

36TH ANNUAL WHARF TO WHARF

# FOGGY AND FAST

## Gobena nearly sets record as Ethiopians take first

Wharf to Wharf

7-28-08



Four runners sprint towards the Capitola finish line at the Wharf to Wharf on Sunday. American Magdalena Lewy-Boulet, left, who will run the marathon in the Olympics, finished second in the women's race behind Ethiopia's Amane Gobena, below. Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel photos

### WOMEN:

## Olympian runs out of road, finishes second

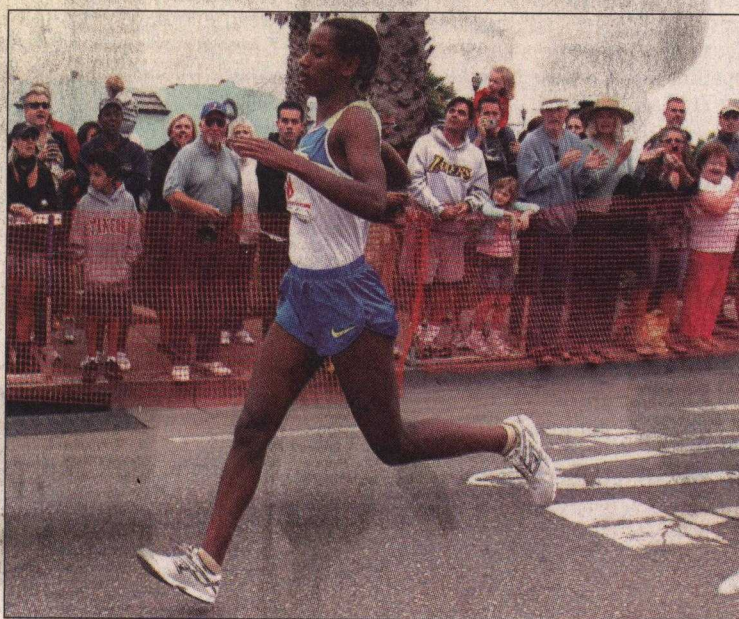
By JULIE JAG  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

CAPITOLA-BY-THE-SEA — Magdalena Lewy-Boulet just ran out of road.

The Oakland marathoner, who will be running for the United States at the Olympic Games in Beijing on Aug. 17, had begun picking off one runner after another as the miles flew by at the 36th annual Wharf to Wharf Race on Sunday. She was gaining ground on the last one — Amane Gobena of Ethiopia — when the race and the road abruptly ended in downtown Capitola.

Gobena, who ran a near-record time of 30 minutes, 46 seconds on the six-mile course, escaped with the win and the \$3,000 purse. Lewy-Boulet claimed second place and \$2,000 in 31:03 and Jane Muia of Kenya finished third in 31:43 for \$1,000.

"I kind of ran out of distance," said Lewy-Boulet, who will turn 35 on



Aug. 1. "I felt better every mile."

Lindsay Gardina became the top local finisher for the second straight year. The Harbor High graduate, who now lives in Santa Clara, said that was her goal at the start of the race. As an added bonus, her time of 35 minutes was nearly a minute faster than in 2007.

"I felt a lot better than I thought I would," she said. "That's probably due to the nice weather. I always run better when it's foggy."

### MORE INSIDE

Top 100 race finishers

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### MEN:

## Burka wins ahead of Hesch, El Mabchour

By LEO MAXAM  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

CAPITOLA-BY-THE-SEA — Christian Hesch spent the night before the 36th annual Wharf to Wharf Race preparing his body like any professional athlete would — camped out inside his cramped Subaru with his wife and two kids on the streets of Santa Cruz.

"All the campgrounds were full," said the 29-year-old runner from Morro Bay. "I only got about six hours of sleep and my hips are sore, but it's my fault for not planning better. All things considered, [the race] went pretty darn well."

Despite an uncomfortable night's sleep, Hesch performed well Sunday, finishing in third place, 30 seconds behind winner Gebo Burka. Burka, a 21-year-old Ethiopian runner competing in his first Wharf to Wharf, blazed through the six-mile course in 27 minutes and 48 seconds.

Defending Wharf to Wharf champion Karim El Mabchour of Morocco, held the lead early on, but he couldn't keep up with Burka over the final three miles. He finished second with a time of 28:08.

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## WHARF TO WHARF

# A winning atmosphere

## Levandoski houses two of top three women racers

By JULIE JAG AND LEO MAXAM  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITERS

Maybe there's something in the tea at Esther Levandoski's house.

Two of the top three women in the 36th annual Wharf to Wharf Race on Sunday spent the weekend at Levandoski's house in Aptos as part of the Santa Cruz Track Club's Racemate program, which houses elite runners with track club members. They were race winner Amane Gobena of Ethiopia and third-place finisher Jane Muia of Kenya. Second-place finisher Magdalena Lewy-Boulet of Oakland did not stay with a host family.

This is the first year Levandoski took in Wharf to Wharf runners. It is also the first time Gobena and Muia had stayed with a host family. The combination seemed to work for all three.

"I'm surrounded by these amazing women!" Levandoski said after meeting up with her guests after the race.

Levandoski said she made the runners tea and bread for breakfast. Their most memorable meal together, however, was the pre-race dinner. After Muia cooked a meal of rice and beef stew Saturday night, both women grew wide-eyed as Levandoski's husband got up to wash the dishes. It was a sight they had never seen.

Apparently, Levandoski said, "Kenyan men don't do the dishes, ever."

**RUNNING IN THE CLEAR:** Michelle Brown achieved her personal record Sunday at the 36th annual Wharf to Wharf race.

The 59-year-old Capitola woman improved her time by seven minutes on the six-mile course between the Santa Cruz and Capitola wharves. More significantly, she did it without suffering any seizures.

This is the second straight year Brown, who was diagnosed with epilepsy in 1998, has run the race episode-free. In her 10 prior races, she had been hit by no fewer than three seizures.

"Unfortunately, when I got home I got one. But hey, it's when I got home," Brown said. "What was really cool were the runners out there that saw [her Stanford Epilepsy] shirt. Even an epileptic talked to me. I got some hugs and some talks and it was really good."

**IT'S NOT DISNEYLAND:** Both Gobena and Muia said they plan to use their winnings to support their families in their home countries. Gobena lives in Ethiopia with her husband and her 2-year-old son. Muia lives with her mother and siblings in Kenya.

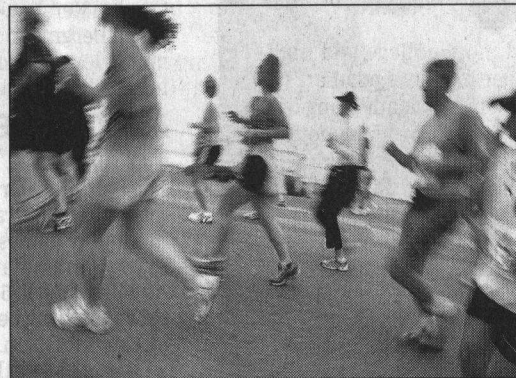
"I am the bread winner of the family because I am the fast one in the family," Muia said.

**HAWAIIAN WINS HAWAII TRIP:** Every year, an eager group of 100 randomly selected Wharf to Wharf runners gathers around the stage at the race finish to find out which of them has won the race's annual drawing for a trip for two to Hawaii.

This year, the award went to a Hawaiian. Oahu's own Lynsey Stone eagerly accepted the gift, then gave it away again.

"Mom, you're going to Hawaii!" she said.

**SIPPING AND SLIDING:** Talk about a workout. Bar-



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Wharf to Wharf runners make their way along East Cliff Drive on Pleasure Point.

tenders at the Bluewater Steakhouse in Capitola, right in the middle of the Wharf to Wharf finish-line madness, barely had time to take a breath after they started pouring drinks at 8:30 a.m. for runners and support crew alike. The best seller? The Bloody Marys.

"We've sold like 100 so far," said mixologist Nalu Froiseth. "And we've got Jell-O shots for \$2, those are pretty popular, too."

Waitress Caitlin Richardson theorized that perhaps Bloody Marys were the drink of choice because of the sporty clientele in town for the race.

"Probably because it's the healthiest drink we have," she said.

**MAS AGUA:** An extra water station was added to the Wharf to Wharf course this year, giving it three over the six-mile span. The station was deemed necessary after thirsty runners flooded the race's first-aid station last year, when temperatures climbed from the high 60s to the mid-80s. Race medical coordinator, Rayette Andrews, said more stations would be added as necessary. They weren't needed Sunday, as cloudy skies and temperatures in the high 50s and low 60s kept runners cool.

"If three's not enough, I'll put in five," Andrews said. "We'll meet the community's needs."

**A UNIQUE RACE STRATEGY:** Jake Graessle of Capitola has a unique means for getting faster in each Wharf to Wharf race he runs.

"It's easier. I have longer legs," said Graessle, who turned seven Saturday.

This is Graessle's third time running the race. The first came while he was still in his mother's womb. The second was last year. He said he trains by participating in Junior Guards. At the end of the race, though, that didn't feel like enough.

"It's tiring," he said. "My legs were hurting."

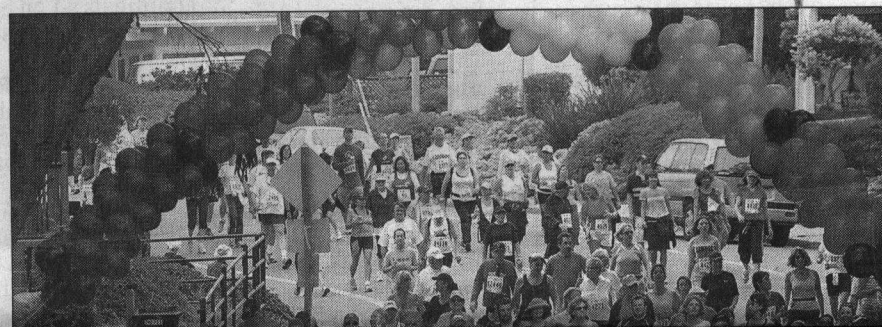
**DON'T SLIP ON THE BANANA:** Among the more eye-catching costumes on display during this year's race: A fleet-footed banana weaving through the crowd; a man wearing a cow suit and Mariachi hat as he played the trumpet in one of the Wharf to Wharf bands; and the street performer known around Santa Cruz as "The Great Morgani," wrapped head to toe in a brightly colored cocoon, rocking out on his accordion.

## TOP 100 MEN'S FINISHERS

PL	NAME	HOMETOWN	TIME			
1	Gebo Burka	Ethiopia	27:48	52	Erich Ackermann	San Ramon 32:47
2	K. El Mabchour	Morocco	28:08	53	Georgi Dinolov	Claremont 32:47
3	Christian Hesch	Morro Bay	28:18	54	Dayne Gradone	Watsonville 32:51
4	Mathew Kosgei	Kenya	28:30	55	Eder Tostado	Watsonville 32:54
5	Brett Gotcher	Watsonville	29:09	56	Chafik Azerki	Alameda 32:58
6	Phil Reid	San Luis Obispo	29:35	57	Jeff Hongo	Campbell 33:06
7	Todd Howard	Victoria, B.C.	29:40	58	C. Harland	Moraga 33:07
8	Michael Coe	Santa Cruz	29:42	59	Walter Mayeda	Aptos 33:12
9	Jimmy Elam	Manteca	29:45	60	Matthew Riley	Castro Valley 33:16
10	Brett Carter	Stanford	29:57	61	Scott Bolin	Coarsegold 33:18
11	Andrew Dixon	San Ramon	30:12	62	Sam Williams	Santa Cruz 33:21
12	Jeffrey Lease	San Luis Obispo	30:21	63	Mitch Moriarty	Aptos 33:23
13	Daniel Tapia	Castroville	30:25	64	Steve Zirkelbach	Piedmont 33:24
14	S. Donahue	Palo Alto	30:26	65	Martin Spierings	Santa Cruz 33:26
15	Harlan Lopez	Walnut Creek	30:35	66	Robert Grove	Folsom 33:26
16	Ganbileg Bor	Daly City	30:37	67	Carlos Castelo	Santa Rosa 33:30
17	Jordan Fairley	Chico	30:43	68	C. Ratliff	Santa Cruz 33:32
18	David Buscho	San Rafael	30:48	69	Rudy Munoz	Fresno 33:35
19	Jacob Evans	Watsonville	30:53	70	Michael Bordon	Los Altos 33:40
20	Manny Mejia Jr	Chico	30:58	71	Scott Mcconville	Santa Cruz 33:41
21	Sean Marzolf	Lodi	30:59	72	Daniel Filip	San Jose 33:42
22	Marcos Corona	San Jose	31:02	73	Nick Fill	San Jose 33:45
23	Alan Jackson	Sacramento	31:03	74	Jeff Oberlatz	Sacramento 33:45
24	Chris Layman	Martinez	31:03	75	Andrew Lavallee	Fairfield 33:48
25	Andrew Wright	San Luis Obispo	31:08	76	Joe Amendt	Clovis 33:49
26	Chris Binschus	Eureka	31:09	77	Craig Lee	San Jose 33:49
27	C. Carothers	Watsonville	31:10	78	Jose Aispuro	Freedom 33:50
28	Kindu Ejigu	Santa Clara	31:26	79	Mike D.	Aptos 33:52
29	Eric Lee	San Rafael	31:27	80	Ian Blair	Alexandria, Va 33:54
30	Calvin Thigpen	Santa Rosa	31:39	81	Kendall Wu	Palo Alto 33:57
31	Pedro Zaragoza	III Lancaster	31:40	82	David Monico	New York, N.Y. 33:59
32	Beau Rogers	Watsonville	31:43	83	Felipe Montoro	San Jose 34:01
33	Sean Dundon	San Jose	31:48	84	James Fazio	Castro Valley 34:02
34	Jason Karbelk	San Francisco	31:51	85	Tom Anderson	Platteville, Wi 34:08
35	Adam Tenforde	Palo Alto	31:54	86	Cooper Kersey	Santa Cruz 34:10
36	Chris Proffitt	Santa Cruz	31:57	87	Chatham Ross	Alameda 34:13
37	Rylan Hunt	Watsonville	31:58	88	Kyle Fujitsubo	San Francisco 34:14
38	Gary Towne	Chico	32:00	89	Bill Newsham	Brookline, N.H. 34:16
39	Keli Parker	Davis	32:06	90	Loren Bland	Goleta 34:17
40	Gary Blanco	Chico	32:12	91	Michael Young	Watsonville 34:17
41	A. Alvarez-bau	Watsonville	32:24	92	M. Tompkins	Mountain View 34:18
42	J. Viglienzoni	Soquel	32:25	93	Tim Nash	Santa Cruz 34:18
43	William Holleran	San Rafael	32:27	94	Kenneth Wilner	Belmont 34:19
44	Aaron Jacobsen	Santa Cruz	32:32	95	Javier Naranjo	Soquel 34:19
45	Nohe Lema	San Jose	32:34	96	Adam Boothe	Santa Cruz 34:21
46	H. Gonzalez	Lodi	32:42	97	Pete Cushman	San Francisco 34:21
47	Jaime Heilpern	Capitola	32:42	98	Alex Cagwin	San Jose 34:22
48	Brandon Collins	San Luis Obispo	32:44	99	Mark Taylor	Santa Cruz 34:23
49	Chris Mocko	Stanford	32:45	100	Mike Connors	San Clemente 34:25
50	M. Abdalla	San Jose	32:45			
51	Z. Klapholz-Brown	Stanford	32:46			

**MEN'S RECORD:** Lameck Aguta, 1992, 26:42

**2007 WINNER:** Karim El Mabchour, 27:53







Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

The top four runners were still bunched together as they crossed the Murray Street bridge over the Santa Cruz harbor at the Mile 2 balloon arch of the Wharf to Wharf on Sunday.

## Men

Continued from Page B1

"Karim is a good runner," Burka said after the race. "I thought he was coming from behind me maybe, but he didn't."

It wasn't the first time Burka and Mabchour had seen each other in a race. On May 26, Burka finished nearly two minutes ahead of El Mabchour in the Bolder Boulder 10-kilometer Memorial Day race in Colorado. Burka was third, El Mabchour 17th. El Mabchour said he isn't in as good of shape as last year because of a knee injury that kept him from training for three months this winter.

"I'm still very happy about my result this year," he said. "Gebo beat me in Boulder by two minutes, so to lose by only [20] seconds was OK. Hopefully I can come back next year to win."

El Mabchour came firing off the starting line to open the race, heading up a lead pack that included Burka, Kenyan Mathew Kosgei and Hesch. The four quickly distanced themselves from the rest of the field by about 100 yards, reaching the first mile marker in 4:37.

"There aren't too many elite runners in the race," El Mabchour said. "I wanted to push the pace in the first miles to see who the strongest runners were."

It wasn't until midway through the third mile that Burka made his move to split up the lead pack. As the four runners reached the hill at the east end of Twin Lakes State Beach, Burka began to pull away slightly from El Mabchour. Kosgei faded to third and Hesch was left all alone in fourth, about 75 yards back from the lead. By Mile 5, Burka had built a substantial 10-second lead over the Moroccan.

The real race then became for third place between Kosgei and Hesch. Hesch said his original plan was to see how long he could stay with the leaders before dropping off into the rear. But when Kosgei failed to really pull away from him along with the others, the American picked up the pace and caught the Kenyan with about two miles to go.

"[Kosgei] wasn't pulling away, and I knew that last part of the race is mostly a downhill run, so I figured if I could stay with him I had a chance to take it at the end," Hesch said. "Down to the wire, a miler always wins."

Hesch would go on to take the bronze medal, 10 seconds ahead of Kosgei.

Watsonville native Brett Gotcher was once again the top local finisher, taking fifth place for the second year in a row, in a time of 29:09. It was Gotcher's eighth year in a row as the top-placing local runner.

Gotcher, who now trains full time in Arizona, said he tried a different strategy in this year's race by holding back from the initial lead pack. Although his result wound up being the same as last year, he said he didn't feel as exhausted as in past years, which gave him confidence for the future.

"Before, I had a naive approach to this race," said the 23-year-old former Aptos High runner. "I used to think, 'I can keep up with these guys' and start out pretty hard. But it hasn't really worked for me in the past, so I decided to try something different. I had a good last three miles where I picked it up to see what I could do this time around, but it was just too much to make up."

"It's a better feeling when you aren't walking it in the final two miles," he added. "This will be a good springboard into the fall running season."

Ironically, Gotcher's good friend Hesch, the "homeless" runner, offered to use his \$1,000 reward for third place to treat the local runner to a post-race meal.

"Most importantly, Brett gets a free lunch on me," Hesch said.

Contact Leo Maxam at 429-2417 or lmaxam@santacruzsentinel.com.



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Runners make their way under the balloon arch at the four-mile mark on Sunday.

## TOP 100 WOMEN'S FINISHERS

PL	NAME	HOMETOWN	TIME
1	Amane Gobena	Ethiopia	30:46
2	M. Lewy Boulet	Oakland	31:03
3	Jane Muia	Kenya	31:43
4	Kate O'Neill	Palo Alto	31:53
5	Belianesh Gebre	Ethiopia	32:10
6	Anita Giusti	Mountain View	32:31
7	Jane Kibii	Kenya	32:58
8	Leah Kiprono	Kenya	33:11
9	Bridget Duffy	Oakland	34:26
10	Katie Layman	Martinez	34:33
11	Suzanne Segesta	Redwood City	34:59
12	Lindsay Gardina	Santa Cruz	35:13
13	Mikayla Murphy	San Luis Obispo	35:21
14	Alison Greggor	Santa Cruz	36:05
15	Jenny Wilson	Discovery Bay	36:07
16	Nicole Campbell	Sunnyvale	36:17
17	Melinda Dinapoli	Saratoga	36:37
18	Tori Tyler	Los Altos	36:51
19	Dana Jones	Danville	37:02
20	Laurie Shea	Saratoga	37:04
21	Roxanne Towne	Chico	37:05
22	E. R. Mayeda	Aptos	37:09
23	Lauren Swigart	Ethiopia	37:13
24	Angela Matthews	Sacramento	37:16
25	B. Detterman	Santa Cruz	37:34
26	Erika Daligcon	Seattle, Wa	37:38
27	Lorna Thomson	San Francisco	37:38
28	Emily Romo	Felton	37:41
29	Brooke Murphy	San Francisco	37:54
30	Carina Hendricks	Ben Lomand	37:56
31	Katrin Tobin	Santa Cruz	38:01
32	Carla Holmes	Los Altos	38:11
33	Katie Hotchkiss	Menlo Park	38:14
34	K. Hammett	San Jose	38:19
35	Tiffany Hall	Vacaville	38:21
36	Carolyn Jaeger	Santa Cruz	38:22
37	Monica Nicholson	Capitola	38:27
38	Marissa Ferrante	Aptos	38:28
39	Melissa Cohen	Santa Cruz	38:31
40	Wendy Fortino	Cupertino	38:42
41	Kimberly Cloud	Turlock	38:43
42	Erin Fabris	Los Gatos	38:48
43	Karen Ribble	San Francisco	38:51
44	Tanya Ferreira	Royal Oaks	39:13
45	Mandy Elseth	Mountain View	39:15
46	Maria Trujillo	Los Gatos	39:22
47	Christina Locke	Davis	39:22
48	Kimberly Thomas	Santa Cruz	39:23
49	Teresa Gaims	Santa Cruz	39:25
50	Tara Carreira	Livermore	39:28
51	Hailey Stiers	Fresno	39:30
52	J. Van Ausdall	La Selva Beach	39:35
53	Mo Bartley	Cool	39:36
54	Cheryl Wolfley	Turlock	39:40
55	Stella Gibbs	Pacific Grove	39:47
56	R. Bargetto-Snyder	Santa Cruz	39:50
57	Lea Nibur	Coarsegold	39:53
58	Teresa Clark	Mountain View	39:56
59	Erin Wyner	Medford, Ma	39:58
60	Yvonne Lund	Campbell	40:03
61	Sara Cohen	Soquel	40:04
62	Amy Schnittger	Watsonville	40:21
63	Corinne Roberts	San Francisco	40:31
64	R. Harrington	Encinitas	40:32
65	Erica Solway	Palo Alto	40:34
66	D. Kerber-Rehr	Chesterfield, Mo	40:35
67	Vicky Boyd	Modesto	40:51
68	Anne Gosch	Carmel	40:54
69	Ramona T Young	Watsonville	40:55
70	Allison Sturges	Los Altos	40:58
71	Diana Harlick	San Mateo	41:00
72	Ellen Wallace	Sunnyvale	41:00
73	Katie Jacobson	Aptos	41:08
74	Amie Ashton	Palo Alto	41:11
75	Honor Fetherston	Los Gatos	41:15
76	Kim Beeson	Capitola	41:15
77	Shelby Scott	Freedom	41:27
78	C. Street-Houck	Felton	41:32
79	Christy Cowley	Los Gatos	41:43
80	Danielle Breski	Torrance	41:49
81	K. Macpherson	Santa Cruz	41:51
82	J. Humphreys	La Selva Beach	41:52
83	Erin Leigh	Los Gatos	41:54
84	Colleen Corcoran	San Francisco	41:54
85	G. Prochaska	Santa Cruz	41:55
86	Vanessa James	San Jose	41:55
87	Lisa Herrera	Morgan Hill	41:56
88	Helena Valkova	San Bruno	41:57
89	Susan Brewer	Los Gatos	41:59
90	Teresa Clayton	Watsonville	41:59
91	Julita Madejska	Davis	42:02
92	Kym Spain	Clovis	42:06
93	Erin Murphy	Santa Cruz	42:07
94	Lan Clayton	Salinas	42:09
95	Charmin Wolles	Aptos	42:10
96	E. Alexander	Manteca	42:13
97	Trinity Magas	Santa Cruz	42:14
98	Emily Bernard	Santa Cruz	42:15
99	Alexandra Young	Watsonville	42:15
100	Bridget Matos	Carmelian Bay	42:21

**WOMEN'S RECORD:** Esther Kiplagat, 2002: 30:42  
**2007 WINNER:** Leah Kiprono, 31:41



# Top of the class: College runners filling out the leaderboard

By JACOB MAY

SENTINEL CORRESPONDENT

**CAPITOLA-BY-THE-SEA** — The Wharf to Wharf Race may be 36 years old, but it continues to get younger with a bevy of new blood among the top 100 finishers. This year saw an influx of collegiate runners, along with some local high school stars sprinkled in, as the event continues to expand thanks to the latest generation of runners spreading word of where to find elite competition during the summer.

Former Aptos middle-distance runner Jacob Evans, who is heading into his final year at Stanford, said he finished with the exact same time as last year at 30 minutes, 53 seconds, but dropped eight spots in the standings to 19th.

"There's more talent out there, I guess," he said. "I feel like 90 percent of the guys in front of me were all collegians. Even the guys behind me seemed to be competing [at the college level]."

He wasn't the only one. Former Willow Glen teammates Marcos Corona, who ran for the University of Oklahoma

this year, and Mohammed Abdalla, entering his first year at UCLA, said they saw plenty of familiar faces out on the course from their competition in the Central Coast Section. There were also plenty of college singlets out on the course, including Berkeley, UC Davis, Chico State, Cal Poly and UC Santa Barbara.

"Every year there's more and more college and high school guys," Abdalla said. "It's getting more popular."

"This is where all the runners come back and hang out and enjoy another race together," said Corona, who finished 22nd.

At least that's the plan entering the race. Abdalla accused Corona of speeding through the race when the two were supposed to run at an even tempo for the duration.

"He took off like crazy," Abdalla said.

"He was taking it easy," Corona shot back. "He didn't want to speed up."

Regardless of how some of the guys choose to run the race, Evans said it was fun to run with a bunch of college guys who run without worrying about meeting their coaches' expectations.

"It's nice to see more people out there because there's

more people to run with throughout the race," Evans said. "It's a fun atmosphere. It makes it more competitive, but at the same time you don't hate to lose or try to beat people."

"That's the nice thing — guys come down to run this thing that are good runners but don't come here to compete. They come here to cruise and have a good time."

Chris Proffitt, a former San Lorenzo Valley runner who was this year's boy's Howard Marcus Memorial Scholarship recipient, ran for the first time, but wanted to run as fast as he could. He's heading to UC Irvine this fall and got a taste for what he can expect in his upcoming cross country season.

Now he just has to figure out how to get the starting line in time after making a last-second split to the restroom. Despite the late start, Proffitt exceeded his own expectations and finished 36th overall in 31:54 with Aptos' Rylan Hunt a second behind him.

"I was pretty stoked," he said, while making plans to run with friends this week. "I beat my 5k time from high school, which is pretty exciting. I was pumped the entire way."

**'There's more talent out there, I guess. I feel like 90 percent of the guys in front of me were all collegians. Even the guys behind me seemed to be competing [at the college level.]'**

JACOB EVANS

## Women

Continued from Page B1

That seemed to be the consensus among the elite women, especially Gobena.

She took advantage of the morning's overcast skies by grabbing the early lead. Flanked by Muia and seventh-place finisher Jane Kibii of Kenya, she covered the first mile in just under five minutes. Then the course's rolling hills began separating the group.

It wasn't long before Gobena, who trains in Philadelphia, found herself all alone in the front.

"The race was good. Up and down for me is good," said Gobena, who will return today to Ethiopia for two weeks before she begins running cross country races in Europe. "I wanted to go no stopping."

Gobena never let up, an effort reflected in her time. She finished with the second-fastest women's six-mile time in race history, just 4 seconds off the 2002 mark set by Esther Kiplagat of Kenya.

Like Lewy-Boulet, Gobena said she could have gone farther.

"I'm tired, but not tired," she said.

Lewy-Boulet, meanwhile,

held herself in check early in the race. She started in fifth — just behind Kate O'Neill, a 2004 Olympian in the 10 kilometers — and then methodically began to pick off the other runners. Kibii was one of the first to go, dropping at Mile 3.

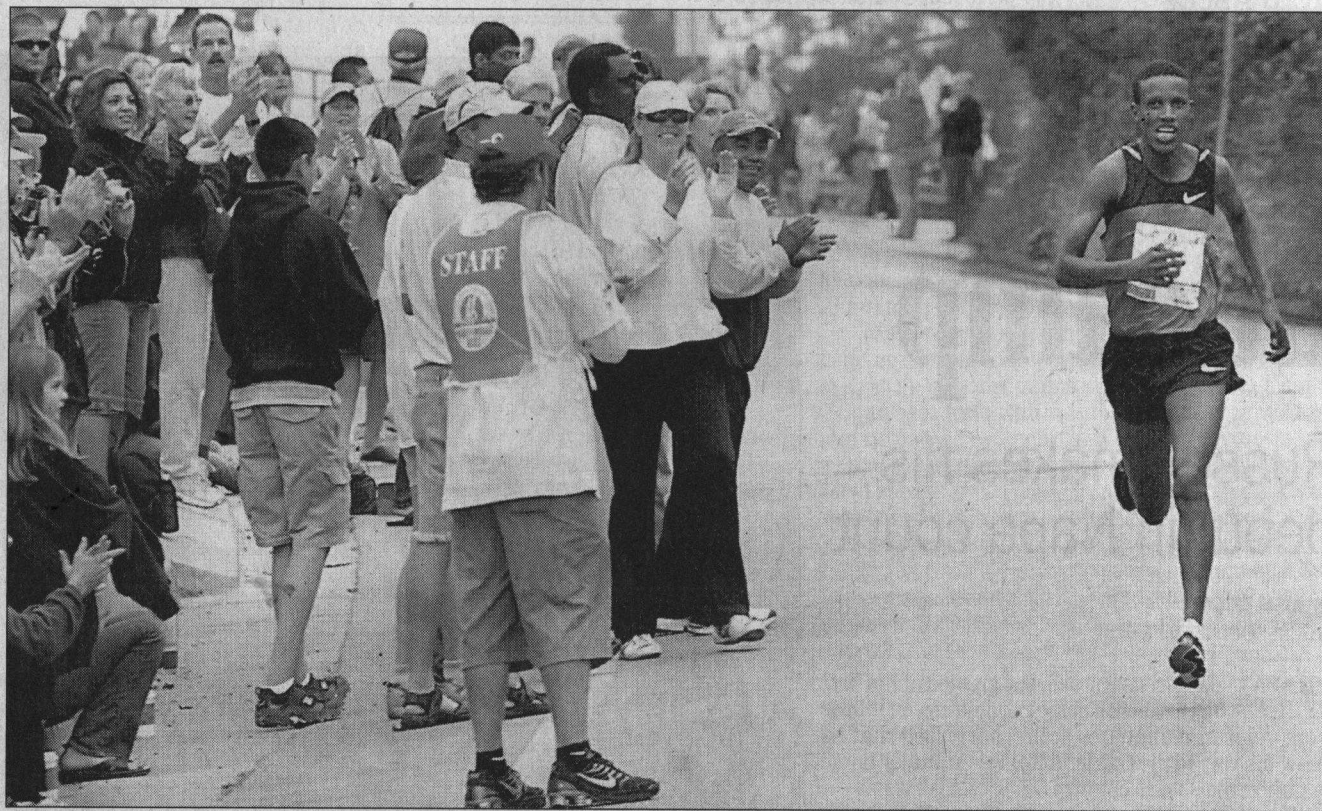
"Where I train, it is flat. I come here and it's like, wheel!" said Kibii, who trains in Davis, mimicking the roll of the hills with her hand. "When I came to three miles, I was finished."

Fleet in her red, white and blue racing flats, Lewy-Boulet caught Muia at Mile 5. She could see Gobena ahead of her, but she didn't have enough time to catch up before the road literally ended, teeing into Capitola Avenue just past the finish line.

Lewy-Boulet said even though she considered the Wharf to Wharf a pre-Olympic training run, she entered the race with the intention of winning.

"I thought it was definitely going to be a good opportunity. I saw it as a good race," she said. "I can't control what other people do. I have to run my own race. She was always in the lead. ... I just came up a little bit short."

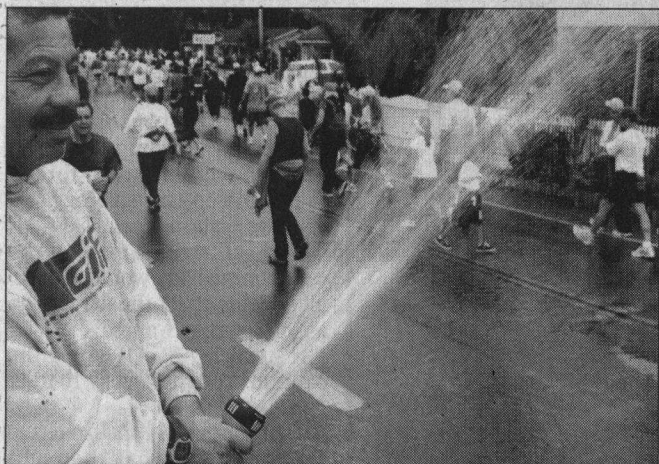
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Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel photos

Gebo Burka, top, sails toward the finish line in Capitola to win the men's race of the 2008 Wharf to Wharf. Burka, No. 15, right, took the lead in the first mile over second-place finisher Karim El Mabchoor, No. 3, of Morocco. At far right, Kelly Patrick and her son Gus, of Solano Beach, keep each other warm on Beach Street as they wait for the race to begin.



Sophie Borazanian/Sentinel

Supporters offer refreshment with a hose along East Cliff Drive on Sunday.

