

# Jogger is back in stride

## Races by attack site

By NICOLE BODE  
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Fourteen years after surviving a brutal rape and beating that shocked the city, Central Park jogger Trisha Meili returned yesterday to the scene of the attack.

This time, she wasn't alone.

"It makes me think of how grateful I am — that I am able to run by there and feel as good as I do, thanks to an awful lot of people," said Meili, 42, who jogged past the site of the April 19, 1989, attack during the first Hope and Possibility Run/Walk.

Meili, who has no memory of that late-night attack on the 102nd St. transverse, was joined by 1,500 other runners and walkers in the 5-mile race she helped organize.

She came forward publicly for the first time in April to promote her memoir, "I am the Central Park Jogger: A Story of Hope and Possibility."

She thanked her supporters for helping her through her remarkable recovery.

Meili has written that her spirits were raised five months after the vicious attack when she went to Central Park and saw flowers and notes left by people praying for her recovery.

### Gratitude

"People have been thanking me, but I want to thank all of you," Meili told the crowd of rac-

ers, "It's the energy that I feel from you . . . that helps me to keep going."

Meili also thanked the Achilles Track Club — an international group for disabled and mainstream athletes that organized the race — for helping her heal by rekindling her love of running.

The race began at 8:20 a.m. near the East Drive and 99th St. entrance. Among the physically handicapped competitors were several in wheelchairs, amputees and blind racers with guides.

Meili — who served as a guide for legally blind state Sen. David Paterson (D-Harlem) — clocked in at a time of 48 minutes, to wild applause.

She then headed to the book-signing tent, where she spent close to two hours penning words of support for her fans.

"Someone like her, it shows you that you can overcome anything," said racer Artie Elephant, 58, who is going blind from a degenerative eye disease. "It makes me handle my problems very easily."



RON ANTONELLI

**REASON TO SMILE** Central Park jogger Trisha Meili crosses the finish line in the first Hope and Possibility Run/Walk, which took her past the site of the Infamous 1989 attack.