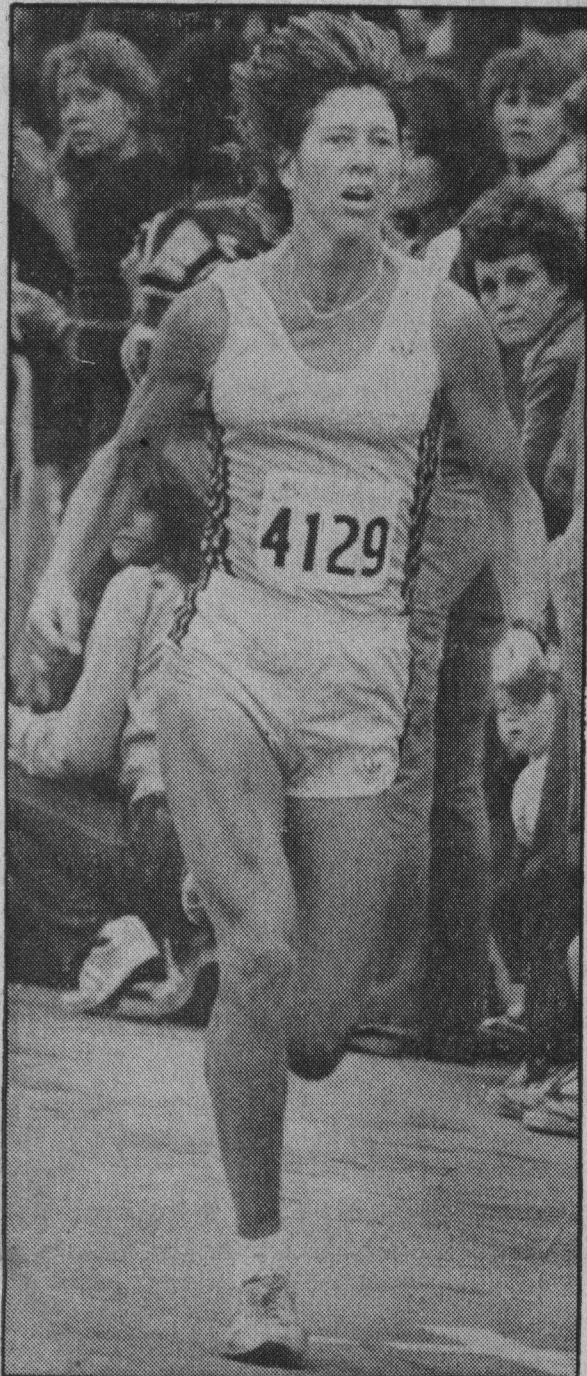


THE WINNERS

The 10th annual Wharf To Wharf race — fast becoming one of the most popular races in Northern California — drew an estimated 4,000 runners Sunday. Aptos' Dan Gruber (below right) was the overall winner in the men's division, while Laurie Binder (below) won the women's title.



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

7-26-82 Emotion-Filled Wharf To Wharf Race

By ED VYEDA

Sentinel Sports Writer

As Dan Gruber crossed the finish line in Sunday's Wharf To Wharf Race, a monkey fell off his back. It may not have been visible to those lined up along the Capitola esplanade, but it happened.

For Gruber, who returned only last week from a highly successful European track tour, there have been fewer finer moments than winning the 10th annual Wharf To Wharf Race. A native of the Santa Cruz area, Gruber is somewhat of a celebrity figure in local running circles. He had won every race in the area, except the big one, the Wharf To Wharf. Three times before he had tried. Three times before he had failed. And, no matter what he would accomplish, people would always ask him, "How did you do in the Wharf To Wharf?"

"I wanted that one bad," Gruber said, only

moments after running the 5.816-mile course from Beach St. to the Capitola Village in 26:57. Indeed, Gruber's desire to win the Wharf To Wharf burned so deeply he began thinking about it during his recent trip to Europe, where he won four times and finished second once. So, Gruber headed for home two days early to try to prepare for Sunday's race.

John Moreno of Pacifica, the 1980 Wharf To Wharf champion, placed third to Gruber, which he figured was as good as he could have done. "He ran as gutsy a race I have seen anybody run," Moreno said. "I could tell he was hurting as much as I was. We were struggling at about four or five miles, but he wasn't going to let it slip away."

Gruber became only the second local runner to win the race, the other being Soquel's Mark McConnell in 1974. McConnell, now a

race director, couldn't help but beam when handing Gruber the champion's plaque. "It may be a bit presumptuous, but I think winning the Wharf To Wharf was as important to him as his wins in Europe," said McConnell. "I really wanted to see him win it. I gave him the number 'one' to wear. And it turned out to be prophetic."

"This is a very satisfying victory," said Gruber, who led virtually all the way, except for a brief surge by Ivan Huff early and a Moreno bid later. "This was important because it was home. I was born a quarter mile up the hill from the starting line.

"It did get to be personal," he said of not having won before. "Finally, I've protected the home turf."

SEE PAGE 14

WHARF TO WHARF

FROM PAGE 13

Ken Thomas, the race director who serves as official starter, has employed Gruber on the Cabrillo College track and field staff and knows how much the Wharf To Wharf Race has meant to him. "We've talked about it and I know how much he'd wanted to win it," Thomas said. "I was so pumped up when I saw him look back with 50 yards to go — then his fist went in the air. That was exciting"

Gruber, who had placed ninth, seventh and fifth before, eventually won by one second over Mark Conover, followed by Moreno, Tom Downs and Huff. Defending champion Duncan Macdonald, who was at Gruber's side long enough at two miles to say, "I'm beat," did not finish in the top 15.

Gruber was allowed to set the pace, and ran a 4:26 second mile. He hit the three-mile mark with a fleet 13:36 split, then he and Moreno double-checked with each other when they saw their four-mile split was 18:13. "That's moving," Gruber said to Moreno.

In the past, Gruber had found the four-mile mark to be his breaking point in the

Wharf To Wharf. This year, he said, "By the time we got there, I didn't feel things were coming up on me. I thought I had out-run it."

While Gruber had been in top shape for his European schedule, he had been fighting jet lag since his return, to the point of falling asleep in the middle of conversations. He had dizzy spells, couldn't eat right, and couldn't sleep right. Saturday, he made the final decision to run. "I had nothing to lose, but a little pride."

Gruber, who went to a chiropractor to treat his sciatic nerve before leaving for Europe earlier this month, needed only a short warmup to get his legs warm Sunday. "But I was worried in the race I would get to the three or four miles and have nothing left. In the one race I didn't win in Europe, I was running PR (personal record time). Then, all of a sudden, in one lap...." Nothing left.

This time, nothing went wrong and now, there is no more monkey on his back — "a weight around my neck," as Gruber put it. After the race, his older brother, Mike, went up and said, "Now you know how Tom Watson felt in the U.S. Open."

Gruber's time was not a record, Macdonald, the former Olympian, setting it last year at 26:23, but there was a record

3,800 runners in the race and a new record set in the women's division. Laurie Binder, 34, was the first "official" woman to finish, in 31:30, 35 seconds faster than the 1980 record set by Michelle Aubuchon.

The "first" woman to finish, though, wasn't the winner. A San Jose woman who refused to identify herself crossed the line just under 30 minutes, but she started early. "I am very illegal," she admitted. "I don't mean anything."

Three local runners gave some new meaning to the Wharf To Wharf history,

Divisional winners in the 10th annual Wharf To Wharf Race, 5.816 miles:

BOYS' 18-UNDER

Gary Lewis 28:50, 2. Shawn Ayers 29:26, 3. David Perez 30:00, 4. Orlando Biggs 30:07, 5. Todd Martinez 30:26, 6. Jim LaFuenta 30:35, 7. Scott Marcondia 30:48, 8. Jeff Zamczyk 31:00, 9. Dan Clemens 31:07, 10. Todd Fitcher 31:15.

GIRLS' 18-UNDER

1. Darlene Davis 35:05, 2. Susan Brodie 35:45, 3. Connie Buckler 36:27, 4. Shannon Clark 37:30, 5. Mona Lopez 37:31, 6. Susan Brewer 37:59, 7. Carla Halford 38:02, 8. Dana Rositano 38:09, 9. Joann Arnold 38:35, 10. Becki VanZant 38:58.

MEN'S 19-29

1. Dan Gruber 26:57, 2. Mark Conover 26:58, 3. John Moreno 27:05, 4. Tom Downs 27:10, 5. Ivan Huff 27:13, 6. Carmelo Rios 27:22, 7. Bill Graham 27:33, 8. (unnamed) 27:46, 9. Mark Genet 27:48, 10. Bill Gail 27:48, 11. Emil Magalanes 27:49, 12. Rich Langford 27:50, 13. Rich McCann 27:50, 14. Henry Perez 27:53, 15. Glyn Reynolds 27:54.

WOMEN'S 19-29

1. Patti Gray 31:59, 2. Patricia English 32:03, 3. Eileen Kraemer 32:41, 4. Kathy Way 32:59, 5. Amy Harper 33:10, 6. Tona Harr 33:24, 7. Denise Bigelow 34:14, 8. Jolie Houston 34:35, 9. Karc Copper 35:04, 10. Teresa Jackagie 35:05, 11. Marleen Haverty 35:4, 12. Vicki Gorman 36:27, 13. GERALYN Tripp 36:52, 14. Cora Einter 37:09, 15. Annette Mungai 37:32.

MEN'S 30-39

1. Denni Denis O'Halloran 28:03, 2. Peanut Harms 28:09, 3. Greg Brock 28:14, 4. Dan Murray 28:31, 5. Jim Press 28:43, 6. Dan Anderson 28:50, 7. Steve Ferraz 29:23, 8. Gareth Hansen 29:44, 9. Tad Woliczko 30:04, 10. Daryl Zapata 30:05.

WOMEN'S 30-39

1. Laurie Binder 31:30, 2. Peggy Smythe 33:43, 3. Loretta Poldorfer 35:55, 4. Patricia Irmischer 36:18, 5. Pamela Blair 36:46, 6. Terri Kayser 38:39, 7. Karen Watson 38:55, 8. Liz Snyder 39:23, 9. Carol Dixon 39:31, 10. Kay Schroer 42:45.

MEN'S 40-49

1. Jerry Lynch 30:03, 2. Tim Rostege 30:51, 3. Michael Hicks 32:58, 4. Walt VanZant 33:05, 5. Charles Foster 33:32, 6. Eric Owers 33:32, 7. John Brazinsky 33:39, 8. Ben Sawyer 33:41, 9. Art Reed 33:56, 10. Malcolm Stewart 34:24.

WOMEN'S 40-49

1. Vicki Bigelow 34:15, 2. Peggy LeDeit 40:40, 3. Agatha-Sue Lee 41:45, 4. Judy Hooper 42:26, 5. Linda Smith 43:03, 6. Doris Burgess 43:35, 7. Anna Broderick 43:37, 8. Dorothy Cady 44:08, 9. Rita Allen 45:08, 10. Jane Bradley 45:24.

MEN'S 50-OVER

1. Stan Huddleston 34:55, 2. Rich Mueller 35:20, 3. Don Carpenter 35:26, 4. Lee Holley 36:25, 5. Ken Napier 37:10.

WOMEN'S 50-OVER

1. Elizabeth Ross 44:14, 2. Pat Hall 46:50, 3. Evie Stanley (no time).