

RUNNER'S PROFILE

by Joe Howell

It is now March, with the SBAA 1997 Calendar of Running Events showing two Grand Prix events this month (Adventour Series 5K on March 8 and 5th Annual Orchard to Ocean Run on March 22). The Grand Prix series then moves into high gear in April, with the Santa Barbara Winery Chardonnay on April 12, the first of four double Grand Prix points events. With the race season now underway, who better to feature than one of Santa Barbara's premier runners--Gregg Horner?

Gregg is not only a national caliber masters runner at distances from 10K to the marathon, he has been and continues to be a perennial winner or top finisher in virtually every local race. As the seemingly ubiquitous Santa Barbara elite runner, Gregg can be seen everywhere--accepting the champion's plaque for the 40-44 age group in last year's Grand Prix Series, pushing himself on frequent solo interval training runs in Shoreline Park, performing his duties as one of the world's most physically fit mail carriers, or graciously accepting yet another award at a local regional or even national running event. Read Gregg's Profile to learn the highs and lows of his racing career--but don't ask him why he runs!

Basic Information

Name: GREGG HORNER

Age: 43

Employment/Family: UCSB grad, Santa Barbara mail carrier. Wife Maureen is a nurse and also an occasional (and talented) runner.

Other Sports/Interests: Hiking, reading, travel, losing money in the stock market.

Running Highlights

Favorite Distance & PR at same: Marathon - PR 2:27. Both my favorite and least favorite event; when it goes well, there's no greater payoff than when you cross the finish line; when it goes poorly, it's brutal.

Best Race and Why: The '94 USA National Master's Track & Field Championships in Eugene, Oregon. Winning the 40-44 10,000 meters on that famous track at Hayward Field was quite a thrill.

Worst Race and Why: Any of my 5 or 6 Marathon DNFs; perhaps the worst was the Wild West Cross Country Marathon in Lone Pine, which features a

spectacularly beautiful but poorly marked course along the Eastern Sierra Nevadas. I was cruising along, enjoying the scenery and leading by 5 minutes when I took a wrong turn at an unmarked trail junction and wound up lost in the Alabama Hills.

Average Weekly Mileage (last 12 months): about 55 miles/week, along with an hour or so of pool running.

Favorite Local Race: Chuck's Beach run - unique, beautiful ocean course, great prizes and no entry fee. Who could ask for more?

Goals (Realistic) for 1997: A win at the '97 USA National T&F Master's Championship in the 10,000 meters. A 3rd Big Sur Marathon Master's win would be nice too.

Goals (Wildly Optimistic) before Year 2000: One more marathon P.R.

Additional Information

Why I Run: I hate that question!

My Runner Hero & Why: I think it was the '92 US Olympic women's marathon trials - one of the leaders slipped on the wet pavement and Cathy O'Brien turned back to help her up. The runner who slipped wound up winning the race, but I was happy to see O'Brien hang in for a qualifying 3rd place. What a class act.



Personal Training Tips: Follow the hard/easy day principle. I know talented runners who don't race to their potential because they don't take enough easy days and are always fatigued.

I love runners who ...: say thanks when a volunteer hands them a cup of water at an aid station.

Suggestions for local races: I miss the old Fiesta 20K which started on the UCSB campus and finished at Shoreline Park. It would be a good venue for an age handicapped, staggered start race.

Suggestions for SBAA: I would like to see the SBAA introduce an open division in races for runners aged 19-39. It seems superfluous to have 5 year age groups when the age differences don't affect performance.

Quote: "Always have a goal."
SBAA Member since 1987.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRAND PRIX MEMBERS

To be eligible to win an award in the Grand Prix, participants must serve as a volunteer in one local area race or perform other volunteer service for the SBAA.

1. Write an article for the newsletter. One page minimum. Send to Bill Rupp.
2. Tab Grand Prix membership form in race calendar (500 minimum). Pickup and deliver to Joe Howell (962-0524).
3. Update SBAA membership phone list - need accurate list to call members to help at SBAA races. Contact John Brennand.
4. Catalog old issues of the newsletter. Contact long-time members to possibly obtain missing issues. Call John Brennand.

GRAND PRIX '98

by Jim Kornell

The Grand Prix is terrific. Here are a few issues to think about for next year.

1. Balance between major and regular races. With the addition this year of a fourth double-point race, the point balance has swung to the "double" races (a possible 8,000 points for the four double races, with a possible 6,000 remaining from the regular races). Is this what we want? I'd prefer to see the Grand Prix encouraging consistency and participation more than a big-race focus. This is especially true since the big races are strung out through the year, which sets up an unsafe training pattern. Most coaches agree that if you are going to train intensely, then one season a year, with six to eight weeks of intense competition, is enough.

In addition, the double point races are a "requirement" for anyone wanting to succeed in the Grand Prix. Suppose Gregg Horner and I raced ten times in regular Grand Prix races, and he beat me every time. Further suppose there was only one double point race, that Gregg was unable to run it, so I picked it off. Who would win the Grand Prix? Gregg, with ten first-place finishes, would earn 10,000 points, I, with nine seconds and one (double-point) first, would earn 10,100 points. Even though Gregg had a perfect season and beat me every time we raced, I would be the Grand Prix champ. This doesn't seem right.

There are a few ways to remedy this. If there is a consensus that a main point of the Grand Prix is to encourage consistency, then adding two races to the possible point total (that is, counting twelve rather than ten races) would make the point balance even. Alternately, if there is a feeling that ten races a year is plenty for most people, the fourth double-point race could be returned to single-point status. Another possibility would be to reduce the number of bonus points in the major races, perhaps giving 1500 instead of 2000, for example.

2. Double-point variety. Our current double-point races tend toward the long end of the spectrum. We have a 10K as our recent addition, but the core SBAA races are 15K, ten miles, and a half-marathon. I suggest that if we keep four double-point races, one of them be short: A 5K or perhaps the State Street Mile. That way we would reward