

Forty-nine Years and Counting

by Bob Murphy
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I have just finished another year of running. I put in over 1000 miles in 2024. I have to admit that I now count my walking miles as part of my “running” total, something I never thought I would do. But, Hey, ya do what ya gotta do.

My total miles have finally gone over the 60,000 mile mark, which makes me wonder how much longer this madness can continue. Needless to say, I still love running. As many of you know, I didn’t start a running life until 1976, when I was a mere 36 years old. I was introduced to fun runs and life has never been the same since then.

Because I started late in the year, my miles for that year were less than impressive: a total of 10 miles. The following year, though, I got a bit more serious, and logged just under 413 miles. The years after that it was 2085, then 3222, and in 1980 I ran a total of 3372 miles (that’s an average of 65 miles per week). Needless to say, with that kind of mileage and the fact that I was still relatively young, that was the year I ran my fastest races (marathon, half marathon, and many other distances). Ever since then, it’s been a slow slide into obscurity. I have had my share of running injuries, but have been fortunate in being able to recover fairly well most of the time. As it is, I am a survivor, so can still finish “up there” in my age group, which often consists of only me.

So what is it that I have accomplished over these past 49 years? One of my major accomplishments has been as a co-founder of Central Vermont Runners, and serving as its first President. Since then I have been a newsletter editor for CVR, a treasurer for the organization, and a race director (some will remember the Juniper Hill 15k, then 12k, which I dubbed “the mother of all races”). I have also been somewhat of a statistician for the club, and a race course certifier for CVR events for nearly a quarter of a century (and was given the opportunity a number of years ago to assist as a measurer in the re-certification of the Boston Marathon).

Some of my race times have been pretty good, but my performances have been a bit spotty at other times; consistency has not been a particular hallmark of my running “career”. Still, I try, and am still enjoying the fun of it all. I’m looking forward to my 50th year of this sport.



Figure 1: Finishing the Ocean State Marathon, 1980