

John Van Ekris

2010 Sporting Intentions Male Roadrunner of the Year



The selection of the 2010 Sporting Intentions Male RoadRunner of the Year was a clear choice this year. This award recognizes not only the recipient's training and racing, but also their support of other runners, their assistance with Club activities, and their ability to always give their best. Our winner this year *is, John Van Ekris.*

Interest in Running and Helping Beginners:

For those of you who run in Charlottetown, you know that John is a regular with the Tuesday evening UPEI group, the Saturday morning Hotel crowd, and the Sunday morning Spa runners. John always takes an interest in new runners who show up. John wants to know who they are and what motivates them. He is always supportive and encouraging, and will drop back from his own pace to check on everyone and to run a long side someone who might be struggling.

John studies the art of running and will often vary his training patterns, testing different approaches to prepare for a marathon or ultra-marathon. He will then pass on the

knowledge he has gained from his various experiences to help those who are attempting to push the boundaries of their own running.

John inspires other runners, both new and experienced. If it wasn't for John making it look so easy and attainable, many of us would not have gone over to the "dark side" and attempted our first 50K run.

Assistance with Club Activities:

John assists with club activities in many ways. He assists his wife Loretta in her role as race director for the ADL Golden Mile. At other runs, if he is not running, he is always there to lend a hand in whatever way will help. Even when he races, Race Directors appreciate that he often stays behind after the run to help clean up.

John and Loretta are the chairs for the Expo associated with the Prince Edward Island Marathon.

However, the highlight of his assistance to the Club this year was his inspiration for, his organization of, and his execution of the 3-Province 50K Terry Fox Bridge Run. This run got a number of



RoadRunners to dip their toe into the ultra-marathon experience. The day was flawless! John even arranged for perfect weather. Like Alex, I think it was in a top running experience for 2010 for all those who took part.

John spent a considerable amount of his own time (& Loretta's) and his own personal cash to organize and carry out this event. This freed his team members to concentrate on raising funds for Terry Fox. The team was able to raise approximately \$4,000 for the Terry Fox run this year. All team members were proud to have participated in John's event, and look forward to what he will come up with in the future to combine our love of running with a fundraising event to help out a worthy cause.

Training, racing and improvement:

John's dedication to training and racing is truly an inspiration! John is a former smoker who has embraced running and a healthy lifestyle with great enthusiasm.

John (like Francis) is a machine. Rather than working on speed, John has been working to improve his endurance and mental and



physical toughness. To highlight his running year, we will start off with a second place finish in the Luc Gallant Marathon in Kouchibouguac Park, New Brunswick in a time of 3:33:40. Next was a 7th place finish in our own Brookvale Ultra Marathon 50K run in a time of 5:43:44. John then stepped it up and ran in two 50-mile runs. First was the Pineland Farms Trail run in Maine in a time of 9:08:01. This was followed by a 9:09:53 in the JFK 50-mile run in Maryland in late November. John wasn't particularly happy with this time, so on a whim he decided to run the Bartram Forest **100-mile** run three weeks later just to celebrate his birthday. John finished 5th out of 18 competitors in a time of 22:02:30!!



Always gives his Best:

When someone is willing to go on a 6 hour training run ... or decides to run 100 miles to celebrate his birthday ... you know that person always gives it their best.

John makes it all look so easy! It inspires the rest of us to push our own running boundaries. Whether it be running in shorts, at night, in the middle of December, or attempting our first ultra-run at a distance greater than the marathon, we know it is possible because John shown us the way.

John, you have the respect of the entire PEI running community, and it is our pleasure to award you the 2010 Sporting Intentions Male RoadRunner of the Year.

Congratulations John!

Unfortunately, John and Loretta are out-of-province at this time, so be sure to congratulate John when he and Loretta return from the Goat Farm!

John Van Ekris



VISION

"Visualize and make them happen."

Ferry Fox 50k Run Sept 19, 2010 New Brunswick Nova Scotia & P.E.I.