

Gee running for the right reasons

Ribbed by his players, Narragansett basketball coach on the right path to fitness

TARPY, from 1

a lot of different reasons.”
A quick sample of the top finishers of the race seems to indicate that one of the biggest reasons was knowing Scott Bessette.

Scott, the brother of Kerri Bessette, whom the race is in memory of, is a South Kingstown native who competes in several racing events throughout the year with the group Running Heritage.

If you were at Run4Kerri or at the Blessing of the Fleet Road Race nine days earlier, you've probably seen someone sporting the Running Heritage threads.

The group is one of the largest running organizations in the area and with so many athletes from the group competing together at events like Run4Kerri, it's hard for a lot of runners to not get to know each other by name, even if their only experience with each other is at the starting line.

For Tarpy, Moulton and top female Amy Rudolph, knowing Scott and having that type of personal connection with someone putting the event together made the decision to enter a no-brainer.

“I like to support this race because I know Scott and I know a lot of people involved in the race so either myself or my husband try to come and run every year,” Rudolph said. “He's away so it was up to me to come and run this year.”

Rudolph went on to explain

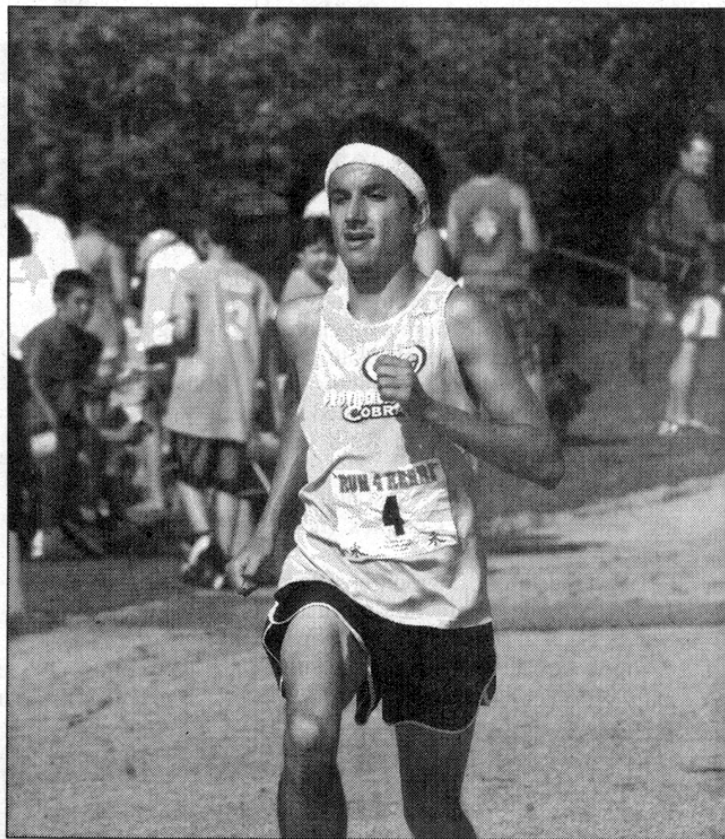


PHOTO: PAUL J. SPETRINI

North Kingstown's Eric Lonergan, formerly of RIC, placed fourth in Sunday's Run4Kerri road race, clocking in at 20 minutes, 46 seconds.

that, because running is such a grueling sport and there are only so many places to get a good workout in, the sheer number of people doing it is so small that you easily get to know people quickly.

“The running community is very tight knit in New England,” she said. “It's a small community but it's very tight knit and you

just have to read his sister's story and see how his family has rallied around her memory and kept it alive ... I would support them anytime I could.”

That so many cared enough to come out and support the cause wasn't lost on Scott either.

“It's overwhelming,” he said. “My college roommates that I haven't seen in years came up and just to have people you care about understand how much this means to you is just fantastic, I couldn't ask for better friends, I couldn't ask for better strangers.”

Turnout great

When Kathy Bessette began planning Sunday's eighth annual Run4Kerri road race, she knew what she was getting herself into.

It would take a lot of work to line up sponsors, a lot more work to get the word out, and a ton of time and effort to keep things organized.

Kathy Bessette knew exactly what to expect. Except, of course, how good it was going to actually go.

During a rare break in the action Sunday, Kathy had a chance to reflect on how well the 2009 edition of her daughter's race turned out.

She didn't even know what to say.

“It's hard to put into words,” Kathy said. “It makes me feel warm in that everybody cares so much about my family and that people that didn't know Kerri have an opportunity to look at her picture, see the kind of person that she was, hear stories and learn.”

Over 930 people from across South County and throughout the area took part in Sunday's race. It was the largest turnout

the event has ever seen, no doubt helped by near-perfect weather.

So what's the future hold for the Run4Kerri?

Kathy isn't sure what the race will look like in one year, in five years or in 10, but she knows one thing: the desire to put on the best event possible isn't waning any time soon.

“We're going to do it as long as we can,” she said. “We'd like one year to hit 1,000. I think we're in the high 900s this year so every year it keeps getting bigger and bigger and it will be going for quite a while.”

Venable takes right step

Wyoming resident Bronson Venable has been through a lot in the last 12 months.

After a remarkable high school cross country career at Bishop Hendricken, a career he capped off with a state championship his senior year, Venable stepped up to the collegiate level as a member of the Iona College Indoor Track team and even placed second in his first collegiate race, the Fordham Opener back in December.

Unfortunately for Venable, as if often the case for distance runners, the injury bug came calling.

Venable had been out of active training for close to six months before Sunday and that's why his ninth-place showing in this year's Run4Kerri was a little more impressive than his third-place effort a year earlier.

“I came out to see where I was as I get ready to go back to college,” Venable said. “I mean, this was the first time I came out, I've been training for like six months after I got injured.”

Venable said he was happy

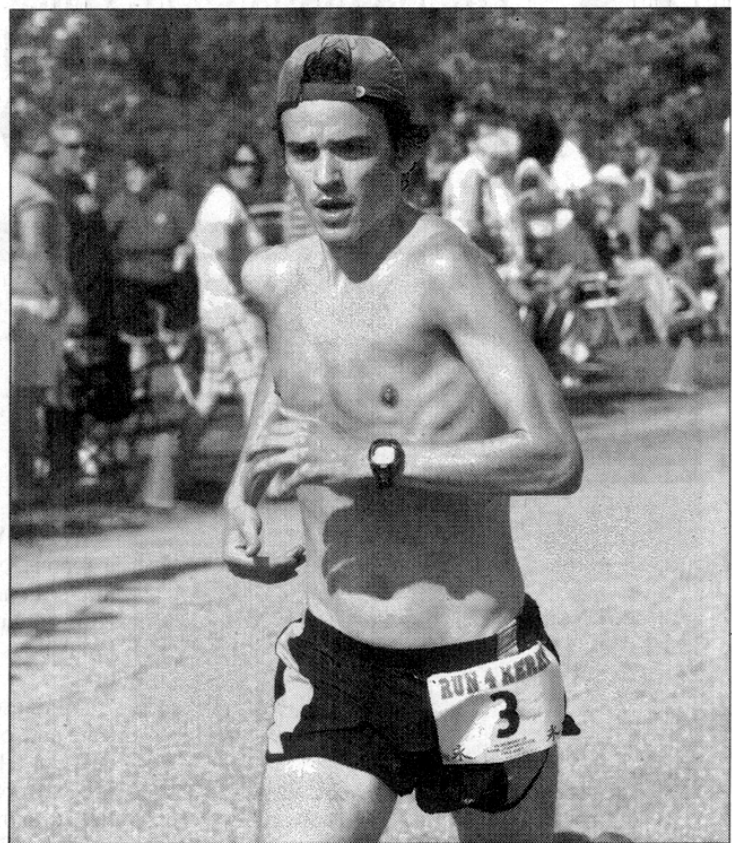


PHOTO: PAUL J. SPETRINI

Providence's Patrick Moulton crossed the finish line at Sunday's Run4Kerri Road Race 42 seconds behind winner Patrick Tarpy.

with his effort and pleased with the race as a whole. That he is a South County local made it even more special.

“It was good,” he said. “There's a lot of people out there. Not only runners, but families with barbecues and whatnot cheering you.”

Venable's reason for joining the race was a simple one. Besides wanting to get back into top form, he wanted to support a good cause and a good family.

“I just started running when I met up with Scott and Matt Pelletier and everything and they all took me in and like I'm running under their wings and they're watching out for me, they're all really nice guys,” Venable said. “So it's sad to see what's happened to their family but they're all really nice, you

have to give back to them.”

Coach gets in shape

For David Gee, Sunday's Run4Kerri road race was just the latest step in a long road of lifestyle changes made for one very simple and highly comical reason.

“Well, I guess I got tired of my basketball kids telling me I was fat,” Gee joked. “This year I picked up running. I've run about five or six races, including the Blessing of the Fleet this year which is a big thing for me, I've never been a runner so this has been a good lifestyle change for me.”

Gee finished in under 40 minutes flat, clocking in at a pace of 10 minutes per mile. Not bad for a 33-year old man who just picked up the sport.

“Well, I didn't quite do the time I expected to do but it's a good race, a fun race,” he said. “There's a lot of community people out, you see a lot of people you don't see often and you get to catch up with them. I survived, that's all that matters.”

Gee said that one of the added benefits of running in a local race is it gets so many people out of their house, whether to compete or just to cheer on their friends and families.

“It's really nice because it's gotten my family out running and we all run together, we run races together, we pull for each other,” he said. “Even people that don't run, they come out and they support us and everything so it's a good community event that can bring everyone together. That's what I think is the best part of it.”

Not that that doesn't have its drawbacks, though.

“It motivates you to run pretty fast because you don't want to get beat by everybody,” he said. “You don't want to stop and walk, you'll get embarrassed by all the people around. That's what motivates me.”

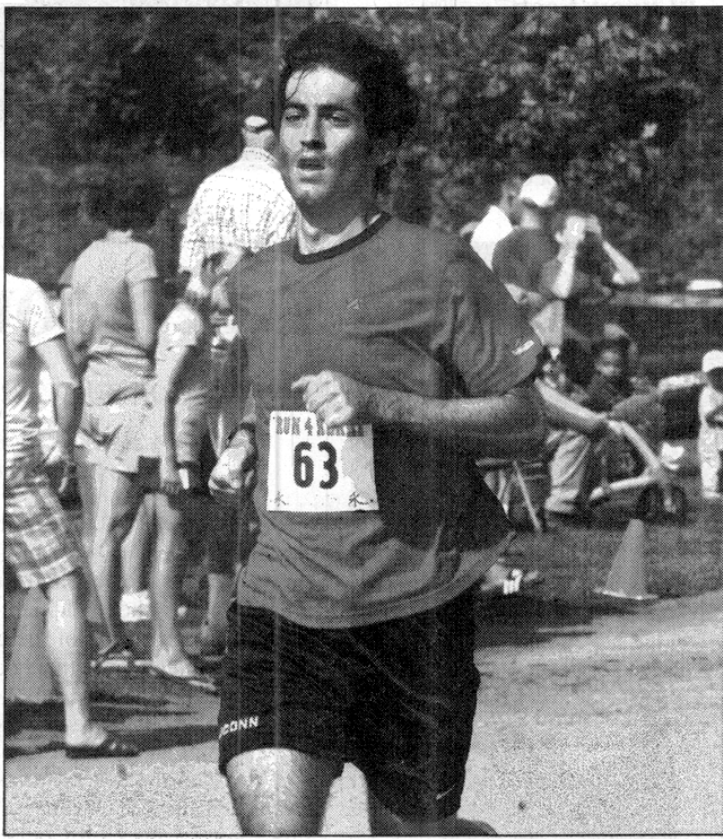


PHOTO: PAUL J. SPETRINI

Patrick Blake, a runner from New York, New York, finished fourth in Sunday's Run4Kerri Road Race, clocking in at the 21 minute, 4 second mark.

TOP FINISHERS

PLC	Time	Name	Town, State	PLC	Time	Name	Town, State	PLC	Time	Name	Town, State
1	19:23	Patrick Tarpy	Providence, RI	35	25:00	Paul Letolle	Wakefield, RI	69	27:23	James Derentis	Providence, RI
2	20:05	Patrick Moulton	Providence, RI	36	25:04	Ed Duhamel	Cumberland, RI	70	27:25	Mike Proto	Bristol, RI
3	20:46	Eric Lonergan	North Kingstown, RI	37	25:06	Kimberly Jackson	Cranston, RI	71	27:25	Ray Fasano	Scituate, RI
4	21:04	Patrick Blake	New York, NY	38	25:09	Thomas Casperson	Cranston, RI	72	27:34	Brian Harris	Clifton Park, NY
5	21:20	Scott Bessette	Mystic, CT	39	25:11	Patrick Kenny	Sherman, CT	73	27:38	Jack Lamberti	Narragansett, RI
6	21:27	Michael Meehan	Providence, RI	40	25:14	Brett Smiley	Providence, RI	74	27:39	Vincent Criscione	N/A
7	21:38	Jacob Edwards	Stonington, CT	41	25:24	Dan Lennon	West Greenwich, RI	75	27:43	Milton Schumacher	Scituate, RI
8	21:49	Amy Rudolph	Providence, RI	42	25:27	Katie Twarog	Providence, RI	76	27:46	Bill Adams	N/A
9	21:55	Bronson Venable	Wyoming, RI	43	25:30	Robb Macandrew	N/A	77	27:47	Kenneth French	Wappinger Falls, NY
10	22:01	Dylan Leazes	Providence, RI	44	25:33	Kevin Toolin	Saunderstown, RI	78	27:49	Joseph Sullivan	Cranston, RI
11	22:19	Glen Guillemette	Narragansett, RI	45	25:35	Aaron Rome	N/A	79	27:49	Michael Marsh	Leesburg, VA
12	22:21	Greg Ahnrud	Chepachet, RI	46	25:37	Matt Lysik	Wakefield, RI	80	27:52	Kevin Mcooy	Johnston, RI
13	22:21	Chris Poulos	Wakefield, RI	47	25:40	Jason Kurland	Providence, RI	81	27:52	Katie Meinertz	N/A
14	22:29	John Bigouette	Pawcatuck, CT	48	25:45	Stephanie Beaudette	Johnston, RI	82	27:58	Ryan C. Kelley	Wakefield, RI
15	22:31	Bryan Johnston	Keene, NH	49	26:07	Kim Chula-Maguire	Cumberland, RI	83	28:01	John Hansen	N/A
16	22:31	Andrew Dionne	Westerly, RI	50	26:09	Michael Halle	Scarborough, ME	84	28:17	Hank Ward	Middletown, RI
17	22:32	Erich Fieldler	N/A	51	26:10	Kenneth Avero	Attleboro, MA	85	28:05	Eric Winn	Charlestown, RI
18	22:38	John Larosa	New Milford, CT	52	26:10	Kenny Bager	Warwick, RI	86	28:07	Gregory Beaudette	Johnston, RI
19	22:49	Michael Macedo	Scituate, RI	53	26:13	Ashley Jensen	N/A	87	28:07	Jack Chaffee	Coventry, RI
20	22:59	Martin Tighe	Providence, RI	54	26:22	Claire Garow	South Kingstown, RI	88	28:10	Elizabeth Kordowski	Perryville, RI
21	23:01	Mike St Lawrence	N/A	55	26:24	Maira Kenny	Sherman, CT	89	28:11	Matt Fontaine	Pasadena, MD
22	23:03	Timothy Rudd	Pawtucket, RI	56	26:34	Rich Falvo	Providence, RI	90	28:12	Stephen Warren	Sharon, MA
23	23:09	Derek Phillips	Minneapolis, MN	57	26:35	Alissa Nelson	Franklin, MA	91	28:17	Billy Seguin	Fairfax, VA
24	23:12	Warren Angell	North Kingstown, RI	58	26:40	Eric Bayha	N/A	92	28:21	Greg Anderson	Wakefield, RI
25	23:34	Joe Parenteau	North Providence, RI	59	26:41	Eric Sinkie	N/A	93	28:23	Michael Kimmerlein	Wakefield, RI
26	23:46	Andrew Sabourin	Barrington, RI	60	26:42	Paul Friend	East Greenwich, RI	94	28:31	Ken Abrams	North Kingstown, RI
27	23:55	Joshua Adams	New Hartford, CT	61	26:46	Taniru Deleon-Nwaha	Mount Kisco, NY	95	28:37	Danny Fontaine	Pasadena, MD
28	24:03	Tom Wharton	Riverside, RI	62	26:48	Jim Ferns	Cranston, RI	96	28:39	Mark Vuono	Coventry, RI
29	24:17	Matt Anderson	Fairfax, VA	63	26:52	Thomas Sherman	West Greenwich, RI	97	28:39	Chris Hook	Cumberland, RI
30	24:25	Dave Schaad	East Greenwich, RI	64	27:02	Kyle Arnold	Clifton Park, NY	98	28:40	Ryan McNaughton	Saunderstown, RI
31	24:34	Joey Carroll	West Kingston, RI	65	27:02	Amy Rice	Wakefield, RI	99	28:41	Jason Ertan	Wakefield, RI
32	24:35	Trish Hillery	Greenville, RI	66	27:16	Eugene Matejek	Stamford, CT	100	28:43	Jason Cunningham	Warwick, RI
33	24:52	Michael Daniels	West Warwick, RI	67	27:16	Mark Mathieu	Coventry, RI	101	28:48	Brian London	N/A
34	24:58	Phillip Campo	Wakefield, RI	68	27:18	Sean Givens Jr	N/A	102	28:56	Gordon Gibson	N/A