

On the Running of the 2016 Boston Marathon

By Charles Seigneur

Around this time last year some of my friends I ran with in college and I were talking about running the Boston Marathon. This historic marathon is the oldest annual marathon in the world and one of the most competitive too, drawing in top athletes from around the globe. I already had a qualifying time from the 2015 Pittsburgh Marathon, a few of the guys had qualifying marks from other races, and three guys would soon hit the qualifying mark at the local Via Marathon, one of the last qualifying races. The decision was quickly made and eight of us signed up for the 120th running of the Boston Marathon.

After taking some downtime this past December, I started up my training in January. At first the relatively mild winter was great for training. Then, right as I was starting to pick up my mileage, the blizzard hit Philadelphia relegating me to mind-numbing hours on the stationary bike. Luckily, the rough winter conditions were relatively short lived and the mild winter resumed. This allowed for some great training through February and March during which I averaged over 11 miles a day, with most of that mileage coming from running in the dark after work.

Leading up to the race there were a few bumps on the road. A couple of my friends had to drop out due to injury, Evan was nursing a minor injury, and I had my fair share of aches and pains. But with a couple weeks to go, I dropped the mileage a little and got all the final travel plans set in stone.

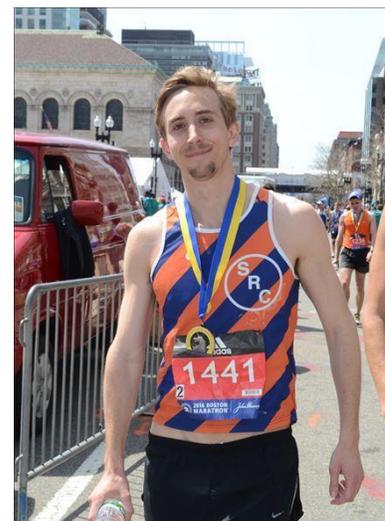
Come race day, weather predictions were all over the place but it was looking like it was going to be a nice day! It was, but not for a marathon. With not many of the participants acclimated to the heat, the 60's°F with a full summer sun, no shade, and a headwind was draining. Times were slow across the board with dehydration being a major issue. I was hitting my goal pace almost through halfway, and then the second half was a struggle. The impressive crowd support, lining both sides of the road for the entire 26.2 miles, was instrumental in keeping the moral up. Though I did not hit anywhere close to my goal time or my personal best, I managed to mirror my qualifying time with a 2:50.06 and finish in the top 500 (out of over 26,000 finishers). While it may not have been exactly the result I was hoping for, running this historic race was a memorable, positive experience.



Bucknell XC alumni together before the start; from left to right: Tim Ryan, myself, Justin O'Brien, Ian Shore, Mike Ryan, and Evan Novakowski.



Grimacing with a mile to go



Trying to smile at the finish