

Coburn from page 1B

She didn't argue the ruling. "I know I wasn't ready," she admitted.

"That winter Coburn embarked on the gypsy-like lifestyle of a jockey. She worked in Florida and has since made stops at the Meadowlands (N.J.), Monmouth Park, Hialeah, the Fairgrounds, Rockingham Park (N.H.), Golden Gate Farms (San Francisco) and the Birmingham (Ala.) Turf Club.

After working on her technique in Florida during the winter of '86, Coburn got her jockey's license the following summer. In the 1987 summer meet at Birmingham, she emerged as the leading rider. "That's when I knew I was on my way."

Her trek brought her back to Livonia in 1989. She became Ledbrooke DRC's leading female jockey for the year, and narrowly missed breaking into the top-10 jockeys' list for the fall meet.

No easy track

A fairy tale come true? Hardly. There have been plenty of downfalls along the way.

Mentally, Coburn has had to deal with the "who-you-know" factor. When she started, she had no background in horses; there were no breeders or trainers in her family. She started at the bottom.

Making friends in this business isn't easy. Travel complicates matters. "In the beginning, the travel was exciting and wonderful," she said. It isn't any more. "As a rider, you're alone a lot. You can never make friends. I mean, it takes a while to make friends, and then once you do you're packing up and leaving."

"That's why Coburn decided to make Detroit her home, again. She still has family here, for one thing. She bought a house in Dearborn two years ago. It's the only trips she has planned for now are to a warm-weather track during the winter.

The who-you-know factor is what can make the difference for a jockey. A good agent, or a good relationship with a successful trainer or owner, can lead to some good mounts. That will lead to victories, which in turn leads to better mounts.

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Lori Coburn jockey

With only mediocre representation, Coburn suffered through a slump in '91 that led her to Finger Lakes in New York last summer. Last winter in Miami she ended her season for Gerald Bennett, DRC's top trainer, and after talking to him decided to return to DRC this spring.

There have been physical problems, too. In the summer of '88, while racing at Rockingham, her horse stumbled and rolled over her; Coburn broke her right leg and left collarbone, and was out three months. In Tampa in '89, she broke three ribs in a fall.

And at the Penn National track in Harrisburg, Pa., in '91, her mount broke its leg lunging at the wire. Coburn broke her wrist in the spill; her mount, which finished second, had to be destroyed.

And yet she continues after her dream. "I guess I've found my niche," Coburn said. "Probably, even after I'm done riding, I'll do something with horses. Maybe I'll just be an exercise rider. I just like what I do."

But for now, there are still goals to pursue. "I'd like to be on the top-10 riders' list," she said. "I want to have that respect for me. If I had that and was on the (top-10) list, I'd be 100 percent happy."

She thought for a moment and smiled before adding, "For now."

Runners approve of new course

By M.P. DILLON

Steve Wacker
Livonia's John Patterson, who has run all 10 Redford Roadrunner Classics, seemed to sum up the sentiments of most of the 839 runners and walkers who entered the 8-kilometer race Saturday evening in Northville.

"The course used to be that Redford had the worst course and the greatest party," he said. "Now it's one of the best courses, and it still has the greatest party."

Patterson likened the hilly course to "mini-Crim." (The Bobby Crim is a grueling 10-mile run held each August in Flint).

Redford switched its course from the flat, cement streets of Livonia to hilly, scenic Northville this year. Northville Downs served as the site for the finish line and post-race party.

Fittingly, new Northville resident Rick Brauer, 30, won the race in 25:15.

Brauer, who led from the get-go, is a new arrival from California where he did some Olympic train-

ing until injury struck.
The former Youngstown State runner hung with the lead pack at the start before waiting until the first turn "to let the photo seekers get out of the way."

"I hit the mile in 4:43 and then just settled in after that, Brauer said.

At the 3/4-mile mark, Brauer opened a 200-yard advantage on Aaron Pruslan of Saline and Eric Laywell of Memphis and never relinquished his lead.

Laywell took second in 25:53, while Pruslan clocked 26:58.

"With the heat and humidity, it was hard to do anything," said Brauer, the New Balance-sponsored runner who is looking for a job in preventive medicine.

Meanwhile, three-time women's champ Ella Willis of Detroit cruised to an easy win in 29:14.

"I thought this race was a 7-miler," Willis said. "That's why I didn't run hard. I didn't have anyone to push me."

Runner-up Maureen Carter of

Brighton was clocked 30:01, while Michele Phillips of Roseville took third in 32:39.

Tops in the men's master's division was Paul Deladurante, who clocked 27:54.
The first master's woman was Jane Ketchin of Ann Arbor, who finished in 32:59. For Ketchin, it was a family affair. Also competing in the Classic for the second straight year were her husband John, and daughters Jennifer, 16, and Emily, 9.

Geoff Hopkins of West Virginia rolled to a swift victory in 21:13 in open wheelers' competition. Hopkins loved the course, but complained about the sprinklers and hoses. Well-intentioned neighbors tried to cool off the wheelers, but the water created dangerous conditions by making tires and wheels slick and difficult to grip.

Hopkins, who trains on hills and used his superior climbing ability to outdistance the field, called the course demanding, but fun.

"I was flying down Griswold," said Hopkins, who is sponsored by Medical College of Ohio's Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department. "I was going 25 mph. It was the joy of my life. I crave courses like this."

Darlene Hunter of Commerce Township was the first woman wheeler in 31:30. "It was hard," she said, dancing in her chair at the post-race party.

Second woman was Debbie Witches, 25, of Romeo, who completed her first race despite the fact she doesn't have a racing chair.
She raced in a regular wheelchair, and her "partner," 6-year-old daughter Kayla, ran alongside her the entire distance. The Witches were among the last finishers and received thunderous applause as they crossed the finish line together.

"I'm just glad to be done," said a fatigued Witches, flushed with a wonderful feeling of accomplishment.

RUNNING

ROADRUNNER BK CLASSIC FINAL RESULTS Saturday at Northville

Top 10 overall: 1. Rick Brauer (Northville), 25:15.1; 2. Eric Laywell (Memphis), 25:53.9; 3. Aaron Pruslan (Saline), 26:58.9; 4. Matt Rowe (Troy), 26:14.5; 5. Nick McLaughlin (Monroe), 26:15.6; 6. David Chomel (Royal Oak), 26:24.6; 7. Dave Peterson (Farmington Hills), 27:12.8; 8. Dennis Poul (Marion), 27:25.0; 9. Edan Woodcock (Troy), 27:34.4; 10. Jon Fry (Bloomfield Hills), 27:38.9.

MALE AGE-GROUP (top 3 finishers)

14 and under: 1. James Carron (White Lake), 22:25.2; 2. Jeremiah Gonzalez (New Baltimore), 23:12.3; 3. Clayton Moore (Novato), 23:14.0.
18-19: 1. Brian Woodcock (Troy), 27:34.4; 2. Michael McLean (Northville), 27:44.1; 3. Joe Led (Livonia), 28:02.5.
20-24: 1. Aaron Pruslan (Saline), 26:58.9; 2. Nick McLaughlin (Monroe), 26:15.6; 3. David Chomel (Royal Oak), 26:24.6.
25-29: 1. Eric Laywell (Memphis), 25:53.9; 2. Matt Rowe (Troy), 26:14.5; 3. Dave Peterson (Farmington Hills), 27:12.8.
30-34: 1. Rick Brauer (Northville), 25:15.1; 2. Tom Hart (Dearborn), 27:47.6; 3. Michael August (Dearborn), 27:56.7.
35-39: 1. Rick Back (Ann Arbor), 28:48.2; 2. John Reed (Dearborn), 29:28.5; 3. Rob Dupro (Livonia), 29:50.0.
40-44: 1. Richard Fodorik (Livonia), 28:04.2; 2. Mark Soyers (Northville), 29:13.6; 3. James McLean (Northville), 30:19.7.
45-49: 1. Paul Dickinson (Livonia), 31:54.3; 2. Jim Carter (Brighton), 28:02.2; 3. Tom Hardeston (St. Clair Shores), 30:02.6.

60-69: 1. Don Sawyer (Ann Arbor), 28:31.7; 2. Courtois Manos, Jr. (St. Clair), 30:19.2; 3. Richard Jones (Dearborn Heights), 30:20.0.
70 and over: 1. Mark (no last name available), 33:02.3; 2. Robert Duggan (Ann Arbor), 33:53.0; 3. Ann Sosa (Livonia), 39:24.0.
DNS: Scott McDonough (Livonia); Para: Geoff Hopkins (Livonia).

FEMALE AGE-GROUP (top 3 finishers)

14 and under: 1. Alexis Lund (Livonia), 21:37.1; 2. Deby Witches (Livonia), 33:50.5; 3. Michelle Phillips (Livonia), 35:11.1.
18-19: 1. Emily Shively (Farmington Hills), 32:01.4; 2. Shannon Hill (Livonia), 32:18.4; 3. Chrissy Galt (Troy), 33:17.0.
20-24: 1. Bridget Moore (Dearborn), 33:06.2; 2. Susan Dwan (Dearborn), 35:22.0; 3. Heidi McKinnon (Troy), 35:55.4.
25-29: 1. Michele Phillips (Livonia), 32:38.1; 2. Cynthia Farris (Livonia), 34:46.2; 3. Susan Dwan (Dearborn), 35:11.1.
30-34: 1. Dawn Massa (Livonia), 32:51.7; 2. Eric Sosa (Livonia), 33:02.3; 3. Carol McArthur (Livonia), 33:52.2.
35-39: 1. Ella Willis (Livonia), 29:21.4; 2. Maureen Carter (Brighton), 30:01.9; 3. Susan Hochberg (Northville), 34:29.9.
40-44: 1. Jane Ketchin (no home town listed), 33:03.0; 2. Maria Salgado (Dearborn), 35:26.0; 3. Amy Maguire (Livonia), 35:27.1.
45-49: 1. Barbara Hiers (Livonia), 35:40.8; 2. Jan McArthur (Livonia), 36:00.0; 3. Carol McArthur (Livonia), 42:50.0.
50-54: 1. Kathleen L. Mackay (Livonia), 40:48.0; 2. Mary DeLauria (Livonia), 42:44.0; 3. Lisa Hiers (Livonia), 43:13.9; 4. Jessica Galt (Livonia), 43:50.1.
60 and over: 1. Christine Warr (Livonia), 47:44.0; 2. Lisa Hiers (Livonia), 51:24.2; 3. Elizabeth Hill (St. Clair Shores), 1:07:35.5.
Para: Darlene Hunter (Commerce Township).

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