

New England AAU  
15K Championship  
October 12, 1968 | Manchester, NH



*Note: MRH generally features Maine events, however we make exceptions when we are provided with rare, first hand accounts, such as this one submitted by Bob Hillgrove, a member of the Maine Running Hall of Fame.*

“Every Columbus Day in October, Manchester, New Hampshire would hold their annual New England AAU 15K Championship. The event had great prizes; honest competition and was flat as old beer for the first 5 1/2 miles (hills galore thereafter)... Didn't check to see at the starting line who was there, just as well, after finishing 9th the year before (Ralph Buschman, Ken Mueller, Graham Parnell, etc.) Ran a 29:56 time trial (6 miles at Colby College 2-weeks before, I was ready. I took off so fast that Tony Sapienza thought I had won it, hit 3 miles in 15:10 and the crowd was telling me I had a big lead... A few minutes later Jim Keefe (Ranked #1 in U.S. 3 miles in '63) and Amby Burfoot (no intro needed) go by... at least I can get 3rd, right? and a nice prize...WRONG!!! At almost 8 miles and "rung out", John J. Kelly catches up to me... with about half a mile to go, I'm "DUN" and Kelly gets me by about 6 seconds... Keefe wins it and I get to say I ran with the best on a cool fall day 40 years ago.”

*- Bob Hillgrove*