

## The Edmund Fitzgerald 100K Road Race & Team Relay

Dear Team & Solo Runner:

### Ending of the Edmund Fitzgerald

It is with great memories of the first Edmund Fitzgerald race run back in 1982 for 12 runners who ran from the Little Marais Inn on highway 61, 62 miles to the top of Lemon Drop Hill on the Grandmas Marathon Course. The next year, still on highway 61, the team event was added as I learned quickly that you could not put on a point-to-point 100K road race with only 12 customers.

Over the past 26 years, it has been my distingue pleasure to work with some of the finest volunteer and truly devoted people who love running and healthy lifestyles. Together we have collected a great history of Edmund Fitz Event...stunning performances...and in 1990, we brought the world to the Fitz. Every runner in the world of 100K racing was on the course. Never before, nor since, has anyone assembled the same field. Roland Villimenu, from France out duded Russell Prince from New Zealand and ran a 6:24 100K...only a few seconds off the American Record. At the 95K mark, Roland was given his French beer, which he chugged, and then was heard "hooting" down the last 5K to the finish at Brighten Beach.

I could continue with a memory chest of events and happenings at the Edmund Fitz. I cherish the awards program and most recently the commission of our own bell. The relative of the sailors who perished on the Fitz have found a warm and friendly place to come each year to remember and celebrate. I know every 100K finisher who has rung the bell and received his or her jar of taconite is connected to the namesake of the event...The Edmund Fitzgerald.

I will miss the opportunity to see all the smiling faces and wild costumes of the teams...boy you guys know how to have fun...and the support you gave to the solo runners is legendary.

I will miss the morning work at the start line...passing out Perkins muffins to our volunteers in the morning...and Pizza Hut cheese pizza to the volunteers in the afternoon. Moreover, every once and awhile a favorite team or two would get a pizza from me...you know who you are?

What happens in the future is still to be determined. We have gotten some interest from the YMCA in Duluth to take over the event...but even they are amazed at the organization, coordination, and volunteers that are necessary to put on the Fitz. Not the least of which are the resources necessary to do the same.

Maybe next year...in the Twin Cities I will organize a reunion/farewell event so you can all come have fun one more time and say good-bye.

In the meantime, we are going to put up a link on [www.edmundfitz.com](http://www.edmundfitz.com) so you can send us your memories, thoughts, thanks, or what ever you would like to say...and share with everyone about the Fitz.

In closing...thanks for the great memories, you gave me. I am truly blessed to have met all of you and enjoyed your friendship. Most of all thanks STAFF...from day one each one of you who have been by my side...THANK YOU.

See you all somewhere down the road....

Bill Wenmark, Founder, Race Director, 100K Finisher  
Edmund Fitzgerald 100K Road Race & Team Relay.