

ALUM PROFILE

Off and Running

Marathoner Cheryl Hewitt doesn't let limited sight limit her

WHEN CHERYL HEWITT was in grade school, her gym teacher refused to put her on the field during soccer games because of her diminished eyesight. Instead, she was conscripted to be a goalie.

"That was the worst place they could have put me, having the balls fired at me 100 miles an hour when my vision wasn't as sharp as everyone else's," recalls Hewitt (SPH'03).

These days, Hewitt, who was born with vision but is legally blind, shows she can run with the best of them. This past June, the dietitian and senior analyst with Abt Associates in Cambridge, Massachusetts, attempted to defend her title in the 2009 Vision 5K road race, the U.S. Association of Blind Athletes national championship. More than 150 blind and visually impaired athletes from around the world laced up, including such elite runners as Kurt Fiene, winner of the 2009 Boston Marathon men's visually impaired division, with an American record time of 2:43.44. Sighted athletes wearing blindfolds pinned on bib numbers, too. (The point of the Vision 5K, organized by Boston Marathon race director Dave McGillivray, is to demonstrate that blind and visually impaired people are as capable as sighted people.) In all, some 1,000 runners and walkers gathered at the starting line on the campus of Boston College in Chestnut Hill on June 7.

Hewitt, who has enough vision to run without a guide, came in third in the visually impaired division. Last year, she won with a time of 25:06.

"They brought me some competition: a couple of young women who were at least a couple of minutes ahead of me,"



Cheryl Hewitt, who is legally blind, runs in a half-marathon last May in Providence, Rhode Island.

JIM AUSTIN

Hewitt says. "I'm not a very fast runner; the couple of years I won it were with times in the range of twenty-five minutes or so, which is really not fast in competitive running."

Hewitt plans to run the 2010 Boston Marathon, likely her last full marathon. "The half-marathon is my favorite race," she says, "and I think I'll probably run those for years to come." She says running is a good stress-reliever. "It's another thing that feeds into my goal-oriented mentality. I really just do it to finish it and not for any other reason."

Legal blindness is defined as vision impairment ranging from no light perception to visual acuity of 20/200, meaning the smallest letter Hewitt can read at 20 feet could be seen by someone with normal eyesight at 200 feet. Hewitt, who is pursuing an advanced degree at the School of Medicine, says her main drawback is not being able to drive.

"Obviously, there are barriers that can be overcome," she says, "and having faced this challenge my whole life has made me the person I am." **CALEB DANILOFF**

2004

JESSICA SUZANNE BABINE (CAS'04) of Amesbury, Mass., earned a J.D. from New England Law. She received the law school's Outstanding Scholastic Achievement Award and was executive articles editor at the *New England Law Review* for three years.

COURTNEY HOLLANDS (COM'04) of Somerville, Mass., is the senior producer for the "Things to Do" section on *boston.com*, which won a 2009 Editor & Publisher EPPy award for best entertainment Web site. Judges said the section "has the true Boston spirit," she writes. Friends can contact Courtney at cahollands@gmail.com.

SARA KATZ (CFA'04) of New York, N.Y., is producer of the theatrical rock concert *Things to Ruin: The Songs of Joe Iconis*, which was

performed at the Second Stage Theatre in New York City this past May.

ASHLEY (JUNG) KIM (SMG'04) and **ABRAHAM KIM** (SMG'05) of Fort Lee, N.J., were married on May 30, 2009. **SAM KIM** (CAS'05), **KIMBERLY CHAN** (CAS'04), **JILLIAN NG** (SAR'04), **VICTORIA LOO** (CAS'05), **JUDY KIM** (CAS'05), and **ALLISON JUNG** (SAR'11), the bride's sister, were in the wedding party. Abraham is an associate pastor at Metro Community Church in Englewood, N.J., and Ashley is an associate finance manager at Unilever and the associate director of the children's program at Metro Community Church.

2006

ALLISON VAN HOUTEN (COM'06) of Ann Arbor, Mich., is the digital brand manager of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia. She is pur-

suing a full-time M.B.A. at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business, concentrating in marketing. Classmates can e-mail her at allison.vanhouten@gmail.com.

2007

JULIE ANN ACKERMAN (CAS'07, GRS'07) of London, England, was recently awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study at the Anna Freud Center at University College London. She will complete an M.S. in psychoanalytic developmental psychology. E-mail her at julie.n.ackerman@gmail.com.

GEORGE M. BECK, JR. (MET'07) of Palisades Park, N.J., a police officer and volunteer firefighter, published *Palisades Park* (Arcadia Publishing, 2009). The book includes more than 200 historic photographs of George's hometown.