

Notable Fifth Season 8K Elite Athlete Quotes In the Following Day's Cedar Rapids Gazette Newspaper

Joseph Kipsang – 1986 8K Men's Winner

Joseph Kipsang completed the 4.97 mile course in 23:23, just 13 days after winning the Grandma's Marathon in Duluth, MN. "I felt the effects of the marathon on my thighs," said Kipsang. "I was surprised no one came from behind." Kipsang, an All-American in both cross country and the 10,000 meters at Iowa State, took advantage of a hill to pull away from the rest of the pack at about the 1 ½ mile mark. "I felt mentally tough," he added. "Since I was all by myself I gave in some. There was no one to push me at 1 ½ miles," added the 25-year old Kenyan. Kipsang ran by himself from then on. (Cedar Rapids Gazette, July 5, 1986)

Nan Doak – 1986 8K Women's Winner

Nan Doak, a Hedrick native and most recently training in Eugene, Oregon, was pleased with her clocking of 26:46 over the course. Doak, a former All-American at the University of Iowa, shared the lead until the 1 ½ mile mark and then pulled ahead to finish first in the women's division. "Connie (Prince) was right on my shoulder for a while there," she said. "I thought Leslie (Seymour) was definitely going to give me a bigger push. "I was happy to win. "Doak added. "I hadn't really sat down and thought about my strategy." Wedding plans have consumed most of the 4-11, 93-pound runner's time the past week. Doak is marrying former Iowa wrestler Barry Davis, who also ran in Friday's race, today in Cedar Rapids. "I came home first for this (race)," said Doak. "Then (after scheduling the race) Barry comes out (to Eugene) and proposed to me and made it more special. I hope I'll be able to walk up the aisle. My feet have blisters on them." (July 5, 1986)

Keith Brantly – 1987 8K Men's Winner

Keith Brantly, a 1988 Olympic hopeful from Gainesville, Florida, smoked a crowd of elite runners, including Bill Rodgers and defending champion Joseph Kipsang in 22:49. After hitting the halfway point in record pace 11:22, Brantly relaxed and coasted down Grande Avenue and Second Avenue to the finish on First Street. "That (the record) was out of the way," added Brantly. "It was just a matter of who was going to get to get it." (July 5, 1987)

Brenda Webb – 1987 8K Women's Winner

Brenda Webb had to push herself (to set a record time of 26:16) since her closest competitor was two minutes behind her. "I think I was just really concentrating on running a time that would set the record," she said. "I felt the course was going to be harder than it was," Webb added. "I ran timid over the hills. I was really surprised with my splits." (July 5, 1987)

Side note: Dr. Ken Paulsen, race director, contacted Brenda Webb (1987 8K women's winner) as a long shot (to attend the race) after reading an article about her training in Runner's World. When Webb agreed to come, she asked Paulsen if she could bring along her friend, Keith Brantly. "Keith and I are good friends," said Webb. "We're both very serious about running. We end up at a lot of the same races," she added. (July 5, 1987)

Keith Brantly – 1988 8K Men's Winner

Fifth Season 8K Road Race winner **Keith Brantly** (setting a course record of 22:38) just may have to apply for a patent on his finishing kick. "It was probably one of the best tactical races I've run," said Brantly. "I thought I'd lost it with 400 yards to go. The smartest thing I could do was hang back." As the lead pack turned the corner for the final 600 yards, Brantly rode (Sam) Obwocha's right shoulder as the two sprinted to the finish. With 50 yards to go, Brantly caught Obwocha off guard by passing him on the left side. "I was already going as fast as I could. Physically I was on the ropes," Brantly said. "Mentally, I wasn't going to concede anything until I crossed the finish line. It gave me a heck of a good workout. It made me realize that I have one of the strongest finish kicks in the world." (July 5, 1988)

Karen Lutzke – 1988 8K Women's Winner

Former Michigan State runner **Karen Lutzke**, was the top women's finisher in 26:43. "Just after two miles I felt good and went and no one went with me," said Lutzke, who thought she might have a shot at the record of 26:16. "That's my best time by about 30 seconds," she said. "I didn't know how hard those hills were. Even a slight incline slows you down." (July 5, 1988)

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Max Harn – 1989 8K Men's Winner

Max Harn of Madison, WI looked back to make sure he wouldn't be surprised by one of five late challengers (winning in 23:01). Three of the top four finishers were from Madison, WI. He looked back several times down the final 700-yard straightaway, watching mostly for Marc Oleson, a sub-four minute miler since high school. "I was concerned about the Canadian's kick, said Harn. "He didn't catch me. Basically, I accelerated away from him." (July 5, 1988)

Nan Doak-Davis – 1989 8K Women's Winner

Nan Doak-Davis looked up at the clock to see that she had shattered the women's course record in a time of 25:57. "When I came across I realized it was 25 minutes," she said. "I'm still in amazement," added Doak-Davis. "I thought I was just babbling through my teeth when I said I wanted the course record." It's scary just because I haven't been doing anything," added Doak-Davis. Mentally I just know what I want." "I'm pretty happy with the way my season turned out," said Doak-Davis. "Now, I get my break and I'm excited about that." (July 5, 1989)

Jeff Jacobs – 1990 8K Men's Winner

Jeff Jacobs of Roscoe, IL, formerly of Clinton, became the first male native Iowan to win the Fourth of July race. He was clocked in 23:35 for his first major road race win this year. "The heat was a huge factor," said Jacobs, who maintained a steady pace throughout the race. "It's the first year I've worked really, really hard. People keep telling me I have the talent," said Jacobs, a Division I all-American in cross-country at the University of Illinois. (July 5, 1990)

Shelly Steely – 1990 8K Women's Winner

Shelly Steely of Eugene, OR breezed to a 42-second win (in a time of 26:44) over runner-up Jean McGould of Chicago. The Fifth Season in Cedar Rapids Wednesday was a hot and humid one. Even at 8 a.m. (with the temperature above 80 degrees). "Splits and everything could have been thrown out the window today," said Steely. (July 5, 1990)

Scott Jenkins – 1991 8K Men's Winner

Scott Jenkins of Madison, WI said he surged ahead with a mile to go after looking back and seeing a pack of runners not far behind (winning in 23:33). "I didn't want to be reeled in by the pack... I felt good, so I took off," said Jenkins. (July 5, 1991)

Janice Klecker – 1991 8K Women's Winner

Janice Klecker of Minnetonka, MN showed little signs of having run the San Francisco Marathon 11 days earlier (winning in 26:55). "I'm certainly on my recovery road," she said. "I may be missing a little bit of spunk in my legs," she added. "Janice pretty much opened it up from the beginning," said runner-up Kathy Hadler. I didn't feel in the condition that I would really challenge the course record (of 25:57)," said Klecker. (July 5, 1991)

Glenn Morgan – 1992 8K Men's Winner

Glenn Morgan won the Fifth Season 8K in 23:34, a personal best for the four-time all-America at the University of Tennessee. As the runners headed down Grande Avenue for the second half of the race, Morgan made a move and no one followed. Going past mile 3, he was a block ahead of Dan Hostager of Boulder, CO and Eric Stabb of Madison, WI. "I'm a sit and kick kind of person. I go behind the lead pack as long as I can and then hopefully with 200 meters to go I start kicking," he said as a different strategy worked Saturday. (July 5, 1992)

Janice Klecker – 1992 8K Women's Winner

In a battle of two former champions, Olympic marathon qualifier **Janice Klecker** pulled away from Nan Doak-Davis after the first two miles and won in 26:26. Klecker, who will run one more race before her Olympic (marathon) debut August 1, said she ran the race pretty much like she had hoped to. "I was pushing as hard as I could," said Klecker, "With marathon training comes the ability to sustain." (July 5, 1992)

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Rodney Dehaven – 1993 8K Men's Winner

Competing for the seventh time in Cedar Rapids, **Rodney DeHaven** of Middleton, WI won after touring the Fifth Season 8K course in 23:28. DeHaven waited to make his move less than a mile from the finish line next to Green Square Park. He picked up the pace and (1990 winner) Jeff Jacobs wasn't ready to follow him. "I tried to do it coming down (Second Avenue)," said DeHaven. "I know I run downhills pretty well." (July 4, 1993)

Karen Glerum – 1993 8K Women's Winner

Karen Glerum, a native of the Netherlands and three time all-American at Iowa State, emerged as the front-running woman at the half-way point. In one of the closest finishes in race history, Glerum was one of five women to break 29 minutes (in a time of 28:15). "We stayed more or less together until the half-way point," said Glerum. "I felt good, so I decided to go my own pace. I then focused on a couple men who were running the pace I wanted to go." (July 4, 1993)

Side note: The race was held for the first time on a date other than the traditional July 4 slot. The race was held Saturday, July 3 to avoid running the race on Sunday July 4 whereby 11 churches are located on the race course.

Dan Hostager – 1994 8K Men's Winner

Dan Hostager of LaCrosse, WI (with third-place finishes the past two years) blew away a solid field of Midwest runners and took home the cash by winning the 8K in a time of 24:06. "I hated to keep disappointing the race officials," said Hostager, a former Audubon and Northern Iowa runner. Hostager said he was surprised he took such a big lead on the rest of the runners. "I was figuring if I died it would be at three miles. Then at that point it would be a survival." It was anything but a survival. Hostager said he never let up. (July 5, 1994)

Bonnie Sons – 1994 8K Women's Winner

Bonnie Sons, the mother of two young girls and a full-time computer programmer, is having "probably my best year since my college years" after winning the 8K in 27:20. "I don't know how to explain it," said Sons, a graduate of Iowa State. "I have two young children and after each one I got faster." (July 5, 1994)

John Kihonge – 1995 8K Men's Winner

John Kihonge may be a native of Kenya who lives in Ames while attending Iowa State University, but it's Cedar Rapids he's calling home these days. Kihonge claimed his second straight road racing victory on the streets of Cedar Rapids Tuesday by winning the Fifth Season 8K on a wet and muggy morning. "You feel you are at home here," Kihonge said after he outkicked fellow Kenyan Richard Rono of Albuquerque, NM, to win in 23:32, one second slower than his winning time at last month's Festival of Races 8K, but five ticks in front of Rono. (July 5, 1995)

Salina Chirchir – 1995 8K Women's Winner

Although **Salina Chirchir** made it look easy with her 35-second victory (in a time of 27:01), she said it was anything but easy. "You can only say a race is easy when you cross the finish line," said Chirchir, a Kenyan living and training in Albuquerque, NM. Chirchir knew she was leading the women's field only when spectators told her so, she said. She didn't know where the other lead women were. "I felt good, but the rain was a little too much... water was getting into my eyes," she said. (July 5, 1995)

Eric Polonski – 1996 8K Men's Winner

On a near-perfect day for a race, sunny and cool, **Eric Polonski** of Austin, TX blew away a star-studded field with a sizzling time of 22:44. Thursday's win was important for his mental fitness after he "blew up mentally and took the off ramp with 6.5 laps to go" in the men's 10,000 meter finals at the Olympic Trials last month. "It's a mental game and it's a game that I'm learning to play," he said. Right now I don't play it as well as I could, but with more races and wins, I'll get better," said Polonski. (July 5, 1996)

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Libby Johnson – 1996 8K Women's Winner

Libby Johnson of Fort Collins, CO, who finished 47 seconds in front of runner-up Amber Anderson of Omaha in a time of 25:59, said she didn't even think of the course record (of 25:57) until the race was over. "I'm just happy to feel good and to be back racing," she said about the encouraging performance after disappointment at the Olympic Trials. "I'm so much more of a racer to win than a time person." (July 5, 1996)

Jeff Jacobs – 1997 8K Men's Winner

Jeff Jacobs said he won with a steady effort – a 4:37 per mile pace (winning in 22:58). "I didn't make any decided move or anything," he said. "The Kenyans surge you, surge you and surge you. They try and drop you with their surges. If you stay with them, they get flustered, I think." (July 5, 1997)

Kris Ihle – 1997 8K Women's Winner

Kris Ihle, who was making her major road racing debut, actually was a bit surprised she set the record (of 25:55), considering she wasn't pushed much over the final four miles of the course. "I expected a couple of the women to be up there for a couple of miles," she said. "I wasn't sure the course record was going to be available to run, because I had to do all the work myself." I knew that the second uphill mile was going to be fairly challenging," Ihle said. "I wanted to maintain that pace, about 5:10, and I pulled out on Salina (Chirchir) and she didn't go with me." (July 5, 1997)

Johannes Mabitle – 1998 8K Men's Winner

Johannes Mabitle didn't have a record in his legs Saturday morning, but he had enough kick to capture the 8K title. Mabitle, a South African living in Boulder, CO, outkicked Kenyan James Bungei and fellow South African Simon Morolong to break the tape on a warm and humid morning in 22:46 (eight seconds off Keith Brantley's 1988 course record). The three Africans broke away from the rest of the pack just after the first mile and stayed together until the final 200 meters. "My aim was (to) break that record," said Mabitle, whose time ranks fourth in race history. (July 5, 1998)

Kris Ihle – 1998 8K Women's Winner

Kris Ihle successfully defended her 8K title Saturday, 49 seconds off the course record she set last year. "The humidity was definitely a factor," Ihle said after easily winning the women's title in a time of 26:42 to become the first repeat champion since Janice Klecker won in 1991 and 1992. It was a hard day," Ihle said. "I ran as hard as I could. It wasn't a record, but I'll take it." (July 5, 1998)

Kenneth Cheruiyot – 1999 8K Men's Winner

Kenneth Cheruiyot of Kenya out kicked South African Gert Thys over the final 200 meters to win in 22:50. "It was not bad," said Cheruiyot. Cheruiyot, Thys, and (Rodney) DeHaven (posting the eighth, ninth, and tenth all-time best Fifth Season 8K times, respectively) were in a pack of eight runners after the turn-around inside Bever Park. The three broke away about a mile later, but there was no defining moment, DeHaven said. "It was just a race of attrition more than anything else. It seems like (Cheruiyot) kind of outlasted everybody else. With 800 to go, he definitely pulled away from me," DeHaven said. (July 5, 1999)

Kris Ihle-Helledy – 1999 8K Women's Winner

Kris Ihle-Helledy became the first three-time winner Sunday morning, breaking the tape in 26:56. A fast time didn't matter on this hot, muggy and windy morning. "I wasn't really concerned about time," said Ihle. I was very happy. Even if I had gone out and hammered, the course record wouldn't have fallen today. Becoming the event's three-time winner was a top priority. "It feels good to do something nobody else has ever done before," she said. (July 5, 1999)

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Simon Sawe – 2000 8K Men's Winner

Simon Sawe waited until the final half-block to pull away and win in 23:22. "I saved the best for last," said Sawe. Sawe and (Jared) Segera broke away from (Rodney) DeHaven shortly after the 3-mile mark and were nearly a half-block ahead when they turned onto Second Avenue. DeHaven made his charge after the 4-mile mark and passed Segera crossing 10th Street. He caught up with Sawe at Seventh Street and the two went stride-for-stride until the finish. "When I tested (DeHaven) I knew he wasn't going to go," Sawe said. "After the railroad tracks, I knew it had to be now. Running from behind, he spent more energy than me. Sometimes it's easier (to run from the front) when you are ready for it," Sawe said. (July 5, 2000)

Bonnie Sons – 2000 8K Women's Winner

Bonnie Sons didn't know what to expect Tuesday after joining the elite field so late. "I thought I could just come down here and try to run a good race," she said, adding she was a bit worried how she'd respond two days after running a 5K. "Once the gun goes off, you just focus on the race." Sons broke away from a pack of three runners just past the 3-mile mark (to win in 28:06). "I was feeling good so I decided to push the pace," she said. (July 5, 2000)

Simon Sawe – 2001 8K Men's Winner

For the second year in a row, **Simon Sawe**, the Kenyan living in Albuquerque, NM, kept things close to the end and out kicked his nearest rival (winning in 23:12). "He's a smart guy. It doesn't look like he's that fast, but he knows how to turn it over for at least the last 150 yards," said Rodney DeHaven. "I wanted to run conservatively to be ready for (DeHaven)," said Sawe. But instead of DeHaven pushing Sawe over the final 200 meters, it was (Johannes) Mabitle who was on his shoulder. "That was a surprise," said Sawe. "When Rod fell off, I had to adjust quickly. I still had something. I knew there was no way (Mabitle was going to catch him). It was a good finish, a tight finish," Sawe concluded. (July 5, 2001)

Kris Ihle-Helledy – 2001 8K Women's Winner

Kris Ihle-Helledy, the 32-year old from Oak Creek, WI, made it four-for-four Wednesday capturing the women's title in 27:00. It was the slowest of her four wins here, but she said it was the sweetest. "It's easier to get to the top than to stay on the top," Ihle-Helledy said. "I went out with my eye on the course record. Actually, at the turn-around (which she hit in 13:06), I thought I was OK. But then the heat, then reality set in." Ihle-Helledy said. (July 5, 2001)

Silvestor Moleko – 2002 8K Men's Winner

Silvestor Moleko and (two time defending champion) Simon Sawe, who both train in New Mexico, pushed the pace in the middle stages of the race after a sluggish start. "I saw Simon moving up front, and the guys were falling behind," Moleko said. "Then I picked up the pace a little bit so that he could work harder to break the guys." Then Moleko kept right on going. He and Sawe ran together for most of the fourth mile, before Moleko broke away from Sawe with just about a mile to go (to win in 23:31). "At that point I was really starting to feel it. I was hoping that I could hold on coming down the hill and pick up speed, but he was way stronger than I thought," Sawe said. (July 5, 2002)

Grace Momanyi – 2002 8K Women's Winner

Grace Momanyi attitude after the race (winning in 27:41) was, in her words, "perfect". "I liked the race, I liked the course, and I liked the weather except for the humidity." Momanyi said she followed her pre-race plan well, except for the end. She wanted to finish strong, but the humidity cut down on her race quality toward the finish. "I felt strong up to three miles," she said. "The last mile was kind of weak because of the humidity. I was afraid I was going to fall down," said Momanyi. (July 5, 2002)

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Simon Sawe – 2003 8K Men's Winner

After posting a 23:24 Friday morning, **Simon Sawe** became the race's only three-time winner. But the race that sticks in his mind is last year's second place finish behind Sylvester Moleko. "I wanted to redeem last year. There was a lot of pressure last year to win the third time consecutively. But that didn't happen," said Sawe. Sawe attacked just before the four-mile mark and sped down the hill to victory. "At that time you're very tired because there's a hill just after the fourth mile," Sawe said. "(Moleko) put pressure on in there (last year), and I couldn't respond. So this year, I wanted to turn the tables on these guys and pressure them." (July 5, 2003)

Atalech Ketema – 2003 8K Women's Winner

Atalech Ketema, the 20-year-old from Ethiopia who trains in New York, won the women's division Friday morning with a time of 27:02. That's a pace of 5:26 per mile. But after the race, neither time nor place nor pace was on her mind. Just the weather. "I feel good, but very warm. Sometimes it's warm, sometimes it's hot. But it's not a problem," Ketema said. (July 5, 2003)

Eric Chirchir – 2004 8K Men's Winner

Eric Chirchir out kicked fellow Kenyan Shadrack Kosgei in the final 10 meters to win in 22:57. Kosgei, considered the better kicker, was second in an identical time. It was the closest finish in race history. "I didn't expect to win," Chirchir said. "I was expecting to win," Kosgei said. (July 5, 2004)

Silvia Skvortsova – 2004 8K Women's Winner

Silvia Skvortsova didn't have much to say after winning the 8K race in 26:29. She wasn't necessarily shy or rude. She simply didn't understand English. "It was good," said the 29-year old from Russia. "I am very happy," she said. (July 5, 2004)

Julius Kiptoo – 2005 8K Men's Winner

Julius Kiptoo of Kenya found himself alone over the final six blocks, pulling away from Patrick Nthiwa and winning in a time of 23:03. "Sometimes you need a group effort to make a record. We were trying to push the pace," said Kiptoo. (July 5, 2005)

Atalelech Ketema – 2005 8K Women's Winner

Atalelech Ketema of Ethiopia used a kick in the final half-block to hold off Edna Kiplagat by three seconds (in a time of 26:56) capturing her second victory in the past three years. Kiplagat of Kenya, the runner-up in 26:59, underestimated Ketema. "She had a good finish and I was tired," she said. (July 5, 2005)

Side note: A downpour about 40 minutes into the race forced runners to scatter, forcing race officials to cancel the children's run and award ceremony.

Julius Kiptoo – 2006 8K Men's Winner

Julius Kiptoo sprinted away from a pack of eight runners at the four-mile mark on a beautiful Tuesday morning, successfully defending his title in 22:45. 20 men ducked under 24 minutes for the first time in race history. "That was the point I had to push it." Kiptoo said of a spot on Second Avenue where there is a bit of an incline before a long gradual decline to the finish. "That's one of my techniques," he said. (July 5, 2006)

Tatyana Chulakh – 2006 8K Women's Winner

Tatyana Chulakh of Russia pulled out an old trick during the final stretch of the 8K on a warm and sunny morning. Chulakh slowed the pace a bit complaining her legs were hurting, then took off and beat Alemtsehay Misganaw to the finish line by two seconds in 26:38. "It was very fast the last 30 meters." Chulakh said, adding she felt confident in her kick. "It's very good, very good." (July 5, 2006)

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Alene Reta – 2007 8K Men's Winner

Alena Reta was looking for a little redemption. He nearly got a record. Running alone for the last mile-and-half, the Ethiopian native breezed to victory Wednesday in the 8K and finished in 22:47. "I know the record." Reta said after breaking away from David Kiprono after leaving Bever Park. "I wanted to get the record. Maybe I try next year," he said. (July 5, 2007)

Magdalene Mukunzi – 2007 8K Women's Winner

Magdalene Mukunzi of Kenya had trouble expressing her joy Wednesday after winning the 8K race. Running here for the first time, she broke away from last year's runner up, Alametsehay Misganaw of Kenya, halfway through the race on a warm and muggy morning, winning in 26:11. "When I see 4 kilometers I try to push the pace," she said. "I feel good. I try to push, but I feel good," she said. (July 5, 2007)

Richard Kandie - 2008 8K Men's Winner

Richard Kandie of Kenya began pulling away at the four-mile marker (to finish in 23:01) as Alena Reta (2007 champion) and Julius Kiptoo (2005 and 2006 champion) were unable to add another title to their list of accomplishments. A small pack of six elite runners led by Kandie, Reta and Kiptoo quickly took the lead as they raced up Third Avenue. Kandie stayed in the lead as they raced onto Grande Avenue, Woodland Drive, and Bever Avenue as the pack thinned (on a race course altered and run on Labor Day due to the June 2008 flooding in Cedar Rapids). "I like this distance," said Kandie. (September 2, 2008)

Casey Owens – 2008 8K Women's Winner

Casey Owens of Des Moines shaved 23 seconds off her eighth place time a year ago to win the women's 8k title in 27:40. The race was postponed from July 4 to September 1 due to the June floods in Cedar Rapids, and the runners enjoyed blue skies and a 69 degree start. "It helps having it on Labor Day. It was a nice change. It's usually hot and humid in early July," said Owens. (September 2, 2008)

Side note: Catastrophic flooding in downtown Cedar Rapids on June 13th forced race officials to cancel the 2008 race on July 4 and reschedule the race to September 1. The downtown flooding and subsequent recovery also forced race officials to alter the course with the start and finish moved five blocks east from May's Island to Green Square Park. Runner turnout was 70% of the normal turnout on traditional July 4 slot.

Simon Cheprot – 2009 8K Men's Winner

The rain may have slowed **Simon Cheprot** of Kenya down enough to prevent a record (falling short by a mere eight seconds with a time of 22:45), but it wasn't enough to keep him from a victory in his first race outside the cross-country and track he ran in Colorado. He entered the race with a simple mind-set and left the winner. "I want just to go fast." Cheprot said of what he was thinking before the race. "I must win this race because this is my first race to run." (July 5, 2009)

Rachel Marchand – 2009 8K Women's Winner

Rachel Marchand, a former University of Iowa runner, said she ran with the lead pack the entire race, with the goal of pushing herself in the last mile "because I have a lot of speed in me right now." That strategy paid off for the Valparaiso, Ind. native as she pulled away from her closest competitor, former University of Iowa runner Diane Nukuri, to win by a comfortable margin (in a time of 26:16). "It was fun to just get out here and run with no pressure." said Marchand. (July 5, 2009)