

# Woman of the Year in Sports Kathryn Martin

*Champion roadracer runs in support of cause and community*

BY KATHERINE CONSORTE

Northport resident Kathryn Martin has been a positive role model not only in her community, but also around the world. Her passion for running has led her to become a nationally known athlete. A Northport Running Club and Greater Long Island Club member, Martin participates in a number of races, including those that benefit various causes. For her dedication and commitment, Martin has been named Woman of the Year in Sports by *The Times of Northport*.

"I couldn't think of anybody better," said Patrice Gardner, who is director of development of the Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk (VNSHS), an agency that provides home health and hospice care. "I couldn't think of anyone more deserving. She's not only a great athlete, but she really supports her community. She is a superstar."

Martin, whose first run was not promising, picked up the sport in 1980 at age 30. She decided to join her husband, Chuck Gross, who enjoyed running every night, for a run. After finishing a mile, Martin, who grew up in Canada, where girls played ice hockey, was exhausted and laying on her back in the middle of the road. Despite the exhaustion, she was determined to continue running and, for the past 20-plus years, Martin has a list of accolades and accomplishments that include 20 record-breakers in Canada.

For the past two years, Martin, a real estate agent for Century 21 Northern Shores, and her husband served as members of the 5K race committee, sponsored by the VNSHS. This race supports the annual bereavement retreat for children who have lost their parents or siblings. Not only did Martin organize and promote the run, she

also competed, finishing in first place. And despite the terrible weather last May, 250 runners participated.

"She is a great community service person," Gardner said. "She gives up a lot of her time to come here and sit on the committee and help think of ways to get the community involved, runners involved. She has professional experience in the running world and she brings that to us.

Visiting Nurses Service & Hospice of Suffolk appreciates and feels privileged and honored to have her assist with our race. She really is a great lady."

Every April, Martin also participates in the 10K Aspire Race in Plainview, helping benefit amputees and the handicapped by raising money for prostheses. Last May she competed in the Elizabeth T. McNamee Memorial 5K run, held in West Islip, in support of a scholarship in memory of a 25-year-old athlete and law

student who died suddenly from an undiagnosed heart defect.

Mickey Murphy, a Kings Park mortgage broker with Long Island Funding and Martin's friend for about 15 years, said, "She is genuine, she is caring and she is straightforward. She is professional and she really cares about people." Martin recently cooperated with Murphy in a holiday gift drive for Little Flower Children and Family Services of New York.

Martin, who has competed in more than 900 races since her start, has won a number of prestigious awards. In 2005, the Road Runner's Club of America presented her with the Road Runner of the Year award for female master. The USA Track & Field chose Martin as the BENGAY Master Athlete of the Year in 2004 for breaking seven American records and three world records in

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*File photo*

Kathryn Martin

the women's 50 to 54 age group. Martin's individual world records all came in the indoor mile and were all set at the Armory Track & Field Center. That year, *Running Times* magazine selected