

THE SIXTH ANNUAL MARYLAND MARATHON

By Phil Jackman
Evening Sun Sports Writer

Jeff Bradley won Maryland Marathon VI with a magnificent charge up Satyr Hill yesterday that left pre-race favorite Bill Haviland gasping.

But, with all due respect to Bradley, the math teacher from Manheim, Pa., the day belonged to runner-up Ron Hill of England.

You wouldn't have thought it until Bradley had a chance to sit down and think about his well-conceived 2:19.36 effort. "I got a great compliment from Ron Hill at the end of the race," he said.

"I'm a real smart runner, he said," Jeff gushed, barely able to contain his enthusiasm. It was as if he were a young violinist and Jascha Heifetz had said, "The boy can play in this orchestra."

"I didn't know I was in the U.S. the way the folks were out there," admitted Bradley. "They were screaming and yelling for Ron and you wouldn't believe the size of one English flag they hauled out for him."

Inevitably, the dream gave way to reality and what it came down to was Bradley and Haviland hitting the bottom of Satyr Hill, about the 18 mile mark, dead even.

"I looked at him and asked, 'Are you ready for this?'" said Bradley. "He said he wasn't and I said, 'Me neither.' I wasn't sure, but I thought I was. It's an old runner's trick, a psyche. I was pretty sure."

Grabbing 30 yards on the hill, Jeff pushed it out to nearly 200 yards in the next mile for a very simple reason: "I felt so good at the top of the hill. I just took off."

In the next two miles, said Jeff, "the people clapping and cheering was so stimulating, it was easy to keep it going." He was more than a half-mile ahead with less than four miles to go. Haviland was beaten.

"I ran too hard in the middle of the race," said Haviland, the 28-year-old college professor from Athens, Ohio. "I got to the hill and there was nothing there."

He was not the only one to feel the sting of the 300-foot rise in little more than a half-mile. Jim Buell of Laurel had figured prominently in the race, pushing the early pace and drawing Bradley out from the pack at about the 10-mile mark.

To that point, six or seven runners had jostled back and forth with no one eager to improve upon an honest but not breath-taking pace.

Hill gave 'em a lesson on runing down a laundry chute, Satyr Hill, grabbing a lead momentarily, then Bradley and Buell took over. Haviland, hanging back, moved up with Bradley nearing the turnaround at Peerce's Plantation and they played cat-and-mouse.

"He'd get me going down a hill; he runs 'em almost as good as Hill," said Bradley, "and I'd pull up next to him going uphill. One time I said to him, 'Hey, we keep it up we're going under 2:20.'"

Those were the last words that passed between the leaders until Satyr and a parting of the ways. All that was left for Bradley was to run it in, strong and sturdy as ever, while his adversary tried to hold on as best he could (Haviland finished 13th).

Now to the real drama, Ron Hill The wee Briton had done his share, forcing the pace among the young tykes after Charlie Trayer had struck out and breezed the guys through a creditable five miles.

He gave 'em hell down the hills, "but going up, oh, how they'd make me pay." Ron kept everyone honest through the reservoir portion of the run and, looking at Buell running strongly going up Satyr, figured he was No 4 — if he could hold it.

"Only goes to show you what you can do if you stay with it," he said. Buell looked good ahead of him but dropped out. Haviland was coming back badly. Trayer was coming up and challenging again, but Hill was just beginning to dig in.

"Trayer came up but complained about having a foot problem," said Ron. This was just before the two of them swept by Haviland, finished but admirably dragging it in. Suddenly, Ron was alone. "What the heck," he said, "second's not too bad."

Hill said he got that tired feeling at a mile and realized "ohhh, this is going to be a long day," but he was here to make a race of it, and he did. He made people do things. He taught the young people a lesson: to reach, to try, to think.

It was a fine race and a couple of guys made it — the guy who won, of course, and the guy who came in second.

By Mike Farabaugh
Evening Sun Reporter

Kathy (Smith) Heckman wiped out Satyr Hill, "the Wall," a mystery woman and Marilyn Bevans within a three-mile stretch yesterday to win the women's division of the sixth annual Maryland Marathon.

Flushed, but hardly puffing, the 23-year-old Howard County standout crossed the Memorial Stadium finish line in 2:55.35, a minute and 57 seconds ahead of defending woman's champ Bevans, who raced to a 2:51.15 MM record last year.

"Going up Satyr Hill (18-mile mark), I didn't know whether I was first, second or third," said Heckman, elated to receive a huge kiss from her husband, Jim, and sip from a can of beer. "I kept looking for Marilyn, who has been injured. I wasn't sure how she would hold up and I began watching for her at Peerce's Plantation (the turnaround point).

"Then I heard about some (unidentified) woman who was supposed to be leading the women and I just didn't know."

Heckman, who represented the Howard County Striders, wasn't going to worry about it, however.

"I went into Satyr Hill feeling very confident," she said. "I do a lot of training in Woodbine and Ellicott City on hills and I feel I can handle them well. I got to the top of Satyr Hill and I felt great."

"All the spectators and the guys in the race kept telling me I looked great, that I was running well and I appreciated that. I enjoy this race (with men) because men are more verbal than women, keep giving you positive support. It's great."

About a mile later, Heckman caught and passed Bevans: "I thought she'd go with me, but she didn't." Then she overcame the mythical barrier, "the Wall" with hardly a notice and the rest was easy sailing.

"I never hit it ('the Wall'), really," said Heckman. "I guess I sorta jumped over it. I felt good and I just kept pushing down Perring Parkway."

"The last 300 yards with all the spectators cheering me on was fantastic."

Bevans hardly was disappointed with a runner-up finish, considering her recent physical condition.