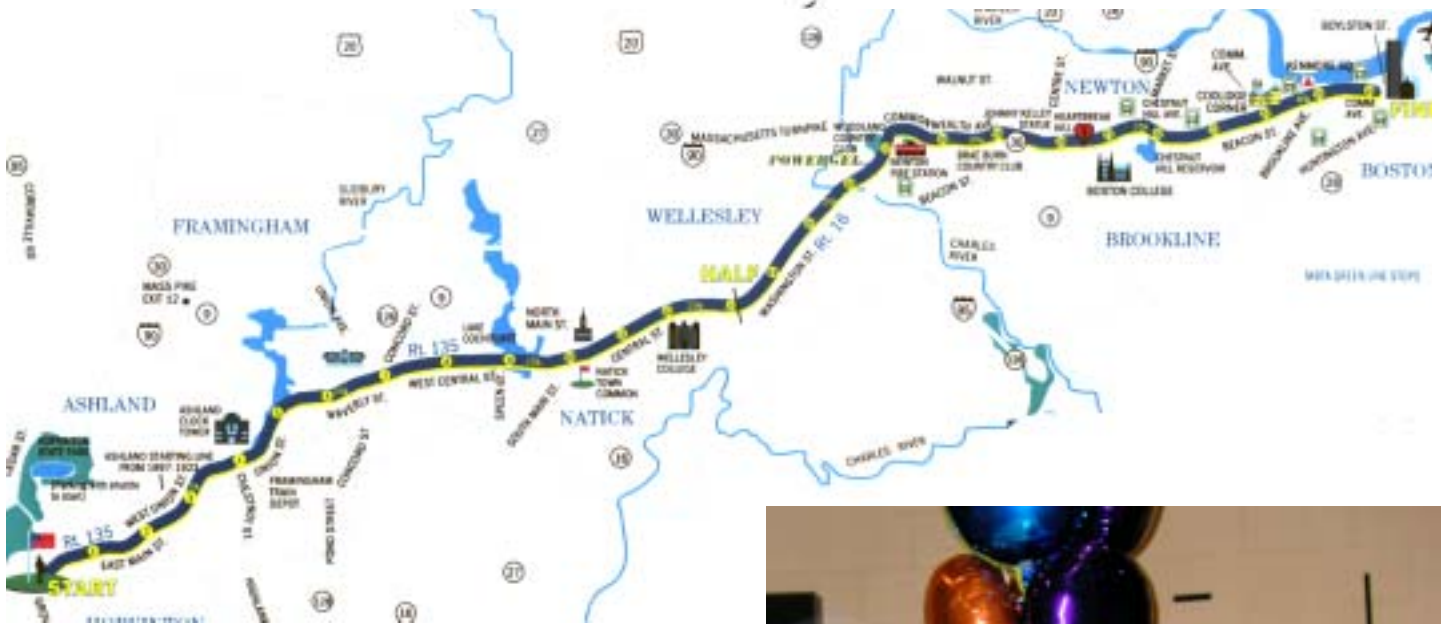


2003 BOSTON MARATHON®



JIMMY FUND WALK



Brian M. Richards
Hopkinton to Copley Square
September 21, 2003

There was some concern that the 2003 Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk (BMJFW) was going to be cancelled due to hurricane Isabel, but Sunday morning turned out to be a beautiful day, with temperature starting in the low sixties and ending in the high seventies, with very few clouds in the sky. I raised over \$2,600 for this years walk, and am proud to say my fifteen year total and sixteenth event with your help is now over \$50,000. There were 6,200 walkers, with 2,000 starting off from Hopkinton (26.2 miles), 3,100 from Wellesley (13.1 miles) and 1,100 from Boston (3 miles). The official start time is 7 AM in Hopkinton, but a few walkers, including myself, left early to avoid the crunch that happens when a crowd of walkers leave at the same time. I left at 6 AM. In years past safety cones were placed on the left side of the road, as there are no shoulders or sidewalks at the start of the walk. I kept wondering when the safety cones were going to be placed on the road. It wasn't until 6:20 AM before the volunteers were placing the safety cones on the road, but instead of the left side of the road, they were placing the safety cones with the flow of traffic on the right side of the road. This was my fourth attempt at the 26.2 mile walk, and in the prior three attempts the first seven miles were always set up against the flow of



traffic on the left side of the road, until one got to Framingham, where the route changed to the right side of the road.

I was set up with two pedometers, a heart rate monitor, a GPS receiver, a GPS watch, a GPS Data Recorder, and a cell phone. I was joking with fellow walkers that I was ground zero in case of an electrical storm. The watch and data recorder



people, it was impossible task. I had many of fine pictures of the sidewalk or sky. With digital, I can delete bad pictures.

Water stops were every two to three miles, where one could grab juice, Gatorade, fruit, snacks, medical and morale support. At each stop a volunteer would place a "dot" on your bib, which signified that you completed that portion of the walk. The only way you could tell the different classes of walkers was by the number of "dots" on their bibs, I.E. Hopkinton, Wellesley, or Boston walker. There is a lot of awe and respect for the Hopkinton walkers, but we Hopkinton walkers can be such a pain, especially towards the end of the walk.

The Jimmy Fund places a picture of one of the patients at every mile point to remind the walkers why they were walking. It was a very sad moment at the 7.5-mile point. It was a picture of a young mother and a baby. This was not an official Jimmy Fund photo. You had no idea if whether if it was the woman or the baby had cancer, and their fate. It was obvious the man who placed the photo on the route was in a lot of pain. I choose to respect his privacy by not taking a photo.

I had a funny moment at the 13-mile point. I mentioned to one volunteer that I was doing the walk in honor of my Uncle Mile, who lives in Canada. The gentlemen offered to send a radiogram to my uncle. I gave the gentlemen the required information and a short message, and he said my

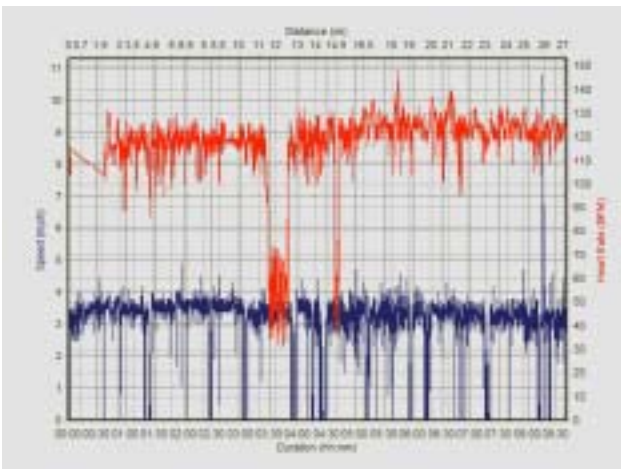
recorded heart rate, pace, and distance. The data recorder recorded fourteen heart readings and seven distance readings every minute, and this information can be uploaded to your PC to look at the data and create charts of your activity.

The first water stop was still being setup so I decided to skip any refreshments and continue on, and grab some orange juice at the second stop. There must be something that prevents some people from taking proper pictures with a rangefinder digital camera. To take a picture all you have to do is look through the viewfinder to compose the picture, press the button, wait for the "shutter noise", release the button, and then take your eye away from the viewfinder. What could be simpler than that? For some





the 14-mile point, although my watch said 13.72 miles. Two walkers, who ran the marathon back in April, got confused when two volunteers who were manning the turn off point insisted that they take the detour. I told the walkers to keep going straight, as that is the official Boston Marathon route. I choose to go to the high school so I could "clock" the extra mileage. Up to that point I was pretty much on the mark with my GPS watch at each official mile marker. After that point I was a half-mile off, I.E., at the 15-mile point my watch would show 15.50 miles. In future years I plan on



Jimmy Fund Walk	2001 Walk	2002 Walk	2003 Walk
Total Distance	27.43	26.60	27.01
Total Time	9:29:00	8:28:03	8:41:02
Walk Time	8:09:08	7:51:04	7:53:56
Steps	57,750	58,714	60,603
Pace	17:50	17:43	17:33

uncle should receive the radiogram by Monday night. I almost wanted to tell the gentlemen that I talked to my uncle one hour ago and planned on calling him when I finished the walk with this modern invention called the cellular phone, but I decided to keep my big mouth shut, and thanked him for the offer.

Lunch stop is at Wellesley High School. Contrary to what the BMJFW wants the walkers to believe, Wellesley High School is NOT part of the Boston Marathon route. The BMJFW diverts the walkers to take a half-mile detour to get to the high school and then back to the route. This takes place at





certainly “Heartbreak Hill”, which is between miles 20 and 21 of the Boston Marathon course. In 1936, while running the last of the four Newton hills, defending champion Johnny Kelley finally caught the leader, Ellison “Tarzan” Brown. As he passed him, Kelley gave him a gentle pat on the shoulder, figuring that Brown would quickly fade. Instead, Brown, motivated by this bold move, immediately regained the lead and went on to win. The late Boston Globe sportswriter Jerry Nason coined the term “Heartbreak Hill” in the next day’s issue when he described Kelley’s bitter defeat (“breaking Kelley’s heart”). The statue depicting the event is hard to find, as trees hid it. Heart Break Hill is deceiving, as it is a series of hills.

I met a young girl of sixteen and we got talking about singing groups. I told her she wouldn’t recognize my favorite group, Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons. I don’t know if she was trying to humor me or not, as she claimed she knew of the group and their songs. I didn’t challenge her, but was tempted to ask her about the Wonder Who, but then again, even my sponsors didn’t know who the Wonder Who are. The Wonder Who are the Four Seasons. The Four Seasons recorded songs like Don’t Think Twice, Lonesome Road, and On the

skipping the Wellesley High School stop.

The highest hills of the walk take place after the 16-mile point in Newton. Quite a few walkers thought this was the famous Heart Break Hill. The most famous hill in all of running is almost





Throughout the walk I thought of my Uncle Mike. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer this year. I can still remember when he and my dad came to pick me up from my camping trip in 1964 when my mother died of cancer. My dad was wearing a black suit, my uncle a gray suit, both with white shirts and black ties. My mind then went to 1988 when he was visiting my dad two weeks before he died, and then coming down again for my father's funeral. He comes from Glace Bay Nova Scotia, and he's someone very special to me. It is in my Uncle's name, Michael McKinnon that I hereby dedicate my 2003 Walk to. Until next year,

thank you and may God Bless.

Brian M. Richards

Good Ship Lollypop under the Wonder Who name. The joke on the radio in the 1960ies was I wonder who the Wonder Who are?

It was a sweet moment at the water stop at the 22-mile point. It was at that point I was almost forced out of the walk in 2001. I was feeling great. There were times I got depressed on the walk. Some walkers had support teams that would meet them on the walk, and these support teams made them well know to the other walkers. I combated this depression by calling in my "A" team, Frankie and the boys, and just played two songs in my mind, Save It For Me and Let's Hang On (my favorite). Other times I would think about my Uncle Mike, and what he meant to me. I quickly forgot my loneliness. My spirits soared when I saw the famous Citgo sign. That takes place at the 25-mile point (watch showed 25.5 miles). The TJ Maxx water stop is the last water stop before one gets to the official finish line. There was no one physically there cheering me on as I crossed the finish line, but in my heart I know my mother and father and all my sponsors loved ones who died of cancer were cheering me on. The Polaroid people took your picture at the finish line. I almost wanted to point to my digital camera and tell them that this is what put the Polaroid Company out of business, but again, I kept my mouth shut. I managed to grab some food to eat, then got on the bus that took me back to Hopkinton.



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The 2003 Boston Marathon  Jimmy Fund Walk
Walking for are loved ones, Both Past and Present

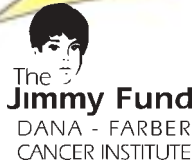
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Karen Snyder, Rachel Kelly Strasser, Ken Szydlowski, Eric Wuesthoff, Helen Zachary, Jean,
Laura, Linda, Teena

Mom & Dad would be proud. Until next year.
Thank you and may God Bless.



Brian M. Richards