

The Harvard Crimson

April 18, 2011

Students Run in Boston Marathon

By [Emily B. Hyman](#) and [Zoe A. Y. Weinberg](#), CRIMSON STAFF WRITERS

Dozens of Harvard students—including experienced marathoners, unofficial “bandit” runners, and students dressed in burger costumes—participated in the 115th Boston Marathon yesterday.

Wearing a shirt that said “George: Cheer for Me,” George Zisiadis ’11 completed the marathon—spanning 26.2 miles between Hopkinton and Copley Square—in three hours and 51 minutes.

“It’s a unique feeling to have thousands of people yelling your name,” said Zisiadis, who had never run a marathon and only trained for a month.

Zisiadis was one of many “bandit” runners—individuals who join the marathon but are not officially registered.

“We were less running and more partying,” he said.

Jennifer A. Xia ’12 said in an email that she was “still on that running high” hours after the race.

Xia added that she enjoyed the high-energy atmosphere and support along the course.

At Wellesley—the approximate halfway point—the runners passed hundreds of signs that read, “Kiss me, I’m _____,” with different adjectives filling in the blank, according to Xia.

Though she did not run with anyone, “running with the crowd was the next best thing,” she said. “The kids were absolutely adorable.”

Grier W. Tumas ’11 agreed, calling the Boston Marathon “addicting” because of the many people cheering along the way, as well as the many challenges of the course—including the notoriously difficult Heartbreak Hill.

“Every year I finish exhausted but euphoric,” she said.

Rachael L. Goldberg ’12, another participant, said that she enjoyed giving high-fives to “as many kids as possible” on the course.

Vidya B. Viswanathan ’11, a former Crimson news editor, was part of a group of about 15 Harvard students sponsored by b.good. Called the “Burger Brigade,” the students raced in burger and french fry suits to support a homeless empowerment organization called Back on My Feet.

Zisiadis encouraged the marathon-shy to consider participating in the race in the future. “People sell themselves short” when it comes to attempting marathons, he said. “You see people running who look just like you and me.”

The Harvard College Marathon Challenge listed 13 students on its website as officially sponsored runners. The group, which includes Harvard students, employees, and alumni, raises money for the health, education, and welfare of Boston-area youth and families, according to its website. Since 2005-06, HCMC

has raised over \$195,000.

The fastest runner—Kenyan Geoffry Mutai—set a new unofficial world record by finishing the course in two hours and three minutes yesterday, while Kenya's Caroline Kilel pulled out a narrow victory in the women's race.

—Staff writer Zoe A. Y. Weinberg can be reached at zoe.weinberg@college.harvard.edu.