

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE

**MARATHON****490 B.C.**

Phedippides starts things off on the wrong foot by reportedly dying after running from Marathon to Athens to bring news of the Greek victory at the Battle of Marathon.

**START****WE WON!****489 B.C.—1895**

Not much happens, although Marco Polo reportedly brings pasta to Italy in the late 1200s; first carb-loading party held soon after.

**1896**

First Olympic Marathon held in Athens, Greece. Winner Spyridon Louls of Greece covers 40-kilometer course in 2:58:50.

**1897**

First Boston Marathon. Winner John McDermott runs 24.5-mile course in 2:55:10.

**1898**

First recorded complaint about Boston Marathon registration process.

**1908**

Distance for Olympic Marathon in London set at 26 miles, 385 yards to allow royal family to watch start at Windsor Castle. Distance standardized for all marathons in 1921.

**1926**

Violet Percy records first official women's finish time (3:40:22) in London.

**1928**

Johnny Kelley starts but doesn't finish Boston Marathon. He goes on to finish Boston a record 58 times.

**1952**

Emil Zátopek of Czechoslovakia wins Olympic Marathon in his debut at the distance in 2:23:03.

**1953**

Jim Peters runs first sub-2:20 (2:18:40). Two seconds after Peters finishes, someone predicts sub-2:00 marathon is imminent. Prediction repeated every time world record lowered.

**1960**

Abebe Bikila of Ethiopia wins Olympic Marathon barefoot, presaging East African dominance and endless Internet debates.

**1962**

The Ohio Oil Company changes name to Marathon Oil Company (early slogan: "Best in the long run").

**1967**

Kathrine Switzer becomes first woman to run Boston with a number; burly boyfriend keeps Jock Semple from pulling her from course.

**1967**

Australian Derek Clayton runs first sub-2:10 (2:09:36).

**1971**

American Elizabeth Bonner runs first women's sub-3:00 (2:55:22). Three months later, Cheryl Bridges (a.k.a. *Shalane Flanagan's mother*) runs first women's sub-2:50 (2:49:40).

**1972**

Frank Shorter's Olympic Marathon win and corresponding media attention help inspire first running boom.

**1973**

Marathon, the chocolate bar, sold for the first time. Discontinued in 1981. In 2004, Snickers launches Marathon Energy Bar.

**1976**

First five-borough New York City Marathon launches modern big-city marathons.

**1976**

Dustin Hoffman stars in *Marathon Man*. Scene with dentist's drill almost as painful as hitting the Wall.

**1979**

Quite possibly the worst movie ever made, *Running the Movie*, stars Michael Douglas as an Olympic marathoner.

**1980**

Rosie Ruiz, initially declared winner of Boston Marathon, is immediately suspected of cutting course because of lack of running knowledge and world-class credentials. After Ruiz is disqualified, Canadian Jacqueline Gareau named official winner.

**1984**

Joan Benoit wins first women's Olympic Marathon in 2:24:52.

**1987**

Brit Priscilla Welch runs 2:26:51 to win New York City Marathon at age 42.

**1990**

Paul Ryan runs 4:01 at Grandma's Marathon; 22 years later remembers time as "2:50 something."

**1994**

Oprah Winfrey runs Marine Corps Marathon in 4:29:20, helps launch second running boom.

**1998**

First Rock 'n' Roll Marathon held in San Diego, key to growth of charity marathoning, on-course entertainment, and race franchises.

**1999**

Marathon, Florida, incorporates as city.

**2001**

Naoko Takahashi of Japan becomes first woman to break 2:20 (2:19:46).

**2003**

Canadian Ed Whitlock becomes first person 70 or older to break 3:00 (2:59:10).

**2005**

Women become 40% of U.S. marathon finishers (compared with 10% in 1980).

**2010**

Number of U.S. marathon finishers tops 500,000 for first time.

**2011**

Brit Fauja Singh runs 8:11:06 in Toronto to become first person 100 or older to finish a marathon.

**2012**

New York City Marathon canceled because of Superstorm Sandy little more than 36 hours before the race start.

**2013**

Two bombs explode near Boston Marathon finish, killing three and wounding more than 260.

**2013**

Estimated 1,100 marathons held in the United States, compared with 300 in 2000.

\*Source: Running USA