



## ***Being a Part of Breaking Down the Barriers***

### **What's New**

May 9, 2018

Hello Everyone,

Congratulations to all the members who ran the last two weekends marathon races which included the Waterloo, Toronto and Mississauga Marathons. Way to many members to list you all here, but you know who you are as a club we congratulate you all on your achievements!

Spring or Summer is finally here and our first Midtown Run/Walk take place tomorrow night starting at 6:15 pm. We will meet at the CNIB Hub located at 1525 Yonge St. just North of St. Clair. You can get change here and leave your belongings behind as you run/walk the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and Belt Line. Our numbers look great so far but I will ask for a favour that we are in need of Guide Walkers for tomorrow night. So if you available please come out and help with one of our athlete. Any questions, please email me. Thanks,

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### **Race Report**

**If you have a story to tell, please send it my way and we will include in our next newsletter.**

Chris White, Visually Impaired Achilles Athlete

#### **Race Day**

Jeff and I are up at 4:30AM and we share a light breakfast. We head down to the street leaving Andrew behind, he will take a later shuttle to the 20k guide exchange zone. We head out into the cold light rain and find a cab to take us to our meetup with Team With a Vision and one of their 6:00AM buses to Hopkinton.

As the road climbs to Hopkinton the sky lightens, revealing a little snow among the trees. We are very fortunate to have access to this

warm bus and a small house near the start where we keep dry and enjoy race prep with the team.

Finally it is time to head out into the misery for our 10:00AM start. It is wet and cold. We are at the back of the first of four start waves. Perhaps 7,000 runners in the corrals ahead of us. Jeff and I are both shaking with cold and anticipation. When the gun sounds we begin a slow shuffle towards the start line through sodden lumps of discarded clothing and plastic bags carried on the wind. By the time we reach the line, things have opened up quite nicely and we are able to run across the start timing mat.

We find ourselves on a rolling rural road that is predominantly downhill. Jeff knows that fast starts don't work well for me so he carefully watches our pace and encourages me to relax and go easy. We complete our first 5k at a 4:57 pace which is pretty much according to plan. It dawns on me that I am actually doing it, running the Boston Marathon, with my good friend.

The course rolls up and down for the next 5k. At times the headwind is very strong and the rain continues. There are many spectators cheering us on. Jeff guides me smoothly through this section at a 4:41 pace. We are doing just fine despite the weather.

After 10k the course is relatively flat and Jeff keeps us at a very steady pace, averaging 4:39 through our third 5k interval. I am feeling good through 15k but the wind and cold are making it hard work. As Jeff put it: "The pace felt good, and Chris seemed to be handling it well, despite the fact we were running into the wind and working harder than usual to maintain pace."

The course continues to roll as we head for the guide exchange zone at around 19k. Jeff spots Andrew as we approach and in a moment he is running with us. As Andrew settles in, we pass 20k, having averaged 4:40 over the last 5k.

We are now near Wellesley College and soon hear the screaming crowds. Our plan had been to steer clear of the chaos but the road is not crowded so we shift to the right side of the course to accept high fives, not taking time to stop for the offered hugs and kisses. Our average pace through these 5k has slipped to 4:44. Jeff has done his share of the guiding. He could now forge ahead but he decides to stick with me and Andrew.

AT around 25k there is a long downhill followed by the first of the famous Newton Hills. It is at this point that I first notice the fatigue. My quads are cold, my arms are cold and my feet are feeling somewhat remote. In this 5k we encounter the second Newton Hill and the weather is worsening with heavy rain and wind. I have slowed to 4:59 through this section. Jeff is sticking with us. I am not feeling strong.

Andrew on the town of Newton: "After visiting it just once, Newton

Massachusetts is the wettest and windiest place I've ever been! Yes, it did open up there, but the numbers of spectators was amazing to see and very uplifting."

We are through 30k now and I am trying not to worry about the sensations, or lack thereof, in my legs and feet. There is another modest hill and then the infamous Heartbreak Hill before we get to 35k. The uphill feel better than the downhill, more sheltered from the wind and gentler on my legs. We celebrate getting to the top of Heartbreak, knowing that it is all downhill now. My legs are not functioning well. I convince Jeff to go on ahead. He looks cold and I think will do well to set his own pace to the finish now. Jeff accelerates and is quickly out of my sight.

We are descending into Boston now. I am pushing but my legs will not go faster. They hurt but they aren't cramping. With 5k to go I think of how easy 5k is on the Leslie Spit in Toronto. Just keep going. Andrew runs a few strides ahead. Sometimes I feel he is too far ahead as we weave through slowing runners but this keeps me forcing my legs to turnover so I can stay close. His pace is perfect, allowing for my weakness but not letting me give in and slow more. As we pass 40k our pace was 5:10 for the preceding 5k.

40k to the finish: We are on a long straight avenue. There is lots of crowd support. I am tired but anticipating the finish. There are many runners who have slowed dramatically and Andrew has to lead me through them carefully as my vision and reactions are fading. Finally we are in the final km, a right turn, an underpass, a left on to the finishing straight. I am pushing hard I think but in fact my pace for these final km has eased to 5:14. It seems a long way up Boylston Street to the finish. I'm not sure where the line is but Andrew puts his hand on my shoulder to let me know we've crossed it.

We are done! Andrew and I receive our medals and then a kind volunteer helps me get my cold, cramped up arms into a hooded rain cape. We are so wet and cold we cannot linger and head for the first warm place we can find.

I'm happy to have run Boston well, only slightly frustrated that the weather was against us. I couldn't have done it without the great guiding and support of Jeff and Andrew. Team With a Vision of the Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired was a great support to the three of us. We were proud to run wearing the team singlets.

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## Reminders

**Rhonda-Marie Parke, Achilles athlete** is once again running an Ultra Marathon all by herself - "No Running Guides" at the Vol State 314 Miles Race or 505Km's. Please support her fundraising page as she raises awareness of Achilles Canada and all disabled athletes. <http://thelastobstacle.com>

**Richard Holloway, Achilles athlete** and chapter president of Achilles True North is running the Las Vegas Marathon in the Fall of 2018. Please go to his Go Fund Me page here to make a donation:  
<https://ca.gofundme.com/blindrunnervegasmrathon>

**2018 Canada Army Run** in Ottawa is September 23rd. Contact me for our Achilles promo code. This race sell-out every year!

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## Guide Runners Needed

Anyone living in the Danforth area looking for a guide runner?  
Please contact me

Looking for guide runners in the Lakeshore and Islington area to run with a visually impaired female. Let me know if your available?

We are in need of guide runners who live in the Brampton and Woodbridge area. If you know of anyone who may be interested in guiding please share with them my contact information. Thanks,

Woodbirdge Area - Desperately seeking guide runners in Woodbridge to run with a 14 year old Austin boy after school, evening or weekends. Please let me know or if you know of someone in the area who would like to help out?

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## Run Schedule

Click [HERE](#) to connect to our website to review all our Chapter Run Schedules...

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## Events Calendar

Click [HERE](#) to connect to our website and learn more...

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## Chapter Locations

Click [HERE](#) to connect to our website and learn more...

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