



## Manchester City NH Marathon Trip Notes November 5-8, 2010

I was flattered when I told someone I was going to Manchester for a marathon and they presumed I meant Manchester England. Nope, been there, done that (but not for a marathon) and instead I'm into fall colors in this old-fashioned New England river town. It was hell to get there due to driving what should have been 5 hours but turned into 7 ½ yet I realize that some of these maniacs do this kind of thing all the time. I don't. I almost turned around when I encountered the Connecticut traffic: Connecticut traffic that I lived through for both Hartford and Mt Desert Island in October so I should have known better.

It's all about the marathon? I usually try for it NOT to be but in this case there wasn't much else other than the marathon. A sweet little town (well, it's the largest or second largest in NH but seems small) and it used to be a thriving textile town but now I'm not sure what is their claim to fame other than a world class art museum and a Frank Lloyd Wright designed residence.

### ***Success – Liberty Ladies at the finish line***



### ***Why run this marathon?***

- If you're a 50-stater and need NH there are precious few others.
- It's their 4<sup>th</sup> year and they are well organized even though they lost my registration. Yet they readily accepted my word (Maricar's word as it was) and fixed it.
- Two hotels are close: the Radisson at the start line and the Hilton Garden Inn .4 miles away and both priced reasonably low.
- The expo is plenty large and had various samples.
- The goody bag was a bright blue cinch pack sponsored by Anthem and contained a water bottle, Power Bar samples and chap-stick as well as various downtown discount coupons.
- The t-shirt is nicely cut, white and simple enough to be nicely different.
- An early start at 7:50am was easy; just show up ten minutes before and they take your number down and say GO. They were closing down at 5:30 hours and claimed a total closure at 6 hours so an early



start is needed for many of us. Especially those of us who don't like pressure. (We finished in 5:59:58.)

- There were plenty of port-a-potties and no lines.
- The course showed a nice side or two of Manchester to include some trails with a lovely little lake and plenty of river viewings.
- The fall colors were still abundant enough and it was a nice surprise to run on some trails and around a lake.



- Food at the finish was generous with chili, vegetable soup and chicken noodle soup offered as well as the usual stuff and power bars. The kind volunteer gave me two bowls.
- There were pages of marathon coverage photos and articles in Monday's newspaper. (See below.)
- Karen was here to complete her 50<sup>th</sup>.



### ***The Marathon could be better?***

- Course was mostly open to traffic and at times cars were passing by within inches of the runners. There was no way to feel safe.
- The only food on the course was GU though we begged and were fed by some volunteers by going up in their yard.
- Dinkiest little medal I can remember, though well designed and matches the t-shirt logo. No year on either but that makes financial sense.
- Weather was perfect at about 32 degrees at the start (wind chill of 29) but could be iffy as snow, ice and sleet came around later on marathon day by 6pm.
- There are too few touristy reasons to visit Manchester in my view.

### ***It's all about Karen!***



Here's Karen, first with her #50 bib, and then with the t-shirt her team made for her. The big surprise came when her son flew in, unannounced, put up signs all along the course, and then was on the PA system to announce her finish and accomplishments. Karen later confessed to me that she purposely never joined the 50-states marathon club hoping that would control her obsession. It didn't work. She's pretty special, as is her son, who I felt fortunate to meet and spend a bit of time with.

Karen got our traditional bottle of champagne autographed all over by the Liberty Ladies with silver pen and despite not being a drinker she graciously accepted that champagne was appropriate.

Here's the front and back of Karen's t-shirt, made for not only her but all her running friends too. Her friends, led by Bonnie and Jim, made her a souvenir scrap book for a surprise presentation to her. I met her son after the marathon when there was a very happy and contented Karen and probably a relieved one too.



**The Big 50** - The marathon committee generously gave Karen bib number 50, and gave friend Barb who was doing her 49<sup>th</sup> state bib number 49. I'll be with Marv for his 50<sup>th</sup> at OBX next weekend and we went to Annapolis earlier this year for David's 50<sup>th</sup> at the B&A Trail Marathon. Here are some of the super ideas Karen's friends and son presented her in honor of her completion:



In a memento scrap book of memories there was this map of the travels required to do 50-states. Then all along the course Karen's son had taped these signs of Karen with the story on the backside. As well as a series of large signs showing all 50 marathons with a picture of the medals. These same signs were reproduced in smaller format and can be made a part of the scrap book.

## Results

Having just gotten home from last weekend's Athens Marathon I was very pleased that we came in at 5:59:47. Maricar and I ran together and came over the finish line together. Had she not kept me going I might have been slower in part due to having spent much of the night up with food/stomach issues.

Larry and Jim were there and did 5:34 and 6:50 respectively but I think they had been at Indianapolis in the pouring rain the day before. (I wonder if Jim's early start wasn't registered.) Peggy and Rosco (who was finishing his 50<sup>th</sup> too) came in 6:39 and Karen who finished her 50<sup>th</sup> was with a bunch of friends who all came in at 5:41. Barb was doing her 49<sup>th</sup> and managed 5:41 and young Morgan who is on a quest to beat all records was 4:40. I think she was traveling with Lien who did 5:12, or at least they were in MCM last weekend together. (Notice that there are two MCMs – Marine Corps last week and Manchester City this weekend?)

This was my 20<sup>th</sup> marathon of the year so I have more reason to be pleased if the legs keep working. And they MUST for Marv's 50<sup>th</sup> next weekend in OBX and then at my family's home area in the

Overland Park, KS area the following weekend for Gobbler Grind Marathon. If the legs continue to be kind to me, my 23<sup>rd</sup> marathon will be in Honolulu early December following being a tourist in San Francisco with neighbor Kathy.

### ***It was a completion of the 13 Colonies***

Hunting really hard for a headline might give both Maricar and me bragging rights to have at least finished the “13 Colonies.”

### ***Friends***



Mr. Spectator Par Excellence is Jim, Bonnie’s husband, who many know by his umbrella on the course. He’s always there for a kind word. Rosco was running to complete his 50<sup>th</sup> state too – it was the first time I’d met him but both Maricar and Peggy knew him. His daughter came to run with him, and here’s his wife, son-in-law and grandbaby. Then see how many friends Karen had? There were even more. This group photo includes Peggy and Lien.

***Pictures*** by Maricar – if they were on the course or at the finish line they are by Maricar. Thank You!

### ***Weather***

Lucky – lucky – lucky. But also cold – cold – cold. It started at 33 degrees or 29 chill factor and the temp never got over low 40s but the wind really picked up to over 15mph so we kept multiple layers on the entire 6 hours. Then had a heck of a time staying warm while we looked for our friends thereafter and stayed chilled for a very long time. I can’t imagine the long drive home Peggy and Maricar endured after the marathon.

### ***Tourist***

That’s Elm Street as the heading and here’s the rest of Elm Street below. This is like their main street. (Snitched off the internet but with no intention of selling so should be okay?)





Above is the Radisson the host hotel, across the street to Veterans Park finish line, and some statuary in the park. I walked the streets on Saturday but didn't find much else more but this main street look and a lovely autumn colored riverside.



The Manchester Welcome Center said open on one sign and closed on the other. I'm not sure they know what they are. Good Times Smoke Shop knows what they are: New Hampshire's Premier Smoke Shop, and they were open. And nearly next door to a lovely church looking City Hall.



This was our Hilton Gardens Inn built from a converted and historical factory and it faced a sports field and was about .4 of a mile from the Radisson and/or the start line. They offered shuttle service within a five mile radius. The sky was a treasure as it oftentimes is in the fall and with snow in the prediction. Next is a nearby factory location taken over by white collar industry and sitting on the river.

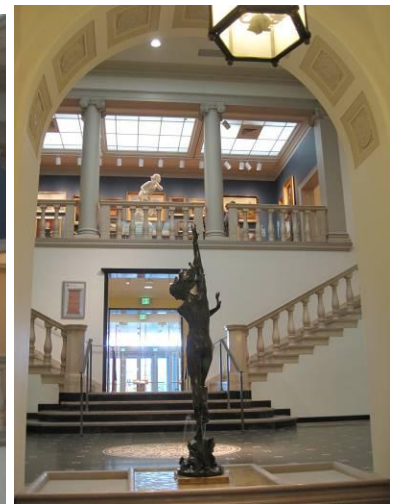
The **Hilton Garden Inn Manchester Downtown** hotel, located in the historic Millyard district of Manchester, New Hampshire, overlooks the baseball stadium of the minor league, [the New Hampshire Fisher Cats](#), and is within walking distance of the Verizon Wireless Arena and minutes from Manchester Airport. Offers amenity-filled guest rooms and two room suites with Jacuzzis®. All guest rooms have a hospitality center with a microwave oven, refrigerator and coffeemaker as well as a 26 inch LCD flat panel HDTV with 85 channels from which to choose, complimentary high-speed internet access with secure, remote printing and the [Garden Sleep System](#). Guests of the Hilton Garden Inn Manchester, New Hampshire hotel will enjoy freshly prepared breakfasts, dinners and cocktails in The Pavilion Restaurant or seasonal, upscale outdoor dining at The Patio restaurant with great views of the ballpark. The Pavilion Pantry® serves as a 24-hour convenience mart where New Hampshire travelers can purchase snacks, microwaveable meals and necessities. Amenities at the Hilton Garden Inn hotel in Manchester include an automated self check-in kiosk, wireless and wired complimentary high-speed internet access, and our 24-hour Ultimate Business Center with PrinterOn secure printing. Free parking. Shuttle from airport available.

***Lovely night shot along the river – picture from the web***

This will also show that Manchester is a surprisingly large town.



***The Currier Museum of Art*** is the only AAA Gem listed in the area. Fortunately it is an internationally renowned art museum featuring European and American paintings, decorative arts, photographs and sculpture. It almost made the drive from NJ worth the trip. The permanent collection includes works by Picasso, Matisse, Monet, O'Keeffe, Calder and Wyeth. The Currier also owns Frank Lloyd Wright's 1950 Zimmerman House, complete with the original furnishings and the owners' fine art collection. I was bummed to have missed the sold out FLW tour.



Inside from the courtyard and looking upwards to the second floor balcony and by way of the fountain.



The doorway from the courtyard and close ups.



Old masters and European paintings and then some crazy modern work too.



Full size bench, a modern family and an Alexander Calder. Does he just give his stuff away to get it displayed? No, that isn't a Jackson Pollock but in a similar style.

This museum is noted for their glass collection and the paper weights were extensive. I couldn't help but leave the pictures larger size to show the intricacies of the work.





And their glass-wear wasn't too bad either. The first one looked Greek to me.



Tom has a quality reproduction of a Frederick Remington and I think their sculpture should be original and it's of the same design as Tom's.

I was amused by this flat-wear set. It begs the question: Why?



Museums seem to me to need the good old fashioned sculpture but some folks think it needs the Picassos of the world. It's hard for the two to live harmoniously so they had separate rooms.



Once moving outdoors, the modern sculptures were more in keeping with each other.

The sky reminded me that nature is giving us some of the best beauty.



Yet my goodbye to the museum and grounds was highlighted by the little puppy that was totally enjoying his ride on the back of momma's bicycle through the sculpture garden. He was in a nice warm cocoon and dressed warmly in a wool coat – in addition to his fur.





The museum neighborhood was full of large houses, some converted to multi-tenant dwellings.

### **Other Results**

Meanwhile the 41<sup>st</sup> running of the NYC Marathon was going on with 45,000 participants. Parker did 4:59 with pacer Marie. He had hoped to run into Bobby Flay who did 4:01, or Jared of Subway fame who managed 5:13, or Robin from the talk show who came in at 6:09 or announcer Meredith who came in at 5:59. The Chilean who ran underground for about 6 miles a day while trapped in a Chilean mine ran 5:40 per one source and 6:10 per another – either sufficient to make him a hero still again. Of course he didn't have to battle the crowds and had two pacers. Most important was our friend Donna who we ran with for her very first marathon in the very first state for her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, and then ran with her again at Mt Desert Island, and she came in plenty fine at around 6 hours.

### **Shopping**

Maricar and Peggy found outlets and also went over to Plymouth, 45-60 minutes away, for dinner. I found a jewelry store willing to attach my last six or so charms to my collectors necklace and bought a pine cone to represent Manchester; that was a pine cone for running on Pine Street and for the fall colors. Does anybody have another idea for Manchester? My charms however ended up costing me a couple hours when they were attached on the wrong end, then attached upside down, and finally correctly. The spaces on this necklace are used up so maybe it's time to quit collecting charms. They number about 70 marathons as well as most of the major week long hikes I've accomplished since starting the bracelet-turned-necklace which is far too heavy to wear now and maybe should become a belt.



### **Next up?**

I'm off to Outer Banks for the OBX Marathon in celebration of Marv's 50-state completion. The following weekend is to family in the Kansas City area for Gobbler Grind Marathon. Then to San Francisco for touring and finally finishing up the year with some tourist time and a marathon in Honolulu with Tom. There are a couple blank weeks so I'm still looking for something to fill my days. Heavens knows I don't know what to do while sitting around the house.

PS to Minneapolis/St Paul Marathon trip notes – Surprised that I was in the money and received \$75 for age group finish plus this lovely medal. I really needed some more medals. This was only my second dollar payment and I felt like a hot shot. Am I now a semi- or mini-pro? Smile.



***Follow up notes from Maricar:***

1. stay at Radisson for instant start/finish
2. you can get free tour of Anheiser Busch and see Clydesdales
3. Drive to Portsmouth for cute New England town with tons of restaurants
4. See Adam Sandler's famous diner the Red Arrow
5. For shoppers, they can go to Kittery
6. small marathon = great service. Fixed your missing bib without a problem.
7. great finish food
8. fairly hilly but not ridiculous
9. Yummy restaurant called Common Man



# Manchester City Marathon

The winners, the runners | Pages D1, D10



Participants stand at attention during the national anthem before Sunday's Manchester City Marathon and Half Marathon.

## A marathon effort in Manchester

Justin Cullity of Manchester, gets a hug from his mom, Libby Cullity, after finishing Sunday's Manchester City Half-Marathon.

PHOTOS BY  
JOSH GIBNEY/UNION LEADER

For more photos from Manchester City Marathon events, visit [UnionLeader.com/photos/citymarathon](http://UnionLeader.com/photos/citymarathon).





Chris Sweeney, of Weare, finishes Sunday's Manchester City Half-Marathon with 5 year-old Julia by his side.



Stephanie Burnham of Manchester, 3rd in the women's division, crosses the finish line.



Volunteer Patrick Broadwater pours cups of water for the runners at Sunday's Manchester City

## ***Itinerary***

### **Fri 11/05/10**

Noon With Jeff in Woodbridge until 2pm  
2:00pm Approx depart via car to Manchester

About 300 miles or 5 ½ hour's drive per MapQuest.

Directions from hotel website: From the South (Boston, MA): Take I-93 North to Manchester. Merge onto I-293 North when arriving in the Manchester area to Exit 5 Granite Street. Make a right going east on Granite Street to the next set of lights at the intersection of Granite Street and South Commercial Street. Make another right at South Commercial Street drive ½ mile and arrive at the Hilton Garden Inn.

2:00pm Packet pick up at Sports and Health Expo at Radisson Hotel until 7pm

Hotel Hilton Garden Inn Manchester Downtown – host hotel - .4m start line  
101 South Commercial Street, Manchester, NH 03101 Tele 603 669 2222 -  
Conf #3370201403

### **Sat 11/06/10**

10:00am Packet pick up at Sports and Health Expo at Radisson Hotel, 700 Elm Street, to 5pm.

Note: Turn back clocks one hour for Sunday morning

### **Sun 11/07/10**

7:50am Early start needed due to firm 6 hour cut off – just show up and they'll record bib numbers at the start line per Peter Boisvert

City of Manchester Marathon – 4<sup>th</sup> annual for 2010  
[www.cityofmanchestermarathon.com](http://www.cityofmanchestermarathon.com) - See virtual tour on website

8:50am Regular start

Runners will begin at 8:50 a.m. at Athlete's Village (Veterans Park) on Elm Street. New Hampshire's own WMUR-news 9 will broadcast live at the starting line. The Marathon and Half Marathon route will run along the same course. The entire route captures the essence of Manchester and all that it has to offer.

Items not allowed in the course: bicycles, rollerblades, skateboards, wagons or motorized vehicles. No dogs. No unregistered runners.

A time limit of 6 hours (13 min. 43 sec/mile) for the marathon will be strictly enforced. The course will close according to the 6 hour pace. PLEASE REGISTER FOR THE EARLY START IF YOU CAN NOT MEET THE TIME RESTRICTION.

The Early Start offers an early start for runners whose expected finish time is five hours or greater.

- Early Start Time: 7:50am. Runners should report to the start by 7:40.
- Early Start is recommended for all runners who expect to have a finish time of five hours or greater. You must expect to run 5 hours or more to participate in the Marathon Early Start, no exceptions.
- There will not be start mats, start times will be recorded by stopwatch
- Support will be limited until official race start at 8:50am. This means until the start of race there will be no police on the course, the course will be marked, but there will be no traffic volunteers, no intersection control and there will be no water stops. There will be a support vehicle to look after Early Start runners.
- Marathon Relay Teams are NOT eligible for the Early Start.

- Runners who participate in the Early Start are not eligible for any monetary prizes or age group awards.
- To sign up for the Early Start, register online and answer yes to the Early Start question.
- If you have already registered or you are registering by mail and would like to participate in the Early Start contact: Peter Boisvert email: peterbster@gmail.com

Avg. Race Day Temp. - Cool, mid 40s

Course - Hilly, challenging and scenic, 2010 Boston qualifier, Perfect running weather

Results in '09 included 472 marathoners timed to 6:51. Ten year age groups.

From '10 website:

4th Annual running of the Manchester City Marathon. The MCM is a challenging Boston Qualifier that takes runners on a scenic trip through the historic mill district of the Granite State's largest city.

Runners in the full and half marathon will enjoy an exhilarating climb to one of the city's highest points for fabulous views of the Queen City, surrounding areas, and beautiful fall foliage.

Located in southern NH, Manchester sits on the banks of the picturesque Merrimack River in Hillsborough County. Just 45 minutes from Boston, the city offers visitors an array of accommodations and dining.

### **Mon 11/08/09**

Depart to NJ with an effort to avoid worse of traffic

Jeff in Woodbridge

### **Attendees:**

Peggy and Maricar at same hotel

Barb Wnek at Radisson – her 49<sup>th</sup> marathon

Bonnie and Jim with Karen – Karen's 50<sup>th</sup>

Nancy Goodnight of Waco



From [www.marathonguide.com](http://www.marathonguide.com)

Email: [manchestermarathon@yahoo.com](mailto:manchestermarathon@yahoo.com)

Official Race Website: <http://www.cityofmanchestermarathon.com>

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## Runner Comments

I have run this marathon, and I want to [add my comments](#) about it.

Number of comments: 49 [displaying comments 1 to 11]

More Comments: [ < 1 2 3 4 > ]

Average Ratings: Course - ★★★★★ Organization - ★★★★★ Fans - ★★★★★

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★★★★★ **A Great New England Race** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5**

g. d. from brookline ma (11/29/09)

6-10 previous marathons | 1 Manchester City Marathon

As others have mentioned, the first and second loops are very different. The first half of the course is less hilly than the second half. Looking at the results you will see that very few people did a negative split on this race. I recommend grabbing a few extra minutes on the front so you can relax on the second half's hills. Water stations were exactly where you'd expect them and they were well stocked with water, Gatorade and people.

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★★★★★ **Two distinct halves** (about: 2009)

**Course: 3 Organization: 4 Fans: 3**

R. A. from NH (11/23/09)

6-10 previous marathons | 1 Manchester City Marathon

Manchester is essentially my "hometown" marathon. The first half is a great - a scenic run, with lots of runners (thanks to the half-marathoners) and excellent crowd support. The second half is a different story, with few full marathoners, sparse spectator support and questionable traffic control. Aid stations and mile markings are very good, and the overall race logistics are well-organized. The finishing area could use some more thought and intentionality, though, since many runners do not realize where to go after they finish.

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★★★★★ **Tough course, but we were warned!!!!** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5**

C. S. from Springfield, Illinois, USA (11/6/09)

50+ previous marathons | 1 Manchester City Marathon

Was this a tough course? Yep. However, the website had warned us about it, and it was right. Seems like all of the course problems from past years have been addressed. Not sure there was 1,000 feet of level ground in the whole marathon. The back half is definitely tougher than the front. Expo wasn't anything special, but they had some good free stuff. Water stops were great, and food at the end was good. As for shirts and finishing medals, we runners need to make sure we don't complain about subjective things like the size of medals or the color of the shirts (my wife loved the medal), when the RD has obviously made tremendous strides in addressing previous problems. NOTE: My finishing time was about 20 minutes slower than I had planned, but the RD should get high marks.

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★★★★★ **My first; definitely a tough, hilly run** (about: 2009)

**Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 4**

J. D. from New York, NY (11/3/09)

1 previous marathon | 1 Manchester City Marathon

Pros:

- Weather - perfect running conditions
- Big mile markers let you know when you're approaching milestones
- Nice pace timers along the course
- Great water/Gatorade stations (including rogue tables from the locals in front of their homes)
- Very good traffic control - directional arrows to let you know where to go
- Short off-road sections
- Nice long-sleeve race shirts
- Your name and home town were announced as you cross the finish line to cheering fans
- My wife and brother were able to run from 26 to 26.2 mile markers
- People were talkative along the course. Police office marathoners carried me through tougher miles.

Cons:

- Soup, old bananas at end tasted bad
  - Mini-medals
  - Hills were non-stop, with lots of walking between miles 19-23 because of late hills
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★★★★★ **Autumn Colors & Small Hills** (about: 2009)

**Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 4**

Rob Klein from Aurora, Colorado (11/3/09)

**11-50** previous marathons | **1** Manchester City Marathon

This marathon was well organized, with decent community support, and was not as hilly as I anticipated. The expo was at the Radisson Hotel downtown, and the start and finish line were within a half block of the hotel complex. I arrived early in the day, so I had time to zip over to Kittery, Maine to visit Cape Neddick Lighthouse, walk my dog Bo on the beach, and have a lobster dinner (who needs pasta when there is lobster to eat?). Basically, there were two big loops that were run. The first loop was to the northeast, and the second to the northwest. The first loop was run with the half marathoners. This marathon had a six-hour time limit, so the race committee allowed those slower runners an opportunity for a sunshine start, giving us 90 extra minutes to complete the race. I was surprised how many folks showed up early. An older couple was completing a marathon in their 50th state together. Awesome! One of the race officials drove along with us for the early miles and supplied the sunshine start runners with water - and encouragement too. He did a great job.

Between mile 4 and 5, there was a turn from Union Street onto Campbell Street. About a half-block beyond the intersection, several police officers were standing, and I missed the turn on to Campbell Street - the turn was marked with sand arrows on the road, but they were faint. Fortunately, the officers immediately re-directed me on to Campbell Street, so I did not lose too much time there. Having a person on that corner to direct the runners would have been a plus, but we were early birds, and so it is likely that all of the support people had not shown up yet. Just past mile marker five, we entered the woods on a bike and footpath (Livingston Park) - for about a mile. That was nice, and there was a serene and peaceful little lake on the left. Then about mile 10 we turned on to Hanover Street and headed back toward downtown on a long straight stretch to complete the first loop. Right near mile marker 12, Maple Street crossed Hanover Street - with a traffic light. There was no one directing traffic there. I looked across the street, and a policeman was sitting in his vehicle in an adjacent parking lot, and appeared to be relaxing. Meanwhile, I had to clear traffic myself to get across safely, as there was automobile traffic. It was the only lack of attention to detail I noticed by law enforcement. Usually those guys are top-notch.

At the start of the second half, we actually crossed the starting line, only going in the other direction. We shortly crossed over the Merrimack River and headed out toward Goffstown. I missed the significance of a lot of the landmarks, but we did pass through or on the edge of Saint Anselm's College campus. Still, it was fun to see some of the large old homes around town. Toward the end we went through some more residential areas, then crossed back over the Merrimack River on a foot/bike bridge, and did a small loop around part of the downtown business district, then crossed the finish line in front of the hotel.

The water/aid stations were staffed by a lot of younger folks, and they - as usual - provided a great service to the runners. Gatorade and water were available throughout. And GU gel was available about milepost 9 and 19 (and two are better than one, right?). So that was a big help too. Weather was better than the forecasts I read earlier in the week. Though it rained hard the night before, it was about 53 degrees shortly after 6:00 a.m. (I could not believe how light it was at 6:00 in the morning), 59 degrees about noon, with sun in the later part of the morning, and with variable winds throughout the morning. There were pockets of cheering fans over the course, and that always lifts our spirits when we are running - and I love doing high-fives with the kids. They have real spirit being out there cheering for us. Then the autumn colors added to the scenery. This course has some reputation for hills, but the hills were not that bad (Omaha and Charlottesville have big hills!) and this was my fourth best finish time - even with pain issues in both of my feet. So it is a worthwhile marathon event if you need a race in New Hampshire, and remember, the hills are not that bad!

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★★★★★ **Wonderful surprise!** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5**

C. M. from CT (11/3/09)

**6-10** previous marathons | **1** Manchester City Marathon

Wonderful race. Advertised as hilly and it was (I love when they are honest). This is the coldest I've run a race like this and it was great! Surprising number of spectators, pretty course (still leaves on trees), and nice organization. I would recommend this to any New England runner.

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★★★★★ **Great race, great state, great people!** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5**

M. W. from Gainesville, Florida (11/3/09)

**11-50** previous marathons | **1** Manchester City Marathon

This was my 37th state and 43rd marathon and it was one of the absolute best. I cannot think of a thing that could be made better.

Organization was superb - and having an early start for us back-of-the-packers worked out really well. The course was very well-marked, with plenty of helpful volunteers. Lots of folks came out of their houses just to cheer us on. We had beautiful weather, too, and that made an already scenic course even better. Sure, there were plenty of hills, but they were doable. Manchester is a lovely old mill city, with several fascinating museums and lots of good restaurants. I hope to do this race again and spend more time touring around the area. If you are looking for a fall race or want to do NH, this is a fine choice.

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★★★★☆ **Hill rumors are overrated** (about: 2009)

**Course: 3 Organization: 3 Fans: 2**

m. n. from Syracuse, NY (11/3/09)

3 previous marathons | 1 Manchester City Marathon

This was my third marathon ever (NYC and Des Moines were my prior ones). The expo and pickup center was pretty low-class, as far as having stuff to buy and info, although it was across the street from the start, which was helpful. There was no pasta dinner either, which sucked. One of the marathon's head organizers told me directly over the phone prior to the race that headphones are ok, but just to watch out; accordingly, I used my iPod and headphones with no problems, as did a few other people. I opted for the early start at 7:10 a.m., which was great, seeing that I did not train at all. The course itself was not nearly as hilly or difficult as I imagined (except at the end, which is uphill till about Mile 26). The support staff along the way were helpful, although there were times when I found it confusing where I should go. All in all, not the best marathon, but certainly worth it for people like myself who have to "check off" the state of New Hampshire.

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★★★★★ **Great training for Boston** (about: 2009)

**Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5**

C. H. from Granby, CT (11/2/09)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 Manchester City Marathon

I had a great experience in Manchester, NH from the expo to the finish. I found the course challenging and scenic, offering a number of steep hills and surprising turns as the race traversed through downtown, a wooded path into a park, through neighborhoods and over bridges of water. Great fall foliage. The spectators were among the friendliest and most encouraging crowds in my travels. People cheered the whole 26.2 miles. The race was very well organized and the mile markers were clearly visible throughout the race. The weather was a perfect, clear, sunny, 50 degrees. I came home with a bag full of freebies from the expo, a great long-sleeve tech shirt, a cute medal and a big smile!

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★★★★☆ **As stated on race website: hilly, challenging.** (about: 2009)

**Course: 3 Organization: 5 Fans: 3**

T. S. from Audubon, PA (11/2/09)

6-10 previous marathons | 1 Manchester City Marathon

The Manchester City Marathon was a well run, pleasant, small race. I particularly enjoyed having the host hotel across the street from the start/finish. There were many and varied hills throughout the course, and few sections that were anything close to flat. This course was about 12 minutes slower than my PR on a faster course with a comparable effort.