

Campbell Outduels Rodgers in Los Angeles

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age-graded time of the day: 2:11:47 (2:17:51 x the M40 marathon age factor of .956).

On a percentage basis, Campbell also led all masters runners with a 94.3%. Rodgers was second at 91.3% (a 2:16:08 age-graded time); Jussi Hamalainen, of Agoura Hills, Calif.; third in the M40 bracket in 2:31:51, also had the third best performance of 85.6% (2:25:10 AG); Patrick Devine, of Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif., winner of the M60 division in 2:58:52, was fourth best at 85.3% (2:25:47 AG).

Devine said he started off at a quick 6:20-per-mile pace.

"I passed the half-way-mark at a 2:51 pace, but at 20-miles, it got to me," he said. "I told myself, 'be smart, just finish'."

Gloria Small, 42, of San Pedro, Calif., was first masters woman across the finish line in 2:58:29, but was disqualified by race officials for not running the entire course. First place went to Maxine Williams, whose time of 3:02:07 gave her an age-graded time of 2:53:18 (79.6%). Harolene Walters, 46, of Mission Viejo, Calif., was next best with a W45 winning time of 3:11:40 (78.5%; 2:55:52 AG).

The race got underway after a false start that caused the crowd to lurch forward when it mistook the sound of a bursting balloon for that of the starting gun. Although the second start was 28 feet in front of the original start line, it was still within the guidelines established by The Athletics Congress as an official marathon course.

Campbell and his countryman, Tom Birnie, 36, captured for New Zealand the AT&T Friendship Cup and a \$10,000 check for the federation. Birnie's seventh-place finish and Campbell's ninth led the other nine participating countries' participants.



New Zealand's John Campbell, 40, is all smiles after winning the masters title in the Los Angeles Marathon in 2:17:51.

Photo by Richard Lee Slotkin

Racewalkers topping the field were Gary Null, 44, of New York and Linda Alexander, 35, of Los Angeles. Null completed the course in 4:05:20 and Alexander walked to victory in 4:14:55.

The race drew 18,861 starters, including four Soviet runners — the first time Soviet runners have participated.

About 14,000 volunteers tended to the competitors' physical needs by handing out water and fruit at one-mile aid stations, while an estimated one million spectators provided moral support.

The marathon, second largest in the country after New York's, took participants through several ethnically

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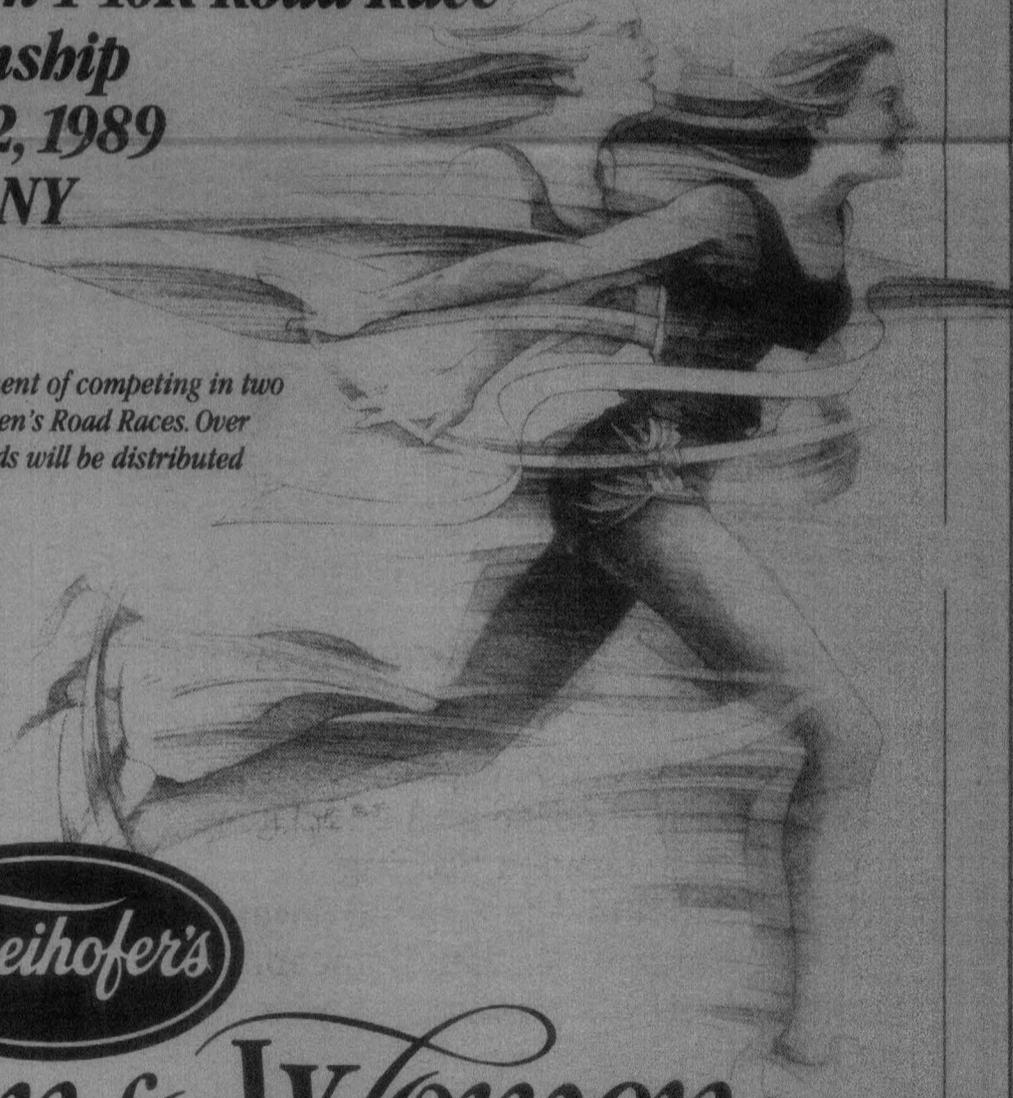
Important pre-race ritual: the 20-minute wait at the porta-potties at the L.A. Marathon.

Photo by Teri Ingram

**TAC/USA 5K National Championship
June 3, 1989 Albany, NY**

**TAC/Region 1 10K Road Race
Championship
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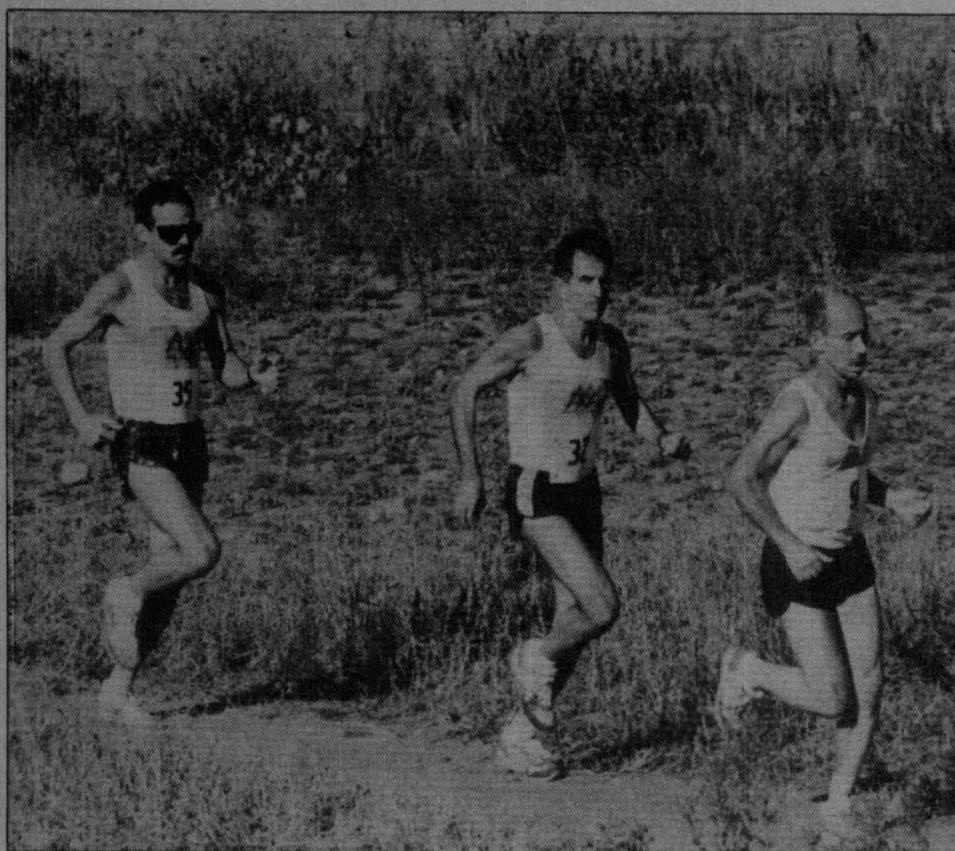
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When older road runners are suddenly subjected to a time standard based on record performances, they find that they aren't faring as well as they used to. Most older performers prefer age groups to a time standard simply because they win more prizes that way. In many races, an old runner may find himself either alone or without serious competition, and just run hard enough to win his age group. With the age-graded standard, if you loaf, someone who's really trying will win the prize.

Wait a minute! Isn't running supposed to be about fun and camaraderie? Sure it is, but when prizes are involved the runner must decide whether he's an athlete or a fun-runner. Most of us are a little of each.

Moderation may be wise as a rule of life, but races are not won by the moderate. Those of us old guys who expect to win awards should expect to flog ourselves just as hard as those 38-year-olds you see vomiting in the chutes. Naturally, because we are old and wise we rarely run like that. Post-race penalties, in the form of injuries, are more severe than for the young. Because almost all of us take a moderate stance, our age groups are less competitive. When a real animal shows up, he makes us look sick. He shows what can be done, and we should not resent having him become the standard by which we are gauged.

I've used men as the example here, but the same idea holds true for women. If you snooze, you lose. □



Ron Larriue, 9; (51:27, second M50), Andre Tocco, 32, (50:09, first M50) and Phil Gerard, 35, (49:47, second M35) cross a river bed at TAC National Masters Cross-Country 15K, Irvine, Calif., November 27.

Photo by Richard Lee Slotkin



Are Age-Graded Standards Fair To All?

Any organizer who puts on a masters athletic event must find a way to set up an awards procedure. One way to do this is to have age groups within which performers of similar age compete. However, especially in the older groups, competitors may be few. We may see 35 people in the M40-44 group, while only 2 or 3 show up in the M65-69 group. This creates imbalances in the awards structure, with which readers are familiar. Sometimes, in the older groups, all you have to do is show up and you'll "win" an award.

This is not so much a problem in road racing, since only one event is involved. However, in a track meet the awards ceremony can become interminable if an award is given in every age/sex group in every event. Masters track meets are not heavily populated, and such a system has the effect of making so many awards as to render them meaningless.

In an effort to make awards more meaningful, WAVA, and others, have evolved a concept of awarding prizes relative to an age-graded time standard. In this system, for each event, a time standard for each age is set, based on age records. Each competitor's performance is compared to the standard for his or her age, and the highest percentage of speed, height, or distance receives the award for the event. This means that a 62-year-old man who runs 90 percent as fast as the

age-62 standard will beat a 41-year-old who runs at 88 percent of the age-41 standard, even though the 41-year-old may run a faster time.

This system has received criticism from some older competitors who feel that they are being subjected to an unduly harsh standard. Are they right? Are they subject to an unfair standard?

As an example, let's put on a hypothetical 5K road race for men only. We'll pay expenses for all entrants, plus a \$1,000,000 honorarium for coming. Thus, we may expect just about every single U.S. male runner to show up. We decide that prizes will be given to anyone who finishes within 10 percent of the record time in his age group. If it were a 100-meter race, this would be like awarding a prize to anyone who was beaten by 10 meters or less. This is a way of separating the elite runners from the also-rans.

Single-Age-Graded Tables Now Available

In the February issue, NMN published age-graded factors and standards for five-year age-groups for nearly every track and field, road race, and race-walk event.

The single-age factors and standards are now available.

NMN has prepared a 30-page guide on how to use the tables to chart your own personal progress. Included are seven pages of factors, seven pages of standards, four pages of examples on how to chart your own performance, a blank personal performance chart for you to make copies, and nine pages of simple explanation with examples.

To get your age-graded guide, please

send \$5.00 to cover printing and postage to NMN, P.O. Box 2372, Van Nuys, CA 91404.

For those interested in conducting age-graded track and field meets, road races or racewalks, we've prepared a 60-page director's kit, complete with both a summary and a detailed explanation, sample races and events, single-age factors and standards, personal performance examples and charts.

To get this 60-page, complete age-graded kit, please send \$7.50 to cover printing and postage to NMN, P.O. Box 2372, Van Nuys, CA 91404. □

If this had been done in 1987, and everyone came, here is how it would have broken down, according to the TACSTATS records for 1987 performances:

Class	Group Record	Record + 10%	1987 Elite
OPEN	13:32	14:53	93
35-39	14:19	15:45	21
40-44	14:47	16:16	16
45-49	15:41	17:15	43
50-54	15:58	17:34	18
55-59	17:08	18:51	26
60-64	17:00	18:42	4
65-69	18:26	20:17	6
70-74	20:01	22:01	3
75-79	21:12	23:19	2
80-84	25:01	27:31	2
85-89	40:26	44:29	1

Note: an elite runner is here defined as one who finishes within 10 percent of the record for his age group.

Example: In the 50-54 group, the record is 15:58. If we add 10 percent we get 17:34. In 1987, 18 men beat this time, earning the title "elite."

One will see that only eight percent of the prizes will go to people over 60. Does this mean they are receiving less than their share? Not at all. What it means is that out of all the 1987 men, only a handful of old competitors got within 10 percent of the standard for their age. The share they get is the share they earned. Again, using the 100 as a standard, should the man who finishes 30 meters behind his group's winner receive the same prize as the younger man who finished within 10 meters?

If we accept that one standard should apply to all, then the older competitors are being rewarded by WAVA standards just as fairly as the younger.

In an age-standard-time event, each performer is competing against a phantom competitor who may not even be at the event. This person, the age group record holder, has shown what can be done. It is up to those who compete to see how close to him they can come. Those who come the closest will get the awards, and the rest will not.

The effect of such a standard is that few old people will win awards, because there are few of them, and, of

those, few approach the standards for their ages. If, by chance, an age record holder should show up, he is likely to do well, no matter what his age.

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