

# January

419 miles - weekly mileage: 93, 94, 93, and 97. Best mileage in a month since December of 2002.

## Races

Date	Location	Dist	Time	Place	Name	40+ Place	Notes
01/01/08	Salisbury, MA	6.22	35:04	11	Hangover Classic	3	40+ PR
01/06/08	Guilderland, NY	4.10	28:15	2	Brave the Blizzard	1	
01/13/08	Hanover, NH	3.11	16:28	9	Dartmouth Relays	2	40+ PR
01/19/08	Florida, MA	3.30	29:40	1	South Pond shuffle	1	
01/26/08	Gilford, NH	3.40	27:46	1	Cobble mountain	1	CR
01/27/08	Pittsfield, MA	4.00	32:02	1	Curly's record run	1	40+ CR

Wow, this month just flew by! I did a heck of a lot of driving this month for races, high points, and towns, but it was a lot of fun. I kicked off the year as I have the last few with the Ocean plunge at Hampton beach. This year I was healthy enough to race the 10K, which was the first time I'd done a 10K that wasn't a mountain or snowshoe or trail race since April of 2001. That was 248 races ago! College, and now CMS, teammate Dave Quintal dogged me the entire run finishing right behind me. We hightailed it to the ocean and got in/out faster than we race. Sorry, Rose I was just too cold to wait for you. Next year we will have a "Dunham Only" plunge. ☺

The following weekend I made my way out to Albany for the Brave the Blizzard snowshoe race. I stopped a couple of times on the way in some of the more remote (to me) Western Mass. Towns. I found some interesting places to run including a nicely packed trail in Lenox that had some great views. The race in Guilderland was tough, made more so by my choice to try and lead from the start. I realized after 20 minutes of running that the distance was substantially more than advertised. I ended up finishing second after trying unsuccessfully to hold of the race director over the last  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of the course. He had a lot of leg turnover and used it to gap me by 12 seconds by the finish. After the race I got the opportunity to check out some of the trails we didn't use in the race as I went out with Tim VO (raw food guy/tower climber) for an excellent 3 mile warm-down.



Scenic view in Egremont



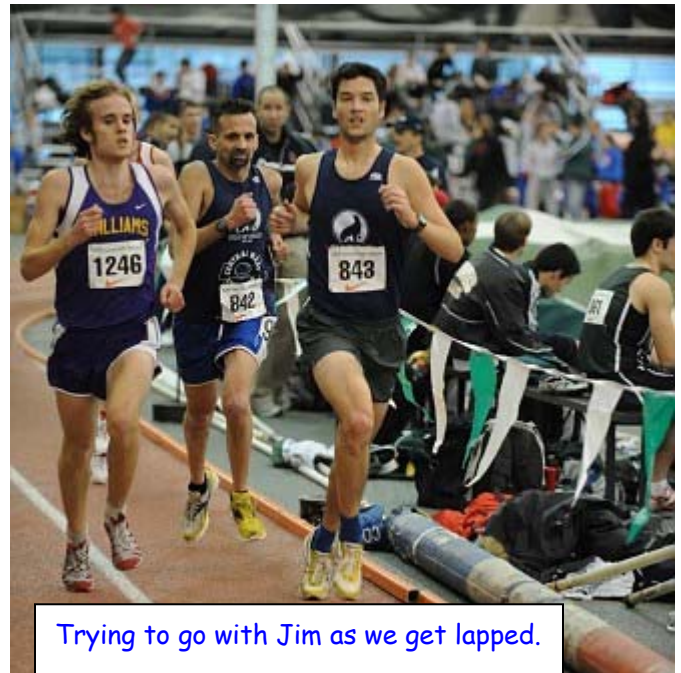
Olivia's overlook in Lenox

On the Tuesday after the Blizzard race I started doing indoor track workouts at the Governor's academy (FKA Governor Dummer's). The Winner's Circle offered a great deal for members (I've been a member of the club since the early 90's). Eight weeks of indoor track for \$20 cannot be beat. The relatively late start for the workouts made it something of a challenge for me. We started the workout around the time I'd normally be going to bed. There was a good crew the first time out and over the weeks I've gotten to work out with Al, Ken T., Brett, Derek, and James. My workouts are a little slow and short for them, but they've made due by adding on afterward. I've found that if I try to do more than two miles of speed I end up injured, so I try to keep it short. I think it has helped so far, with my times getting faster.

The next race was my final planned indoor track race of the year. I spent a lot of mental energy preparing and worrying about the 5,000 meters at the Dartmouth Relays. I had hoped to run 3:15 per Kilometer for as long as possible. My goal was to break my PR as a master (40+) of 16:29, but my stretch goal was to run closer to 16:15 (3:15 pace). Jim (dreamy-Jim) met up with me and Dan at the River and we carpooled to Hanover. It seemed like a short ride to me after a couple of snowshoe races with 3+ hour drives. Just as we were heading over to the fieldhouse Eric Morse pulled up. He came out to watch and do a warm-

up/down with us, but would not be racing. The meet was running behind schedule so we had plenty of time to watch some excellent racing and to catch up to old friends. We ended up sitting with Brad Hurst and bumped into John Molvar (coach at Gordon College) and Gary Gardner (coach at UM Lowell) among others.

We went out into a surprisingly pleasant afternoon in Hanover for an easy three miles. Unfortunately the meet had fallen even further behind than we had thought and we spent a good deal of time jogging around while seemingly endless heats of the 400m were being run. I was seeded 10<sup>th</sup> in a field of 11, but it looked like there might be a couple of guys around my pace. The first 200 meters seemed really easy, I sat on the back of the lead group and felt like I was jogging along. We came around the turn and saw the clock, UGH! The reason it felt easy was that we were going way slower than hoped for. I hit the 200 in 44 seconds, already a full 5 seconds behind. The field immediately strung out as every kicked it up a notch. I ended up hitting the mile just a hair over what I had hope for, but I was feeling tired even that early in the race. I made 2K just a little slower than 3:15 pace, but by 3K was 6 seconds behind. I ran from 200m to 2 miles basically alone in next to last. I reeled Jim in just after 2 miles but he held me off and would not let me around. We got lapped by the leaders with 1K to go and I also got around Jim at about the same time. I was carefully watching the clock and knew a sub-16:30 was going to be tight. I also peeked back and didn't see Jim with 400 to go. He went by me in the last lap like I was standing still, but I rallied and met my goal. I just barely broke my 40+ PR and was happy that indoor track season was over ☺



It was a short turn-around to the next speed workout. I need at least a couple of days to recover from a race and my ankles were not happy going back to the track on Tuesday after a Sunday evening race. I kept a close eye on the weather all week as things were not looking good for the River snowshoe race. I've tried to host a race there for 5 years and have only been able to snowshoe once. There was a serious amount of rain on Friday so when Dan and I checked out the course that afternoon we were greeted with slush and about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of bare ground. Sadly the race was cancelled. Snowshoe racing was still on in Western Mass, so I was off to North Pond for a Saturday race. I took the opportunity to bag six more towns (three before and three after the race). North Pond is a great location for a race, a rolling twisting course and a big hill along with some nice views of the Pond. I felt flat right from the start and took a look at about a mile in and five guys were right on me. During the long climb I slowed but remained steady and gapped the chase pack. The long downhill was more of a test of how fast I was willing to go and how much I trusted my footing. I thought I saw someone close behind with about a mile to go, but I ended up pulling into the finish line first. This was my first win of the year which gave me thirty consecutive years with at least one win. It was also my 1,000<sup>th</sup> race, so it was a bonus to get the "W".



Orange & Warwick Town line



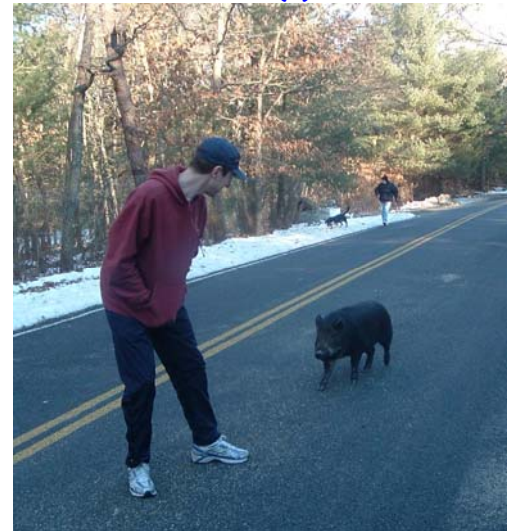
The "Frog Bridge in CT"

The next day Al and I hit the road to take a shot at the speed record for visiting the five county high points in Rhode Island. We reached them all in 2:44:06 and also visited a Mass county HP (Bristol) and three CT COHP's before finishing with a three mile run in the towns of Wales, Brimfield, and Holland. We had a great time driving around and checking out some interesting (and not so interesting locations). The weirdest thing was our encounter with a pig, which I captured on video. Check out the link: <http://www.active.com/video/play.htm?id=da4f34f2-0c4f-4f51-9ec2-5263fcab58bb>

Pictures of the trip are at: <http://s153.photobucket.com/albums/s209/davedunham/2008%20RI%20blitz/>

**Anti-gravity takes hold in RI**

**Albee and friend (?)**



The final weekend of the month would be a test, with back to back snowshoe races. I headed up to Gunstock for the first Cobble Mountain Snowshoe race. I must have known about half of the people entered, but the weird thing was most of them had never competed in a snowshoe race. Scott Graham and I did a relaxing three mile warm-up together reminiscing about the "old days" with the Greater Lowell Road Runners. Scott noted that the pond at Gunstock was the one that Lance Burgess had tossed me in at the conclusion of the Fred Brown Relay. Ah, great memories!

The course at Gunstock was great, with a mix of wide open groomed trail and single-track. There was also a lot of up and down including a climb up and over Cobble Mountain. I got the lead early on and pushed on the climb, the final 2K was almost all downhill which made for a quick finish to the race. I "kept it honest" pushing right to the finish even though I had it in the back of my mind that I'd be racing the next day. The race was excellently run by acidotic racing and I was quite impressed with how smoothly they directed their first snowshoe race. I hit the road right after taking pictures of the rest of the field coming in (see: <http://s153.photobucket.com/albums/s209/davedunham/2008%20Cobble/>), then drove to Moultonborough. I got my final run of the day in hitting the trail up and down Red Hill. It was an interesting trail that was well packed. I used my Kahtoola's for added traction, which made for some careful placement when I climbed the fire tower on the summit.

On Sunday I got up early and hit the road for a 3 hour drive to run in Lee and Washington prior to the snowshoe race. It was snowing and the roads were lousy for the first 40 miles, but by the time I hit Worcester it wasn't too bad. I arrived in Pittsfield and the sun was shining and temps were in the upper 20's. That is a heat wave for the Curly's record run race. I put in an easy three miles on the road and another mile in snowshoes prior to the start. The field looked very strong with Matt Cartier doing his first SS race of the year along with Ben Nephew (my teammate and the 2004 WMAC series champion), Tim Mahoney and Tim Van Orden. I figured I'd be in the mix but with everyone else having "fresh legs" I hoped to tuck in behind the leaders and see what happened.

We were given final instructions on the course and course markings along with a reminder, for me specifically, to watch for sharp turns. I had missed a turn a few years ago at the base of the mountain and swore I wouldn't miss a turn this year. Ben went out hard the first 200 meters with Matt and Tim M right behind him. I made a move to pass Matt just before the course got narrow. A little bit after that Tim M moved into the lead and I accelerated around Ben to move into second. We had been climbing fairly steadily, but I recalled that the real grind hadn't been reached. Tim M missed a turn by a few steps and I called him back as I pushed into the lead. I figured it was also a good time to see if I could gap the field.

I glanced back a little later and could see the Tim's, Ben, and Matt in a line with my lead increasing. I pushed as hard as I dared, knowing that my strength would be in the climb and they'd likely close on me on the crazy downhill. The course is named for Curly's speedy descent of the Shadow trail on skis. It was very steep in spots and had some icy spots to keep you alert. I also kept looking from side to side to make sure I didn't miss a turn. At the bottom there was a course monitor, at the spot I had gone off course, sending us in the proper direction. I had a couple of nervous moments in the last mile as the course

zigs and zags and with the light dusting of snow it was hard to follow the course. I kept my eyes out for orange flagging and finally hit the last 1/2 mile. I had marked my warm-up so that I'd know when I had 1/2 mile to go, Tim V O had done the same. He fashioned some branches to spell out "YO" or was it "YI"? I ended up with my first back to back victory since 2002. The caper to the day was the warm-down. I had planned a route up and over the mountain in order to get a run in Lanesborough and Hancock. The race course just misses running in both towns and I figured it would be the "easiest" way to get them. Somehow I convinced a large group to accompany me, which made the run that much more fun! We did a tough 5 mile loop up/over/around the mountain. We also visited the highest natural body of water in Massachusetts. You never know what you'll find until you get out there! Pictures of the trek can be found at:

<http://s153.photobucket.com/albums/s209/davedunham/2008%20curlys%20warmdown/>



**Looking ahead:**

February will be a busy month. I'm planning on racing six times including two "doubles". I'm also planning to go to Martha's Vineyard to race and visit the county high point. That will also give me the opportunity to run in each of the five towns on the Vineyard. There will also be another cool race by acidotic, the Kingman Farm 5K snowshoe race. What makes it unique will be the 6:00 PM start time and requirement that everyone use headlamps! That should be a lot of fun.

**30 year winning streak**

