

# Another runner arrested

## Former Wharf To Wharf winner booked after assault

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CAPITOLA — The 19th annual Wharf To Wharf Race has turned into one of the most memorable, but for what race officials would consider all the wrong reasons.

Sunday night, 1990 Wharf To Wharf champion Carmelo Rios became the second elite runner — each staying in the area as a guest of the race — to be thrown in jail over the weekend.

Rios, 31, of Hayward, was arrested around 8 p.m. after he reportedly slashed a bouncer with a broken beer bottle outside the Edgewater nightclub in Capitola Village, police said. Rios was booked into County Jail on suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon.

Saturday afternoon, former world-record holder Henry Rono of Kenya was arrested by Santa Cruz police on a charge of being drunk in public along Beach Street near the Boardwalk.

Capitola Police Sgt. Vince Riccabona said Rios had been drinking with four or five friends when they

were ejected for "loud and obnoxious" behavior. Outside the club, Rios became irate and challenged a bouncer to fight, Riccabona said.

"He threw a temper tantrum, went to a garbage can and pulled out a beer bottle, broke it and used it to attack the bouncer," he said.

The bouncer was cut once near the right elbow before he and another bouncer jumped on Rios and disarmed him, Riccabona said. The bouncer sustained a two-inch cut which required stitches, but was otherwise uninjured.

The bouncers held Rios on the sidewalk until police arrived, while a large and vocal crowd gathered.

As police handcuffed Rios, some in the crowd yelled at officers. Rios did not resist once he was on the ground, Riccabona said, and later reportedly said he knew he had made a mistake.

While Rios was being booked, police said, his friends arrived at the jail and created a disturbance, demanding his release. Officers eventually calmed the group. Rios was released on \$5,000 bail later that night.

"I am absolutely shocked," said Kirby Nicol, the Wharf To Wharf race director, upon learning of the incident early Monday evening.

Before competing, Rios had been staying at the Dream Inn as a guest of the Wharf To Wharf Race. But Sunday afternoon he was on his own, Nicol said.

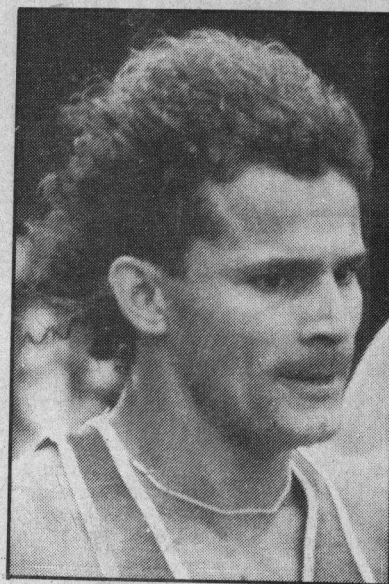
"As far as we're concerned, the race was over at 11:37 Sunday morning when we cleaned up and were out of Capitola," Nicol said.

"Our basic policy is one of hospitality," Nicol said of the race's covering hotel expenses for Rios and Rono over the weekend. "We traditionally invite back to the race runners who have won the race in past years and are still actively running."

"We will continue to do that," he said. "We don't make moral judgments on people who enter the race. We invite people for their athletic excellence."

Nicol said, however, the race committee will review the two incidents.

"We have never had a situation like this," he said. "We'll have to



**Carmelo Rios**  
Reportedly slashed bouncer

talk about what the policy will be."

Rono, 38, who has been battling a drinking problem, failed to show up to run the race. He was put up an extra day by race officials until he was able to leave Santa Cruz on Monday. No charges were filed against him.

Each year, invited elite runners

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## Runner arrested

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— usually former Olympians and world-class distance runners — are given rooms at the Dream Inn for the two nights leading up to the race, with the Wharf To Wharf covering expenses.

"Then they run Sunday and go home," Nicol said.

Rios, though, has stayed in the area through Sunday night in recent years, and last year celebrated his victory before leaving town the day after the race, said Dan Gruber of Soquel, another former race winner and a teammate of Ri-

os on the Reebok Aggies Running Club of Mountain View.

"Carmelo has made friends in the area," Gruber said. "Last year he stayed out (Sunday night), which is pretty common, since he won."

The Aggies have a reputation of being a group that likes to drink and party. Gruber said a running magazine once labeled it "the Hell's Angels of running clubs." Club members, who are among the best runners in the race each year, traditionally have held a party in Capitola after the Wharf To Wharf

Race.

But "being violent is not Carmelo's thing," Gruber said. "I have seen him wild and he has been known to bend an elbow. But being violent is totally out of character."

Nicol also said it was completely out of character for Rios, a former Puerto Rico Olympian and college All-America runner, to be involved in violence. And Rios last year was somewhat of a media darling at the Wharf To Wharf because of his affable personality.

"Carmelo has always been very colorful," Nicol said, "and a great person to interview. Last year he

was the star of the show."

Riccabona said police were busy with a number of intoxicated people, parties and large crowds following the Wharf To Wharf race.

"If I had a paddy wagon I could have arrested 10 or 12 people just from that incident alone," Riccabona said of Rios' arrest.

"We had 12,000 people in the race," Nicol said, "and I think probably when you are dealing with that many people, you have all kinds of characters."

*Staff writer John Robinson contributed to this report.*