

THE MONITOR

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Charlette Kerivan: On the Right Track

Speed-walker Charlette Kerivan triumphed in the 1990 New York Marathon with three minutes to spare on November 4 as a member of the Achilles Track Team. Diagnosed with Type 1 Insulin-Dependent Diabetes just eight months before, Charlette began training the day she got out of the hospital. The New York Marathon was the first marathon in which Charlette, a 41-year old marketing executive and mother of three, has competed.

"I wasn't even physically fit before I was first diagnosed with diabetes," said Charlette, who was convinced by her endocrinologist that she needed to begin an exercise routine as soon as she felt up to it. "By the summer, I was convinced I wanted to race in the New York Marathon and my doctor said OK. I knew I

would have to run with someone who could help me monitor my blood sugar levels, so I got in touch with the Achilles Track Team."

The Achilles Track Team is a track club with 40 chapters around the world which counts among its members runners and race-walkers with physical limitations. However, there is no limit to the spirit of endurance among these runners and walkers with disabilities like blindness, cerebral palsy, amputations and asthma. The Achilles Track Team members run with a partner, who is there to insure their safety during the marathon. These volunteer companions are

trained to watch for signs of distress that even the runner may

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Speed-walker Charlette Kerivan and her physician, Joseph Belsky, M.D.



Achilles Track Club

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not be aware of.

"Charlette came to us with the right attitude — she wanted to have fun," said Dr. Richard Traum, who has an amputated leg above the knee. "She was in great physical condition." Dr. Traum is the founder of the Achilles Track Team who credits the team members with inspiring each other to overcome great obstacles. The Achilles Track Team trained Richard, Charlette's husband, to accompany her in the New York Marathon.

Richard helped Charlette measure her blood sugar levels during the race. "He agreed to carry 15 pounds of gear on a backpack for me," said Charlette. "In that pack, he carried food, sports drinks, dextrose tablets, and my meter." Charlette says that monitoring her blood sugar levels was critical to her training and to participation in the Marathon. She uses a ONE TOUCH[®] Blood Glucose Meter to give her immediate feedback.

The meter, she says, helps her "juggle my chemical balancing act."

Charlette and Richard stopped

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every hour during the Marathon to take a reading. If her sugar levels were too low, she chewed a dextrose tablet which gave her the burst of energy she needed to continue. "Some people carry brownies," said Charlette, "but they just sit in your stomach and make you feel awful."

Charlette built into her time estimate for walking the race, the necessity of stopping for testing and eating. She guessed that she would need 8 hours to complete the Marathon, but came in at 7 hours 57 minutes.

How did she feel when she crossed that finish line at 3:12 p.m.? "Exhilarated and with blisters on my feet." She immediately monitored her blood sugar before being presented with a big bouquet of flowers.

"I can't wait for the next Marathon," she said. "I would like to with the Achilles Track Team in Germany, where I lived for five years. Before I had diabetes, I never thought I would participate a marathon at all!"

People with diabetes are welcome to join the Achilles Track Team. For more information, please call (212) 967-9300 or write to Achilles Track Team, 9 East 88th Street, New York, NY 10128. Be sure to mention **THE MONITOR**