

**RUNNER'S PROFILE** by Joe Howell

By the time you read this, the 100th Boston Marathon (April 15) will already have happened. Race officials indicate that there will be 37,000 "official" entrants, and Boston-area sources are suggesting that with the record number of "bandits" expected, the total field could top 60,000! Among the group of over 20 local runners competing in Boston will be the husband/wife team of John Wiskel and Bobbi Janowiak.

John and Bobbi are like a number of Santa Barbara's outstanding running couples--they have some amazing accomplishments, are still extremely competitive, yet remain remarkably humble! In the case of John and Bobbi, their last "really big" event before "retirement" was the 1983 Ironman Triathlon, which they each completed. While they have remained active runners and bikers, in recent years they limited their competition to local events. With some clever planning by Bobbi (see comments in John's biography), Bobbi and John returned to big event competition after a 12-year hiatus, competing in the California International Marathon in Sacramento in December 1995. Both qualified for Boston, and both have been quite active the last few weeks, training and assisting in the fundraising effort for the Run for Research.

As part of their return to competition, they have signed up for the SBAA Grand Prix and are turning in strong performances. Now that this "Iron Couple" has returned to competition, watch for them.

**Basic Information**

**Name:** Bobbi Janowiak  
**Age:** 44  
**Employment/Family:** Psychotherapist in private practice  
 Husband: John  
 Family: Felix - the best cat ever  
**Other Sports/Interests:** Sports: bicycling, cross-country skiing, hiking, kayaking  
 Interests: reading, birdwatching, gardening

**Running Highlights**

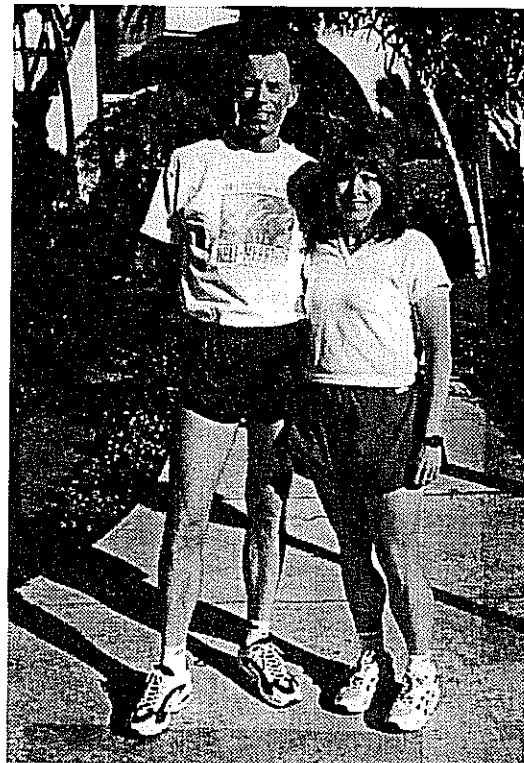
**Favorite Distance & PR at same:** Half-Marathon (1:39) and 10K (43:40). I like the half-marathon because it's too far to run fast (for me), and I like the 10K because it's over quickly.  
**Best Race and Why:** I have two favorite races: 1983 Santa Barbara Triathlon because I beat

Terry Thomas and the 1995 Calif. International Marathon because I beat Terry Thomas. The CIM was my first marathon in 12 years. I had always wanted to run Boston, and I had only 12 weeks to train. It was a long shot for me and mostly a fantasy. I didn't get nervous about qualifying until I ran the SB Half-Marathon one month before and my finishing time potentially projected into a qualifying time. I knew it was going to be very close. I made it with 3 minutes to spare. The CIM was my slowest marathon, but it was definitely one of my most gratifying.

**Worst Race and Why:** I have two bad races also. The 1983 Bakersfield Triathlon was my first triathlon, and I had just learned how to swim 4 weeks before. I swallowed several gallons of Lake Ming when I got kicked in the head during the swim. I panicked and couldn't exhale under water. I thought I was going to drown as people swam over the top of me, but then I realized I could stand up. Lake Ming was only about 4 feet deep in most places! I waited until everyone was about 50 yards ahead of me, then I dog paddled until I calmed down. The other bad race was the 1983 Ironman. That was the year of the 50 mph winds and the tacks. Someone had thrown thousands of tacks along the bike course. I never saw so many flat tires in my life. I was very disappointed with my time. It took me about 2 hours longer than I had planned.

**Average Weekly Mileage (last 12 months):** 30 - 35 miles/week

**Favorite Local Race:** Santa Barbara Half-Marathon



**Goals (Realistic) for 1996:** Sub 3:30 marathon, PR 3:34

**Goals (Wildly Optimistic) before Year 2000:** 10K sub 40:00

**Additional Information**

**Why I Run:** I run for my mental and my physical well-being. I enjoy both the solitude and the companionship of runs. I grew up during the time when girls could not compete in sports. Running has helped me recapture some of that childhood play.

**My Runner Hero & Why:** I have many running heroes - people who try even though they may not be fast or anyone with a good attitude, people who don't take themselves too seriously and are supporters of others.

**Personal Training Tips:** I cross-train mostly on the bicycle. It really helps prevent injuries and adds a great deal of variety.

**I love (hate) runners who ...:** I respect everyone who tries to get or stay healthy through exercise. I hate runners who cheat - either by cutting the course or who lie about their times.

**Suggestions for SBAA:** I love the Grand Prix events and schedule.

**Quote:** "We can strengthen the mind, temper the spirit, make the heart a goddamn turbine. But then a strand of gristle goes pop and presto you're a pedestrian." From Once a Runner

**Basic Information**

**Name:** John Wiskel  
**Age:** 49  
**Employment/Family:** Santa Barbara Research Center, Manager Facilities Operations  
 Wife: Bobbi  
 Cat: Felix  
**Other Sports/Interests:** Sports: Biking, skiing and bike touring via credit card vs. panniers when time permits.  
 Interests: Woodworking, cooking and fixing Bobbi's flat tires.

**Running Highlights**

**Favorite Distance & PR at same:** Half-Marathon: 1:24:30

**Best Race and Why:** California International Marathon in Sacramento, December '95. This was my first marathon in 12 years. Bobbi intrigued me by showing me the brochure with a picture of the T-shirt and having me commit not knowing it was a marathon. Once I did commit to

the T-shirt only then did she divulge that it was a marathon. In a few days she received the application for the Boston Marathon revealing that the Sacramento Marathon was a qualifier. At this point the race was on. I really wanted to do a 3:00 marathon, not knowing if I had a sufficient base or enough time in the remaining 12 weeks to train. I met my goal, running a 3:00:27.

**Worst Race and Why:** The International Friendship Marathon from San Diego to Santa Rosa, Mexico. This marathon was held only one year that I know of, or at least care to know of. Besides coming down with dreaded runner's trot, I was also to meet another runner from Santa Barbara. Finally reaching the finish line, I discovered my local running partner drove the course the night before and decided that the best plan was to run the half marathon. If no one believes this, ask Bill Mason!

**Average Weekly Mileage (last 12 months):** 30 - 35 miles/week

**Favorite Local Race:** Santa Barbara Half-Marathon

**Goals (Realistic) for 1996:** Sub 3:00 hour marathon, PR 2:59

**Goals (Wildly Optimistic) before Year 2000:** Marathon: 2:55. 10 miles: sub 6 min. pace.

**Additional Information**

**Why I Run:** The Fun. The Friends. Be able to eat what I want. I also enjoy running while on vacation and exploring new areas and courses.

**My Runner Hero & Why:** Jeff Macaluso, because I never see him training but he always seems to come out of the closet at race time.

**Personal Training Tips:** Bike for endurance.

**I love (hate) runners who ...:** I hate runners who pass me and are not breathing hard and in fact are still able to smile. I love seeing runners out in nature, enjoying long distance runs.

**Suggestions for local races:** Shorter miles, faster splits.

**Suggestions for SBAA:** Good job on the Grand Prix series.

**My views on ...:** If you're having a psychological down period in running...buy new shoes.

**Quote:** "If you can't beat 'em, make them hurt."

**Odds and Ends:** Ironman Triathlon 82, 83 (Bobbi and I both trained for this year), 84; my best time was 11:58. I owe a lot to Terry Thomas who did a 11:59, beating the 12-hour barrier and saving my self respect by not beating my PR. Thanks Terry.

One of the two founders of the Original Pier to Peak run and organizer for the first three years.