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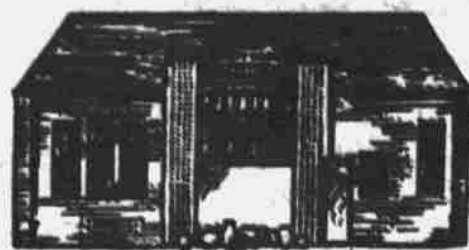
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Craft-Ware Pottery Co.

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The day of the race brings pain, smiles

By Alice Hrnicek

Six o'clock seemed to roll around early Sunday, as the sound of the alarm clock jolted my arm to subconscious action. As I lay back in bed, the smell of morning air and the promising glimmer of the sun beckoned me to stick my head out the window. And then I remembered, it was the day of the race—my first.

But neither my friend who entered, nor I, considered it a race.

KLIN RADIO, for the second year in a row, co-sponsored a Race Against Cancer in conjunction with Anheuser-Busch in behalf of the American Cancer Society. The race was administered by the Lincoln Track Club.

Since I like to run slowly and alone, the fear of being trampled by 264 others who were probably more talented was suffocating. Finding out that most had entered to raise money in the form of pledges or to just have fun, did much to alleviate my doubts.

The run's setting seemed to invite a tranquil excitement among the scattered crowd. Everyone moved restlessly, anxiously awaiting the sound of the starter's gun. We were all together, a murmur that blended as naturally as the hum of a bee hive.

WITHOUT CEREMONY, the gun rang. A hesitant motion and uneven acceleration shattered the unity of the figures.

I set a pace. I didn't look at my watch once—I just ran.

The course wound around Holmes Lake up a slight slope and then along a sharp left turn on to 70th Street. Before reaching the street, the maze of runners took on their individual styles. Others overtook me. The crowd thinned out as I stayed toward the back.

IN SOME INSTANCES, it was easy to distinguish the three-milers from the 10-milers. Those who appeared to lope effortlessly had to be long-distance experts. There were 184 of them. The rest of us, who struggled or just ran, could pride in finishing the short course. We numbered 81.

Clothes indicated nothing about a runner's form. It was a casual race. Few dressed up.

But shoes told all. Surprisingly, many wore quality brands.

Until I reached the first mile marker, complete with a water station, people continued passing by me. But then, although my pace didn't change, I began to slip by a few.

Hey, I thought, is this real?

THE COMBINATION of continual movement, changing scenery and the substitutions of running mates as I gained and lost on others steadied the time ticking by.

I never had tried the course. It was hilly, as I had been

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