

40 for 40

Marathon runner breaks through age barriers

By LISA GERBER

Mark Saidman ran for his life—one mile for each of his 40 years.

As he crossed the finish line, his house in West Bloomfield, three running companions broke into a chorus of happy birthday. Friends and relatives cheered while the theme from "Rocky" provided background music. Although temperatures last Wednesday were in the mid 80s, all runners were still in high spirits as they gulped quarts of water.

The men left Ann Arbor at 5:20 a.m. along Pontiac Trail. They arrived at Saidman's, 40 miles from their starting point, at 2 p.m.

"I'm ready to do more," said Allan Gelfond, 42, a social worker from Farmington Hills. "I could still do another 10 or 20 miles."

Saidman and Gelfond were accompanied by Lou Milgram, 55, from Franklin, who completed 36 miles and Jeff Serwin, 32, also of Franklin, who ran the last 15 miles. Saidman's wife Mary, accompanied the men on the last mile and a half. It was her birthday, too.

All four long distance runners have competed in the Boston Marathon and Belle Isle Marathon, but none had ever run more than the customary 26-mile marathon distance.

"I FELT LIKE quitting after about 20 miles," Saidman said. "But I just couldn't. The whole event started out as a whim but developed into a reality. Our goal was just to finish."

"A mile a day keeps the doctor away," they say, Saidman added.

Saidman began running about eight

years ago, but only during the last several years has he taken on long distances. He's lost 40 pounds since he started.

Gelfond's weight is down 100 pounds. "The men lose more than they can eat," Mary Saidman said.

The night before their marathon, each runner ate a three-scoop granola and honey sundae. But, for several days before, they filled up on spaghetti and bread—to store up on carbohydrates.

"We had to force ourselves to eat like that," Gelfond said. "A long distance runner has an excuse to eat that stuff."

GELFOND SAID last week's run was the "first annual." Next year he hopes to make it a more glamorous

event. "Instead of a pistol start we could have hands playing at both ends and commercial sponsors."

However, Saidman doesn't plan on another long distance run in the near future. "Next year on my birthday, instead of 40, I'll probably start out at one mile again," he said with a grin.

"We would have run rain, snow or shine, because we are all dedicated long distance runners," Gelfond said.

"He (Gelfond) is like a machine," added Milgram. "Once you turn his motor on, his feet keep going."

Each of the men runs six or 10 miles five to six days a week. Only in severe weather, do they move indoors.

"A lot of our family lives are based around when we can run," Gelfond said.

All encouraged running for everybody, "but maybe not 40 miles."



ABOVE: Mark Saidman celebrated his 40th birthday by running from the steps at the University of Michigan Union in Ann Arbor to his home in West Bloomfield. LEFT: Saidman was joined on his journey along Pontiac Trail by Jeffrey Serwin (left) and Louis Milgram, both of Franklin and Allan Gelfond (right) of Farmington Hills. Saidman ran between Milgram and Gelfond.

Staff photos by
Charlie Kidd



THE INSIDE * ANGLE

"IN A LIGHTER VEIN, we'll start our Inside Angles. Now that you're all sitting back and relaxing in the easy chair out on the backyard patio waiting for the barbecue to warm up, give a moment of thought to your height. A recent research report published in the July issue of Science Digest reveals that people in the "short" category have a lifespan of 10-15 per cent longer than that of the tallest people. Comparisons were made of persons in several categories where information on height and longevity were available—U.S. presidents, athletes and successful persons (whatever that means). "Short" was construed as meaning a height of 5 foot 8 inches or less, and "tall" as meaning more than 6 feet. In every category the persons in the short classification had lifespans markedly longer than the tallest. The "medium" bracket (from 5 foot 8 to 6 feet), had records of longevity that fell in between the two extremes. Among presidents—including only those who died natural deaths—the five shortest average 80.2 years, and the five tallest died at an average age of 66.6. The large majority of presidents—in the middle group—lived to an average of 69.1. Among "successful people," the shortest had a lifespan averaging 82 years, and the tallest, 73. Among athletes, the figures go this way: Boxers—71.8 (short) versus 64.7 (tall); baseball players—76.9 (short) versus 64.6 (tall); "superstars"—71.1 (short) versus 65 (tall). Even among the super-tall, those less than 7 feet 7 lived to an average of five years longer than did giants over that mark. Science Digest noted that the average height of American men is now 5 feet 9, and that of women 5 feet 3.6 inches. The Inside Angles feels that since very few of us will ever be president, superstars or successful(?) we can grow as tall as we want without fear of growing too tall.

Farmington Hills 15, Southfield 14. Seems the victory was doubly sweet because Southfield was beat on its own turf at the civic center on Evergreen. Contributing to the victory was JAN "THE BIRD" DOLAN, whose arm, we understand, feels about



JAMES KANTOR

"CONGRATULATIONS go out to DR. JAMES KANTOR, an osteopathic physician completing his residency in pediatrics at Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills. He was honored as the outstanding resident of 1977-78. Kantor was chosen by his fellow physicians in recognition of his teaching ability, academic ability, rapport with patients and fellow physicians. The Farmington resident received the award at the annual Botsford Hospital dinner dance on June 10, given in honor of the graduating interns and residents. He received a certificate and check from the Alvin Yarrows Memorial Fund. Yarrows was a staff member at Zeigler and Botsford Hospitals for more than 25 years. Kantor will be practicing his pediatric specialty in Livonia beginning in August.

the same as the Detroit Tiger with the same nickname. Big KEITH "BEACON" played first base, while MIKE DORNAN proved to be the big bat for the day. Others playing were DOUG GAYNOR, from parks and recreation. Sports analysts believe Gaynor's participation made the difference in the game since he was familiar with the Southfield playing field, having worked in that municipality previously. Southfield City Administrator PETE CRISTIANO did the pitching duties for that team, livening up the affair by giving JOANNE SMITH a big hug before every pitch. (Did you ever hear the one about WARREN HUCKLEBERRY? But the best gag of the day was that JOE ALKATEES served as umpire. Wonder if he could see the balls and strikes between the highrises?

That's enough for today. You all enjoy the holiday and don't forget us at INSIDE ANGLES, P.O. BOX 68, SOUTHFIELD 48067.

men's semi-annual sales and clearances

Newsbreak: men to get big price break during Hudson's knit shirt clearance 4.97 to 12.97

There's plenty of summer left we've learned from a reliable source. Take advantage of these front page savings on casual/leisure-time favorites from famous makers and our own exclusive imports. Choose from classic

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hudson's

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