

28TH ANNUAL WHARF TO WHARF RACE



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel photos

Dave Bouley revels in the spray of a garden hose along Opal Cliffs Drive near the five-mile point of Sunday's Wharf to Wharf Race, where the sun made an uncharacteristic appearance. Even before the race began at 8:30 a.m., the sun was warming up the course.

The HEAT is on

Wharf to Wharf

More than 14,000 runners pound the pavement and soak up the sun from Santa Cruz to Capitola

By **DONNA JONES**
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

More than an hour after winner John Gwako of Kenya crossed the finish line in under 28 minutes, hundreds of Wharf to Wharf participants were still running, walking and, in some cases, limping the final few yards into Capitola.

No matter. Most of the nearly 14,000 runners who ran Sunday's race weren't in it for the competition.

"I love this race; it's so fun," said Roz Lima of Half Moon Bay, who ran the six-mile course with her 9-year-old son Frankie in just under 90 minutes. "All the bands, all the people, the support from the spectators, the perfect weather, the people who spray water — just everything, it's wonderful."

Spectators appeared to enjoy the race as much as the runners.

Maryann Fernandez stood on the porch of her brother's home about a hundred feet from the finish line, a large coffee mug cradled in her hand.

"I'm really impressed by the diversity of the crowd (of runners), their good humor and excellent physical shape at the finish," she said, as runners ranging from young children to senior citizens sprinted for the finish.

The sun was already warming up the course as runners packed Beach Street between Front Street and Cliff Street prior to the start at 8:30 a.m. The crowd was so dense, it took more than eight minutes for all the runners to cross the starting line.

The course took runners through Seabright, past the Santa Cruz Small Craft Harbor, down East Cliff Drive to Opal Cliff Drive. Live bands and spectators, some who showered runners with garden hoses, provided encouragement.

The fog finally kicked in at

Pleasure Point, giving runners a little relief from unusually warm temperatures.

The heat sent two runners to Dominican Hospital with symptoms of heat exhaustion and dehydration, said Rayette Andrews, a registered nurse from Dominican who headed up the volunteer medical team.

"When we came (to Capitola Village) this morning and the sun was out, it was an ominous sign for us," Andrews said.

If it hadn't been for the fog rolling back in for the last two to three miles of the race, the number of medical emergencies would probably have gone higher, she said.

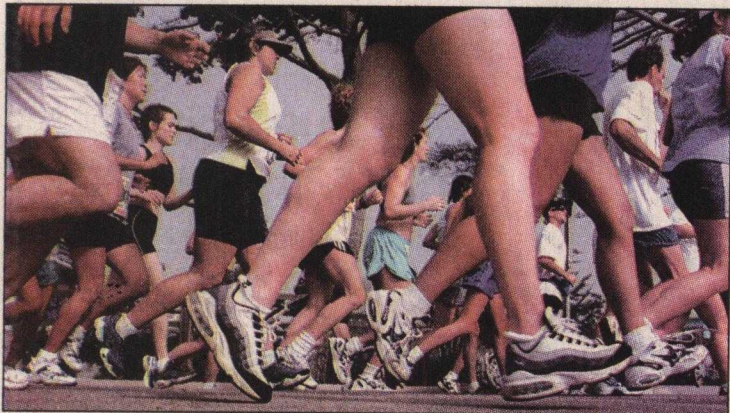
Both runners with heat problems finished the race and then hit a medical tent set up nearby. A third runner suffered a speedy heart rate and flagged one of the 100 medical team members who ran along with runners in case of trouble. He was also trans-

Please see **RACE** on **BACK PAGE**



The crowd was so dense on Beach Street Sunday that it took more than eight minutes for all the runners to cross the starting line.

Race: Sunshine makes the cut in Wharf to Wharf Race



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Runners make their way down East Cliff Drive Sunday.

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ported to Dominican by ambulance. All three runners were subsequently treated and released, a hospital spokeswoman said Sunday afternoon.

The medical team members made up just a fraction of the approximately 1,500 volunteers who worked to make the race happen. Many, like 14-year-old Jared Eslit, who will be a sophomore at Soquel High School in the fall, woke before the sun came up to help ready the course.

At 10:45, Eslit was rolling up the orange netting that was used for barricades along Opal Cliff Drive. He volunteered, he said, to help raise money for the school football team. It had been worth the effort, he said, but he was

ready to go home and "go back to sleep."

Race Director Kirby Nicol said 14,000 runners signed up for the event and typically about 9 percent are no-shows. The number that runs without registration is usually less than 9 percent of the whole, he said.

This year, the finish line was moved up a little up from the village so that runners wouldn't stack up at the end of the race and prevent others from sprinting across, Nicol said. Race officials will be evaluating the new mark to see if it will allow them to open up the event to 1,000 more people. This year, the race sold out with 14,000 registrations.

"We hate to turn people away," he said.