

Grillo Vs. Levasseur (Third Place 2001)

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I never realized how competitive I could become with a fellow athlete until I ran a race against the insane machine, Grillo. We raced one another in the 600-meter, and he opened a kick in the last 50 meters that blew me away. I was disgusted. I could not wait to race him again at our league meet. I wanted to show him that I was not weak, and I would not be worn down. The time came, and with determination, I beat him and I was thrilled! It hit me just then that he was a junior; I was a sophomore. I would need to run against him again the next year.

Two more seasons went by, and it was time for our first meet for indoor track, and although I did not race against his town or him, I saw his performance, and I wept to myself. His time beat my best by nearly a whole second, and I was scheduled to race him the following week. I did everything I could to get psyched up.

The day finally came. We raced; he won. We both passed out from exhaustion, and when we arose, we congratulated one another on a good race, and then sat down to race one another again in the 4x4 relay. We were both anchors, and we were both dead tired. We managed to run the 4x4 and finish. Luckily my relay team and I did not let the Holliston Panthers down. I had beaten Grillo by a mere few feet. Once again we congratulated one another and then we parted.

A month later it was time for the TVL league meet. The officials called us to the line and gave us our lane assignments; Grillo and I shook hands knowing it would be our last time running against each other. Right before the girls finished, we joked about just being able to finish the race and not 'dying.' Then the officials called us to the line. I pulled ahead for the first 590 meters, and then out of nowhere I heard something that sounded like a train. I tried to run faster, but my legs would not move. My mouth was dry and all I could taste was my last meal.

He had beaten me again. As I crossed the finish line, I almost collapsed, but Grillo was there to catch me. We embraced one another and for the last time congratulated one another on a great race. Then we helped each other into the bathroom, where we lost our last meals together, proving that opponents can be sympathetic and caring toward one another.

I will always remember the competition I felt with Grillo. I will never forget the great feeling I experienced when I competed against him. Grillo was a worthy adversary who taught me that winning is not everything. He helped bring out the best in me.