



The Italians at the Ocean State Marathon in Providence

Two thirds of the CRC Italian contingent took part in the 2000 Ocean State Marathon in Providence. In a day dominated by Ukrainian runners, with temperatures in the mid 50's and a steady wind from the north at 15/10 MPH, **Esme' Fantozzi-Curtarolo**, blessed by relative youth and a quick step, ran a 3h33'08" marathon for a personal best. This was a spectacular improvement of approximately 50 minutes on her previous marathon performance and more than sufficient to qualify her for Boston (the qualifying time was 3.40). She placed 395th overall and 46/309 in her division, averaging 8'06" per mile in the first 10 miles, 8'03" in the second 10 and 8'20" in the last 6.2 miles. **Fabio Schiantarelli** ran a 3h36'29" marathon overcoming the twin curses of age and past injuries. That placed him 439th overall and 23/114 in the senior (50-60) division he has just entered (the splits yielded 8'00" in the first 10 miles, 8'18" in the second 10 and 8'33" in the last 6.2). Although this does not qualify him for Boston, the issue had already been rendered mute by intra-family negotiations. At the start of his training, Fabio had been outgunned by his wife Lisa (a professor at the Fletcher School of Diplomacy) who had successfully imposed a minimum interval of one year between marathons with no option for re-negotiation.

Short reports by runners below

From Fabio

The Ocean State Marathon in Providence is a very well organized event, with a human scale (1500-2000 runners). The crowds are very friendly and the course varied (see below). The start at the Community College of Rhode Island in Warwick is appropriately located in the middle of a wooded area that allows for a pre-race cleansing of the body, while communing with nature (the average European tends to believe that many Americans are somewhat uptight about bodily functions, due perhaps to the puritanical origin of the nation, but this certainly does not apply to American runners). The course is undulating, but basically flat or somewhat downhill for the first 19.5 miles. It wanders in a West, North-West direction, before turning more or less North around mile 8, and straight North from mile 13.1. This is when I started feeling the effect of the steady wind from the North (this is what happens after a low pressure system has just gone by) and struggled somewhat. Seeing the skyline of Providence at mile 16.5 gave me a needed boost. The course changes complexion at 19.5, becoming seriously hilly until mile 23. This is when runners hit the wall and start walking. I kept running and started passing many who could not do that any longer. I am still wondering whether I was rejoicing because I was not one of them, or simply taking pleasure in other people's misfortune (I hope it was the former). The last three miles are basically undulating downhill with a view of downtown Providence and come as close as possible to joyful (so to speak) marathon running. I ran pain-free from past hamstring injuries for the entire race and finished in a decent, although not as fast as I wished, time of 3.36.29. All in all, a nice marathon.

From Esme'

A very, very nice marathon for me. I started slow and relaxed at an 8'20" 8'40" pace (it was mainly downhill, which makes this pace really slow). Everybody was passing me and I managed not to care about it (hard to do). At mile 5, I started feeling well and the pace went down to around 7'40" per mile. The first 10 miles split was 1h21'02" (8'06" pace). From mile 10 to 16 everything was great. At mile 16, just after catching Fabio who had gone out a little faster in the first 10 miles, an annoying pain in my left quad started. I decided not to push and I was very pleased to see that despite the pain I was able to keep the pace. I ran the second 10 miles in 1h20'28" (8'03" pace). At mile 19.5 the hills started, but I started realizing that the qualification for Boston was almost done and I focused on that. The hills were hard, my legs were heavy but I still had plenty of energy, passing other runners who were cheering me on with "amazing pace" and "looking so strong". I did the hills with the strategy of smaller steps, same rhythm, in a 8'30" to 10' per mile pace, depending on how long and steep the hills were. Finally, with no hills left, at mile 25, I started sprinting and I did the last 1.2 miles at below 7' per mile. Hills included, the pace for the last 6.2 miles was 8'20". My overall time was a very satisfying 3h33'08".

In the post marathon picture

Fabio with wife Lisa and daughter Julia, and Esme' with her photographer husband Stefano.