

MTA Employees Go for the Gold in LA Marathon



MTA MARATHONERS: Above, back row, from left, **Robert Barron**, Division 2, 7 hrs., 33 min.; **George Parks**, County Counsel, 8 hrs., 50 min.; **John Tena**, Division 2, 4 hrs., 19 min. (Front row, from left) **Christian Valtierra**, Operations Support, 4 hrs., 58 min.; Bike Tour rider **Marie Pratt**, Arthur Winston Division, 1 hr., 25 min.; **Mario Razo**, Division 2, 5 hrs., 14 min. Below, back row, from left, **Roland Guzman**, Division 20, 4 hrs., 30 min.; **Simon Guzman**, Division 20, 3 hrs., 50 min.; **Al Martinez**, Countywide Planning, 5 hrs., 8 min.; **Gary Chan**, Countywide Planning, 5 hrs., 11 min.; and **Everett Wilson**, Revenue, 4 hrs., 17 min. Middle row, from left: **Bernie Guzman**, Division 20, 5 hrs., 52 min.; **Art Aguilar**, Division 2, 7 hrs., 55 min.; Bike Tour rider **Deven Lewis**, ITS, 1 hr., 20 min.; **Vazgen Vartanian**, ISD, 3 hrs., 28 min.; and **Charles Hernandez**, RRC, 6 hrs., 26 min. Front row, from left: **Paul Kim**, Division 20, 5 hrs., 50 min.; Bike Tour rider **Kathryn Jackson**, ISD, 1 hr., 40 min.; **Luis Inzunza**, Media Relations, 4 hrs., 35 min.; and Bike Tour rider **Mattie Jones**, ITS, 1 hr., 30 min. PHOTOS BY GAYLE ANDERSON



By BILL HEARD, Editor

(March 8) John Tena, a Division 2 mechanic, has run the LA Marathon 11 times. Marie Pratt, a dispatcher at the Arthur Winston Division, has cycled in seven. Everett Wilson, an auditor, has run in all 16 events.

We're not talking amateurs here. Well, actually, we are. But, with that many races under their belts, the pain, strain and pleasure of crossing the finish line after 26 grueling miles is familiar to this bunch of MTA employees.

Tena finished the race in 4 hours, 19 minutes. "Not quite my best, but not too bad," he says.



Division 8 Transportation Manager **Grant Myers**, above left, and Transit Operations Supervisor **Ralph Gray** did the Bike Tour. It was the sixth time for Myers and the seventh for Gray. Below, new medal makes 15 marathons for Sr. Security Officer **Luis Medrano**.



The hardest part was getting ready. "Committing every other day to go out and run is harder than the marathon, I think," says Tena. Now, he's thinking of entering either the San Diego or San Francisco marathon.

Pratt, the cyclist, completed the course in 1 hour, 25 minutes, "but that was slow," she says, regretting that she hadn't really trained for the race.

"The hardest part was climbing the hill on Vine Street," she remembers. "I really felt it. Then, again, coming toward the end on Union Street. I was glad to be home, but it was fun!"

Wilson was a late arrival

Everett Wilson, with 15 previous LA Marathons under his belt, made a mistake this time. He arrived only a half hour before the starting gun and found himself lost in a sea of marathoners.

"For a veteran runner, I should have known to get there early so I could get up front," he says, regretfully. "There were just too many people in front of me."

Wilson had to struggle for the first two miles to work his way through a pack of walkers and slower runners. His slow early pace left him with excess energy. "From mile 23 to the end, I was sprinting. I had a lot left," he said.

Wilson's time of 4 hours, 17 minutes reflected his slow start. In an earlier race he ran the 26 miles in 3 hours, 15 minutes. His next event? The Palos Verdes marathon in May.

First-timers made it OK

Al Martinez, a first-time marathoner, was hoping to complete the courts in less than five hours and he was happy with a time of 5 hours,

8 minutes.

The hill on Highland Avenue leading to Mann's Chinese Theater "was tough," but his technique of running for eight minutes, then walking for two, pulled him through.

For Mattie Jones, riding in the LA Marathon was a life-time goal. "I've mentally trained for years, so I only needed two days of actual training." She finished in 1 hour, 30 minutes.

Her friend, Kathryn Jackson, also was on her first marathon. The huge crowds lining the marathon route made her "a little nervous, but it was OK."

Earlier in the week, she did a 10-mile training run and took a spill. But, under the pressure of the actual event, she finished in 1 hour, 40 minutes. Now, Jackson is training for the 62.3-mile Avon Breast Cancer 3-day walk in October.

Although metro.net invited all LA Marathon participants to have their photo taken, it's not certain all runners, bikers or wheelchair competitors got the word. The photos with this article picture those we were able to round up.

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