

## **Terry Cooke**

I started running in 1988. At that time, I taught aerobics at the South St. Vital “Y.” I became friends with a new member in my class who had offered to help me compile all my music cassette tapes so that I wouldn’t have to stop to change tapes. This nice young man ran road races and I figured I can do that. So, baby steps, and it seemed much easier than trying to lead a class for a cardio workout to Flashdance! Right left, right left...seemed easy, but then you added the distance factor to it. He and I kept running, joined the After Five Running Club, and well, Wes Pastuzenko and I have been together ever since.

Both Wes and I wanted to test ourselves, along with many of the After Fivers at the road races and the distances available at the time. There were “Bird’s Hill Races” sponsored by Prairie Sky Running Club; “Athletes Wear” Road Races organized by After Fiver, Marilyn Fraser; Puma Series put on by “Yellow Snow” and organized by Pat Riddell, and of course, After Five’s “Grand Beach Sun Run.”

After we started running, we joined the After Five Running Club. Our road racing started in earnest, and it was a wonderful time. The Club provided running knowledge, opportunities, and the darn best parties you could ever imagine!

As a beginner runner my most satisfying achievement was the completion of my first road race, “Cypress Hills 5 km” in B.C. Did it - complete with slippery wood chip covered trails through forested areas. Beautiful scenery – footing was very challenging. But the biggest accomplishments were always the full marathons. I had no idea it was humanly possible, especially by me, who never got chosen for baseball or other sports teams. Have always have been grateful for the coaches that guided me over the years – Doug Sammons, Brian Walters, and especially friend and just plain great human being – Ken Perchaluk. Ken had faith in the abilities of all his trainees. He set challenging goals and his encouragement made me believe I could accomplish my running goals.

What is my favourite memory of my involvement in road running, now there is a loaded question! This had to be organizing a bus to take runners to The Twin Cities Marathon. I wanted to run this race as my first full marathon and wondered how I would get there. I asked around and was told I could drive, fly, or why didn’t I try to organize a bus to go down with me? Why not – how hard could that be, really? Besides, 1990 was the 9<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Twin Cities Marathon.

Well, it seemed I wasn’t the only one who wanted to run Twin Cities that year and the MRA had run an advertisement in its newsletter that generated significant interest and the first Trudge and Tour for Twin Cities Marathon was born. After nearly 30 years of organizing the trip with the help of my partner Wes, I found it did get easier.

We also arranged a Trudge bus to Bemidji, Minnesota, May 28<sup>th</sup> to attend “The Loop of the Lakes Runs.” 5, 10, and 25km. Races. It was a beautiful weekend with all events finishing in the shadow of Paul Bunyon and his blue ox, Babe.

Some of my running times were: 5 km: 23:13; 10 km: 47:53; 15 km. 1:19:14; 20 km: 1:50:14; Twin Cities full marathon 1990: 3:56.

My favourite race was the Twin Cities Marathon and Ten Miler because we were well-treated by the hotel and the local people. One year Debra Supeene and I got to shake Governor Jesse Ventura’s hand outside the Governor’s Mansion on Summit Avenue. Yes, each year was different and each so much fun.

In 2003, I she was honoured to be interviewed as Director of Trudge and Tour by Runners World and the comments about Winnipeg running were included in the January 2003 issue. Wow, someone in Pennsylvania, USA, had heard about the little group of runners that trekked annually to the race that called itself “The most Beautiful Urban Marathon in America.

My worst running experience taught me a lesson. I ran my first half marathon in Manitoba and started with Wes and we were together till mile 5. I soon discovered that eating one of those super large bran muffins slathered with honey wasn’t “the breakfast of champions.” The progress to the Finish Line was secondary to my focus of finding the nearest porta potty!!

My volunteer work:

Director: Trudge and Tour – Twin Cities from 1990 to 2017.

Editor of “On the Run” MRA newsletter. I was the editor for a number of years after Allan Besson and before Les Harder.

Board of MRA (early 90s). Marilyn Fraser was President when I first was a board member. I recall Ken Perchaluk, Brenda Michel, Georgine Cook and Mike Gwynne were also on the Board at that time.

Organizer for the first “Debra Supeene Run to Remember” held in St. Vital Park. Steve Gajerski and I worked together on this run for several years. Steve took over as the organizer in the second year. Debra was well-loved in the running community and passed of cancer in 2001. Journalist, Lindor Reynolds of the Free Press had spoken with and photographed Debbie the year that Lindor joined us on the Trudge bus. She wrote a column about how she saw us “Sleek-thighed lycra clad runners (men and women) and how we were obsessed with our bodily functions and stopwatches!” She did make us giggle, but we were serious! Lindor advertised the Run to Remember with a group picture of After Five Runners taken running in St. Vital Park. Lindor Reynolds sadly passed away of cancer in 2014.

So many memories have been gathered over the years. The experiences of road running, and the many good friends made along the way shall be treasured forever.

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