summer.



An afternoon under sail can be a remembered experience.

## OPERATION RUN/SAIL

In recognition of the athletes who attended the 1984 International Games for the disabled, the 52 Association held a special ceremony at its Ossining Sports Center. Westchester County Executive Andrew P. O'Rourke presented a proclamation establishing June 15, 1984 as Operation Run/Sail Day in Westchester County.

Dick Traum, President of the Achilles Club for disabled runners, the first above-the-knee amputee to run the marathon, left the center and ran to the Shattamuc Yacht Club in Ossining. Traum boarded the 38 foot ketch "Possibilities Unlimited" captained by Allen Hayes, a double amputee and one of the most popular ski instructors at the 52/7-Eleven "Learn-to-Ski" clinics. Hayes and Traum sailed down the Hudson River and returned to Ossining. Operation Run/Sail honored disabled athletes of all levels and was a special tribute to the 1984 International Games for the Disabled.

The Third International Games for the Disabled was held in Nassau County from June 16 to June 30, a first in the United States.

More than 1800 disabled athletes from 54 countries competed in 22 events. Included was track and field, swimming, weight lifting, archery, soccer, wheelchair soccer, wrestling, riding, and cycling to name just a few.

The 52 Association will make Operation Run/Sail an annual event.

Garnett Westchester Newspapers/Kathy Krombeck



Dick Traum, The Marathon Man

## RUNNING: THE YEAR-ROUND SPORT BY PATTY LEE PARMALEE COACH & COORDINATOR ACHILLES TRACK CLUB

What do skiers do in the summer? Run. But what do disabled skiers do in the summer? They run too!

At first, running may not seem the ideal sport for a disabled person; swimming and cycling are less jarring. But running can be done anywhere, anytime, for very little money. And above all, it is a social sport. A large part of the pleasure is the conversations while jogging, as well as the very heartwarming interaction with other participants and spectators in a race. Doctors and researchers are finding more and more that there are very few disabilities or diseases which prevent running or fast walking, and regular aerobic exercise is beneficial to people with nearly every physical condition.

Not only are there objective physiological changes (the heart muscle is strengthened, the blood gets more oxygen, the body is toned, the appetite and weight are regulated, and energy is higher), but the psychological benefits are the real payoff. For any runner, some of these psychological benefits are the direct result of the increased energy level and the achieving of goals (as well as the simple enjoyment of nature, and the body's rhythms).

For a disabled runner, there is the added enormous joy of living what had once seemed a fantasy. Gradually the handicap becomes more or less irrelevant, recedes to a secondary place in life, because in a race everyone is faster or slower than someone else. People who are overweight, smokers, timid, old, all have different handicaps and the disabled runners are by no means always the slowest. (Some members start races early in order to finish with the pack; others race right with the middle-of-the-pack runners.)

It is a very heady experience to realize that what you have considered your handicap—your body—is capable of much the same involvement in physical activities as others. One reason why running is a particularly good sport for the disabled is that it is already viewed as a sport for everyone. Race officials see many races within one race: women do not really compete against men; older women against younger women, etc. Gradually it is accepted that disabled runners are just one more category. (Achilles members, however, do not "compete" against each other because the disabilities are so varied; rather they compete against themselves and test their own improving condition.)

The Achilles Track Club for disabled runners was started by its current president, Dick Traum, who ran his fifth NYC Marathon on his artificial leg last fall. He did his first, seven years earlier after taking fitness classes at the Y with Bob Glover. A young Canadian named Terry Fox, a cancer-related leg amputee, heard about Dick's marathon and decided to run all the way across Canada to raise money for cancer research. He died shortly before reaching his goal, but his great heart inspired Canadians to organize many races and clubs for disabled runners. On Terry Fox Day in September, over 1,000 ten-kilometer races are held across Canada in his memory. In Toronto on Terry Fox Day in 1982, Dick was impressed by the Canadian commitment to disabled runners and returned to New York to found the Achilles Track Club with Glover and the New York Road Runners Club. As far as we know it is the only organization in the U.S. dedicated to training ambulatory as well as wheelchair disabled runners.

The stories of Achilles members in the 1983 NYC Marathon give some idea of the diversity of the team. There is Mary Ball, a national-class wheelchair racer with polio and Linda Down who was born with cerebral palsy and runs with crutches. Last year Linda was invited to the White House with the winners of the NYC Marathon, to be congratulated by the President on her own courageous victory. This year John Paul Cruz (who was born with one leg—a thalidomide birth defect) received the same honor after his marathon. JP, an irrepressible athlete, tried skiing for the first time this year joining the 52/7-Eleven "Learn-to-Ski" clinic at Jack Frost Mountain in March. He is a natural skier too, and did extremely well his first time on skies. Sandy Davidson, a Scotsman partially paralyzed from a stroke started with Achilles, walking weakly, and worked his way, with his cane and wonderful smile, to doing all 26 miles in ten hours.

Many other disabilities are represented in the club, including blindness, cancer, kidney dialysis, various kinds of paralysis, brain damage... and all are welcome. Not everyone will end up running a marathon, some may not race at all. But everyone, no matter how timid and out-of-shape to begin with, benefits from the steady exercise and the improved self-image.

Interested in regular exercise or perhaps starting your own group? We will be happy to assist. Simply come to a 6:30 P.M. Wednesday evening workout at the International Running Center, 9 East 89 Street, New York, NY 10128; or write Patty Lee Parmalee, Achilles Track Club, same address, for information; or phone Patty or Dick Traum at 212-398-0348.