

...Footnotes...

.....May 2024



Capital City Road Runners & Walkers Club

Great moments – Seb Coe vs Steve Ovett in 1980



It came as a bit of a shock, while I following the Boston Marathon on television. The realization hit hard that it has been 43 years since running my first Boston Marathon. I mean 43 years! Where does the time go. Glad to be still around though! During the 1980's, two British runners caught the people's imagination. I will let Jason Henderson, who wrote for *Athletic Weekly* tell you the story of the competitive rivalry between these two amazing runners. It's a story worth telling and remembering.

It is now 40 years since Seb Coe and Steve Ovett took part in the most talked about head-to-head in the history of the sport. Yet even though four decades have now passed since the Moscow Olympics of 1980, their monumental showdown at those Games still sends a tingle down the spine of athletics fans who were mesmerised by a duel that captured the imagination of the world.

Coe held the world 800m record and was favourite for that event. Ovett was unbeaten in 43 races at 1500m or the mile, held the world mile record and was tipped to triumph in the 1500m.

The two men also came into the Games with a share of the world record at a distance they had never met over – 1500m. Ultimately, though, Ovett won 800m gold after Coe ran a disastrous tactical race, whereas the latter enjoyed redemption in the 1500m.

The result? A one-all draw with two own goals.

The first clash, over 800m on July 26, was an anti-climax. As Mel Watman reported at the time in AW: “Ovett ran so physical a race that he can consider himself lucky not to have been disqualified, while Coe chose an Olympic final of all occasions to run the most abysmal tactical race of his career.

“Instead of the full-blooded battle we had been anticipating so excitedly, the race turned out to be an untidy, ill-mannered affair won in the modest time of 1:45.4. We didn’t see the best of either Ovett or Coe.”

Watman added: “Having got that off my chest... Ovett, the supreme racer, got himself in the right place at the right time and when he struck for home early in the finishing straight there was never any doubt as to the outcome.

“Whereas Coe was left floundering in the cut and thrust of an Olympic final, Ovett was absolutely in his element.”

On August 1 the two middle-distance gladiators returned to race over three-and-three-quarter laps and, after Coe took his revenge, Watman wrote in AW: “Rounding the final turn Coe, with Ovett just behind, closed up on the leader Jurgen Straub for the kill. Both Britons gathered themselves for one last lung-searing effort but it was Coe, glancing back to take stock of the situation, who got in first.

“Turning into the straight Coe drew level with Straub and then with another burst of acceleration 80 out, the ‘double kick’ we had heard whispers of, he was away and winging it to everlasting glory.”

The careers of Coe and Ovett were played out in the pages of AW in the 1970s and 80s. Coe first appeared in the magazine when winning the colts race at the Yorkshire Cross Country Championships in 1971, whereas Ovett was featured in the Spotlight on Youth column in 1970 and his first photo appeared when finishing runner-up in an 800m race aged 15 in 1971.

From then on they appeared on the cover multiple times with AW providing such a definitive coverage of their exploits that an entire book was published in 1982 called The Coe & Ovett File containing little more than a collection of cuttings from past pages of the magazine.

Both athletes broke many world records and won lots of titles. Yet the moment they are remembered for best remains Moscow 1980. (*the running rev*)

Moscow 1980 - Coe & Ovett - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqHXv6Q5eh0>

TRI-CITY RUN

Fredericton – Moncton – Saint John - Fredericton

530 kms – 8 days – March 20 to 26, 1985

- By Dennis Atchison



Fredericton was clear and cold the first day of the Run. A temperature of -22 Celsius with wind chill of -30C. Seven days later Fredericton was 4 Celsius and sunny. Such is long distance running in early spring in New Brunswick.

The idea of running from Fredericton to Moncton to Saint John and back to Fredericton was unique. No one had done this before (or since). Ultra Marathons were rare or unheard of in 1985, never mind running in winter conditions. The exception, of course, was 1980 and Terry Fox.



I decided to do the Run late March based on media interest. They had a lull in sports stories during that time and were able to provide coverage and profile. CBAFT (Radio Canada out of Moncton) did a half-hour television special afterwards.

As the new Executive Director of New Brunswick Special Olympics, I pitched the RUN to the NB Auto Dealers Association. The physical challenge and uniqueness of the RUN had caught their attention. In the end their sponsorship raised \$22,000. Their support also secured our credibility as a professional volunteer organization.

It was important to include a Special Olympics athlete on the Run, but to find such an athlete would be rare. What most people do not realize about Special Olympic athletes is many are true athletes. Despite mental challenges, the physical “knowing” and performance can reach excellent levels with the right training. Special Olympics offered over sixteen different sports in New Brunswick at that time, and accommodated a wide range of ability levels (recreational to highly competitive). But nowhere in the mix was ultra-marathoning.

Six months before the Run I started to up my training from 50 to 60 kms a week to 100 – 120 kms per week. At twenty-eight I was exploring how far and how fast I could run. Later that year, a month after the Run and a well-earned rest, I ran in the first season of competitive road racing in New Brunswick. I ran in six of the ten sanctioned races and finished in the top ten in the province. The Run had given me an excellent base for competition.

Fortunately, the running gods were kind, and three days before the start, I found a Special Olympics athlete to join the Run. Lucien Noel from northern rural New Brunswick had run the Montreal Marathon with his brother and was able to join the team. A unilingual twenty-eight year old Francophone, Lucien had never been to any of the RUN cities. Our driver was my friend from my university days, a Black unilingual Anglophone. We were an unusual crew.

The first day, in that cold and wind, we covered 85km. I ran for an hour shift, and Lucien for half an hour shift. To run beside the St. John (Wolastoq) River was stunning ... and flat! By mid-afternoon the highway took us away from the river and into the hills. There is nothing romantic about running up a 3km long incline with semi-trailers blasting by, but it is exhilarating when you reach the crest.

I showed Lucien how he needed to stretch before and after his shift – quads, hamstrings, calf and shoulders. He also needed to learn to eat between his shifts, small meals of good food and lots of water. By the end of the third day I knew he could handle more workload. Just in time too, as my left heel was in pain. To run all day on the right-hand shoulder of the highway took a toll on my left heel.

Three days of winding hilly highway, beautiful views, slightly warming temperatures and constant blow back of wind from big trucks as they sped by. But we were in Moncton! 210 kms done ... 320 kms to go.

The first two nights we drove back to Fredericton, but this third night and for the remainder of the Run we stayed in hotels. Each morning was a round of phone calls with media, eat a light breakfast, pack up some ice for the coolers and my feet, quick grocery run for food for the van, and then off to where we had stopped the day before.



The remaining four days we split the shifts, half an hour each and about 6kms a shift depending on hills. We had become a machine ... 30 minutes and 6 km ... stretch, eat, change socks (ice heels for me) ... repeat for 8 to 10 hours. The weather had warmed a bit, zero degrees mid-day and minus 5 or so in morning and late afternoon. No snow, a little wind. Great running weather.

Quick anecdote: On the second day as we approached Sussex, the sun was warm as I ran my leg through the hills and valleys on a very winding road (the original two-lane Trans Canada Highway). Sussex in farm and dairy country and the views were stunning. I was in the zone, smooth running, effortless and easy when my friend decided to play “The End” by The Doors over the little speaker hooked to the outside of the van. Beautiful setting, effortless running ... and Jim Morrison’s haunting lyric, “This is the end ... beautiful friend.” To this day when I drive that road I can hear that song and my friend’s snickering laugh.

Media posted daily updates on our progress. Often cars would honk as they drove by. Those moments picked up our spirits. One of the newspapers even created a box section daily recording our progress each day.

Three days later we arrived in Saint John to much fanfare; a parade of cars from the dealers, a band and speeches at Market Square. A hotel gave us a room and a restaurant gave us a meal. Lucien had his first taste of Black Forest cake!

Despite the language barrier, my friend and Lucien found a way to joke and tease each other. My friend was Lucien’s first contact with a black man. That evening, as my friend did push-ups to wake his body up from sitting in the van all day, Lucien reached over and touched my friend’s hair. “What’s he doing?” my friend chirped. Lucien explained to me he was curious what an Afro felt like. So my friend sat on the floor against the bed while Lucien gently touched the Afro. Simple moments ... and beautiful.

The last day we started early to cover the last 120 kms. The police escort for half the journey kept us safe on the narrow number seven highway. At four o’clock the Capital City Roadrunners met us at the Fredericton Airport and ran with us the last 20km to our finish line. We arrived at exactly 6 p.m. on a perfect spring day.

There was a reception later that night with media and Lucien’s parents and some people from the Car Dealers and Special Olympics. My emotions were on the surface from fatigue, and from completing the Run ... that feeling which overwhelms you after such effort. Lucien, on the other hand, was his happy self enjoying the

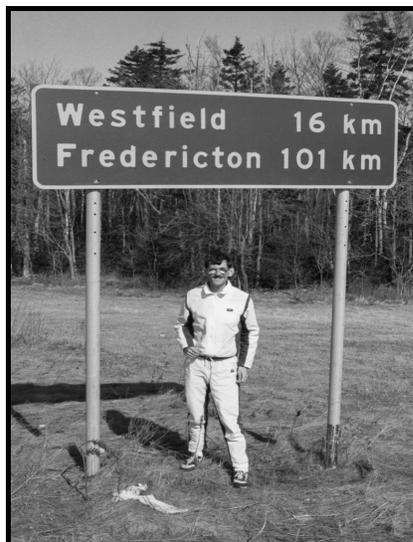
attention and the wonderful adventures he had. The next day he and his parents left for home. We connected by mail once or twice afterward.

The Run was a major success on many levels. It raised the profile and legitimacy of N. B. Special Olympics. It secured a long term relationship with the N. B. Auto Dealers Association who continued to support Special Olympics for several years afterward. The Run also built a solid relationship with media, who kindly covered several of our events and athletes over the years that followed. But maybe most of all ... the Run was a pure experience ... just you and the road and the elements, day after day, kilometer after kilometer ... running.



Above
Approach to Saint John

Lucien poses on
the last day
of the run.



The President's Report by Fran Robinson



We've had a really beautiful month, for the most part, in New Brunswick! The snow is gone, buds are bursting, spring flowers are popping up, and, for people who have been training for spring marathons, they have either run it already (Terry Haines and Jos Eijkelestam) or will soon be running it (Mike Melanson, Paul Looker). Others are preparing for the RunNB super series (Lloyd Sutherland) or half marathons (Joanne Embree). I will have missed many people, but you get the idea. We runners are a busy lot, always setting goals for ourselves or at the least, trying to get out running or walking regularly.

This past month, Members of the executive met with the Multicultural association of Fredericton to try to build some community with their members who walk or run. We received a thank you from the trail coalition group for the monies we sent them (as an option through our membership fees) for continued trail development in the city. We had our monthly point series run/walk for the club, the Queen Square mile, thanks to Paul Looker. Some of us attended a marketing study presentation that we had initiated by UNB students, thanks to Jochen Schroer. It was informative and we are awaiting their final report.

We have established a search committee for a new president since I am not reoffering in 2025. If you are interested, please let me know. franrobinson100@gmail.com.

Have a great month everyone! Fran



Great group the other Saturday morning of hardy but dedicated runners and walkers. The steady light rain made for a cold and wet finish. Congratulations to all of us for still smiling at the end!

Photo - Michele Coleman

2024 Fredericton Marathon Weekend. May 10th - 12th , 2024 by Paul Looker

The fifth event of our point series is the 2024 Fredericton Marathon Weekend. Our club members have participated in and supported this event for many years. As such we have incorporated this sporting festival into our point series to demonstrate our club's continued support of this event. It is a fixture around which many club members and local runners motivate themselves, set goals, and build their training plans.

Realizing that not all club member's can, or will be, participating in this particular event we will allow virtual completion of any of the event distances included in the Fredericton Marathon weekend. (3 km, 5 km, 10 km, 21.1 km, 42.2 km).

There will also be points awarded for those who volunteer at the marathon, in any capacity, and for those that volunteer at the club booth during the race expo.

Hope to see you all there for the race weekend. I will peruse the event website for results of our club members. If you are volunteering please let me know what your role is and I will adjust the awarded volunteer points accordingly. For those not participating directly in the Fredericton Marathon events please send me your walking or running times for any one of the event distances.

Send your responses and information to the club email address: info@crr.ca

Good luck everyone, have fun walking or running and thank you volunteers.

Paul



FOSSILS CORNER BY STEVE SCOTT



Congrats to Terry Haines and Family at the 128th running of the Boston Marathon. As Terry tells it; a warm day in early Spring generally means results and expectations must be altered somewhat. Terry eventually triumphed, but it took longer than usual. From lessons he had learned long ago when environmental conditions are not favourable, the main aim is to get across the finish line and complete your 53rd Marathon.

It takes a wise veteran runner to back off and live to run another Marathon. I salute you Mr. Haines, you are not only the best, but very wise as well. Hope you stay healthy enough to run a few more (at least 7 more), but this can be our little joke my friend for now.

Suffice it to say, you have accomplished a lot since your very 1st Boston in 1990 I believe.

Newer members of this CCRR/W may not be aware of Terry's contributions to our Club over the years since the middle to late 1980s; trust me they are many.

From time to time, I like to let the membership know what the legacy of the Capital City Road Runners has been and continues to be because I think it is very important as we go through challenges post Covid.

Just remember" . . .there is no finish line. . ."

Cheers, Steve.



Terry Haines

Trees Are Our Friend by The Running Rev



Trees stand as a silent witness as they absorb harmful carbon dioxide and releasing life giving oxygen. John O'Donohue writes of the "invisible embrace" of nature and many others have written of the mystical healing properties of nature and especially the healing properties of trees.

Shinrin-yoku in Japanese is also known as "Forest bathing" in English. It simply means bathing in the forest atmosphere, or taking in the forest through our senses. This is not exercise, or hiking, or jogging but rather being surrounded by the healing properties of trees that calm the mind and slow down one's heart-rate and not forgetting that it is balm for the soul.



At this time of the year the spring blossoms adorn the trees as they burst forth in spring colours announcing the arrival of a new season and new life after a long, cold winter.

Then in the Fall the trees shed their glorious green dresses and don their colourful Autumn costumes that provide us with a feast for our eyes. So you see, trees are our friends. Hug a tree today!

The Running Rev!

