

RUNNER'S PROFILE by Joe Howell

Remember completing your first really long race - the one that you trained for with such discipline? Whether it was a marathon, a triathlon or any other event, your sense of satisfaction can be hard to describe. Often, it seems that only others who have trained for and reached the same goal can truly appreciate what you felt. I recently experienced, on two separate occasions, a greatly rewarding, yet totally vicarious sense of accomplishment: assisting fellow runners in completing their first marathon.

I have never pretended to be a coach, nor do I possess any particularly unique knowledge about running. However, with a few outdated marathon training schedules in my files and some finisher medals on my shelf, two friends, who had never run a marathon, seemed to think that I had "the knowledge" to assist them.

In the accompanying Runner's Profiles, we are featuring two women who have a great deal in common, yet met one another (and in fact competed against one another) only recently. Both Jill O'Leary and Jan Campbell have run for some time, but each decided to complete their first marathon this year. (Jill and I work in the same office and often talk about running; Jan and I have worked together on a number of seminars and other activities.) From my earliest conversations with both Jill and Jan, it was clear to me that each was approaching her first marathon with an amazing level of dedication and focus. As I spoke periodically with each of them about their training, their good days, their low periods and their pre-race anxiety, I re-lived identical training experiences. While Jill and Jan each professed to have a primary goal of "just finishing my first marathon", each also had a more quietly stated, but equally entrenched goal of completing her first marathon in under 4 hours.

Jill picked the 1995 Los Angeles Marathon. As most of us remember (and as recounted in the tale below by Jill), the conditions were horrible for everyone running the race - except Jill. She breezed through with a 3:59:02 finish, continues to train on an intense basis, and undoubtedly will finish (and thoroughly enjoy) many more marathons.

Jan Campbell picked the Lompoc Marathon so that her family could experience it with her. As a fellow runner of this year's Lompoc Marathon (not a great personal experience), I was on hand to see Jan cruise across the finish line, looking fresh and energetic, at 3:58:30. (It was a wonderful experience both for her and for all of us who saw her).

Now that Jill and Jan have had such enjoyable and successful experiences in their first marathons, they no doubt realize that they too are now fully capable of coaching another through his or her first marathon. In my case, having so thoroughly enjoyed the coaching experience, I will be waiting for yet another energetic, dedicated runner to ask that I share "the knowledge" with them. I look forward to that opportunity and suggest that all of you veteran SBAA marathoners consider it -- the "coach's vicarious marathon" is inexpensive, takes little time and is a truly worthwhile experience.

Basic Information

Name: Jill O'Leary

Age: 43

Employment/Family: Part-time Word Processor, Schramm & Raddue.

Husband - Patrick O'Leary, Ph.D., Vice President, McGhan Medical Corporation.

2 dogs (Zoey - Weimaraner; Bianca, 150-lb. Great Pyrenees), and 3 cats (Grizabella, Sabrina & Alexis).

Other Sports/Interests: Enjoy gourmet cooking (had a catering business in Bucks Co., PA), reading, golf, and watching professional football (especially the Dallas Cowboys).

Running Highlights

Favorite Distance & PR at same: I enjoy all distances, but prefer 15Ks and over. I look forward to running more half-marathons.

Best Race and Why: Without a doubt, the 1995 Los Angeles Marathon (my first!). Being 1 runner in a field of 20,000 was so exhilarating. There was a miscommunication regarding my transportation to the race, so I had to run 2 miles just to get there, arriving approximately 3 minutes before the gun. I wore my "No Fear"



cap, and I felt exactly that: no fear! Despite heavy rain (which I loved) and strong winds (which I hated) during the entire run, I never hit a wall, never hurt, never had a blister. Crossing that finish line and having the finisher's medal placed around my neck was an experience I will NEVER forget. My time was 3:59:02.

Worst Race and Why: The 1989 Philadelphia Distance Run (half-marathon), my first race over a 10K. It was a morning after heavy rain, the sun was shining, and the humidity was unbelievable. I was dehydrated at mile 11, but finished in 1:40:10.

Average Weekly Mileage (last 12 months): 35-40

Favorite Local Race: Law Day 15K. Everyone involved with that race does such a good job, and Joe Howell is such a pro with the microphone!

Goals (Realistic) for 1995: First, I reached my 1995 goal of finishing a marathon, and second, not boring family and friends with the gory details of the marathon for more than a week afterwards (I hope I met that second challenge!).

Goals (Wildly Optimistic) before Year 2000: To run 3 marathons in 1 year, with 1 being either the San Francisco or Big Sur Marathon, and finishing 1 of the 3 in under 3:45.

Additional Information

Why I Run: To keep my sanity and for the inner peace it gives me. I have solved so many problems on those roads; problems that seem insurmountable somehow do not appear quite so traumatic during a good run. I started running 15 years ago (at my husband's encouragement) when I quit smoking, and I will always be grateful to him for getting me involved in this so-very-addictive sport.

My Runner Hero & Why: I think his name is Laurence Ortiz (a local runner). He usually finishes in the last group during a race, but I truly admire his spirit. Even with both knees in braces, he hangs in there.

Personal Training Tips: Believe in yourself as a runner, set running goals, and include plenty of hills in your training.

I love runners who ...: stick around to cheer the last finishers in a race.

Suggestions for local races: More 15K's and half-marathons (and maybe change the Nite Moves to a night when I don't work late!).

Suggestions for SBAA: Keep up the good work. It is a splendid organization.

My views on...: growing old. I cannot imagine "feeling" old. Exercise does such miraculous things for the body and mind; I undeniably can see myself running for another 40 years, at least. How could I then "grow old"?

Quote: "Life begins at 40. I do not recall feeling this good during my 20s or 30s."

SBAA Member since 1995.

Basic Information

Name: Jan Campbell

Age: 43

Employment/Family: Marketing Director, Bartlett Pringle & Wolf.

Married - Randy Campbell, President, S.B. Independent.

2 awesome daughters: Noni, 5 1/2; Emma, 2.

Other Sports/Interests: Swimming, hiking, crafts, camping, and kid stuff!