

RUNNER'S PROFILE

by Joe Howell

Liz North. Does her name sound familiar? It should, for any one of several reasons. A mother of two with a home business who is also a student, Liz and her family reside in Arroyo Grande. Despite all of the other demands on her time and the travel required for her to participate in local races, Liz not only runs lots of local races, but she runs them fast! Starting with her third-place Grand Prix finish in 1997, she has continued to finish in the top two or three in her GP age group, winning the Grand Prix in 1999 and then sharing first place in 2002 with Dianna Hall. (See below for a great quote from the ever competitive Dianna.)

If you see Liz in a local race and your pace and hers are a match, I strongly recommend running with her. I tried it at this year's Chardonnay and she was a great impromptu race partner - one mile splits that were so precise it was scary, great attitude, humility, wonderful Scottish accent and ... I would like to say more, but our running partnership ended when she continued her ever-precise mile splits and I began to fade at mile seven.

After the early September Nite Moves race - the last Nite Moves of the season and a Grand Prix event - someone commented to me about how inspired they were to see Liz travel so far to make a mid-week race and what a pleasure it was to have such genuinely nice, competitive people participating in the Grand Prix. Well said.

Basic Information

Name: Elizabeth (Liz) North

Age: 41

Personal Information - Basic

Employment (Company, title, describe job if not obvious): Mother of two. Home-based business owner of First Impressions, a ceramics service, mostly selling personalized & decorated hand and footprints of children ... really cute! Student at AH College, learning all about computers/electronics, advanced ceramics and the potter's wheel. Also a certified ACSM health fitness instructor.

Family - who they are; what they do: Steve, my husband of 16 years, is a Commercial Diver and Electrical Contractor and former surfer excellence. I met him in Australia where I was teaching gymnastics for 18 months. Daughter Kirra is 6 years old. She loves collecting sea shells & ants to be a mermaid. Son Kaeden is 2 ½ years old. He

loves trucks & eating dirt. They are all very supportive of me and my funning. I feel blessed to have such a great family.

Other Sports/Interests/Hobbies: Gardening with "help" from my kids, skiing, long runs on Pismo Beach, ceramics, computers, skydiving, golfing, NFL football and of course logging onto sbrunning.org daily for the latest news.

Personal Information - Additional

My friends describe me as ...: the skinny girl who doesn't stop eating. "when we did the Providian Relay we had to stop every other hour so that Liz could eat. Keeps her running fast"...Jan Berdar. "Very sweet until she has a birthday and moves into your age group. Thank goodness she's someone else's problem for the next few years"...Dianna Hall.

If money were not a consideration, I would love to be a ...: triathlete and ultrarunner. A serious ceramics artist specializing in sculptures of athletes. Have a running coach. I would visit my family in Scotland more often. I'd also organize and fund free races for kids and award tons of cool hardware for them to take home.

Goals - In the next 5 years, I hope to ...: become a computer network geek, get a real job and start saving like crazy for retirement.

In the next 10 years ...: Stay healthy so I can keep up with my very athletic kids. Write a book. Vacation in Australia with my family.

Accomplishments - I am really proud of the fact that ...: I was the Scottish gymnastics champion in 1985. I won gold in the all round and on all four apparatus finals. After years of placing in the top 3, my perseverance paid off.

Running Highlights

Favorite Distance & PR: 5K 18:44

Best Race and Why: Lately, the Providian Relay from Calistoga to Santa Cruz (199 miles). I love team events. This one was very challenging. I got injured on run 1 of 3 but managed to complete my 20.1 miles and the sense of accomplishment was so great that we are all doing it again this year. It's also my excuse to get a weekend away with the girls.

Worst Race and Why: 1996 JC 10,000 State Finals. I was a serious contender to win but succumbed to a severe side ache which caused me to walk 2 laps finishing 6th overall.

Average Weekly Mileage (last 12 months): Not worth the mention. Just when my daughter stopped bringing home all the microorganisms of the day,

my son has now hit that age, arghh! If I'm not taking care of a sick family member, I'm sick myself. For some insight, read "The Mommy Race" in the August issue of Runner's World.

Favorite Local Race: Nite Moves - It's fun and I perform well on PM races. I think it's a food reserve thing (see, my friends describe me as, above).

Running Goals (Realistic) for this year: Increase my weekly mileage to 40+ without getting injured.

Running Goals (Wildly Optimistic) for this year: Acquire a treadmill and increase my mileage to 50+. Then, just maybe, I won't get whooped quite so badly (by Marianne) in next years GP. Run a sub 19 minute 5K.

Running Goals - (Lifetime-Before I die, I hope to) ...: Run a fast marathon and inspire many people to lead a healthy lifestyle. Also to run into my 100's if I'm lucky to make it that far.

Additional Running Information

Why I Run: For all the usual reasons, for my sanity and my competitive nature.

My Local Runner Hero & Why: All runner-moms. The challenges are endless.

Personal Training Tips: Increase mileage slowly, wear sunscreen and attend non-local races occasionally for a change of scenery.

I love runners who ...: are always pleased to see you and take the time to chat for a minute.

I hate for runners who ...: Never met one!

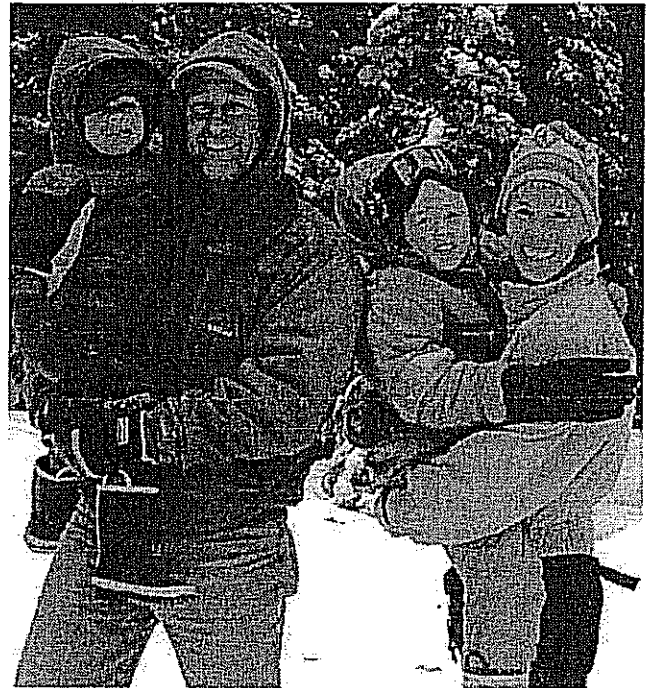
Suggestions for local races: Offer babysitting and become more kid friendly by having free bounce houses, balloons, kids races, etc. You may be surprised at how that can increase registration. Also, have masters awards at races. John Clinton already does a good job of this. Maybe other races will follow his example.

Suggestions for SBAA: I love the new web site and the regular running tips are great. Ho about a "workout of the week" category or coaches corner?

My views on: My first passion as gymnastics but I was forced to "retire" because I was "too old". That won't happen with running (at least not for a long, long time if I can help it). Where else can you be called an "age group baby", special thanks to JK!

Quote "No matter how old I get, the race remains one of life's most rewarding experiences. My times become slower, but the experience of the race is unchanged; each race a drama, each race a challenge, each race stretching me in one way or

another and each race telling me more about myself and others." George Sheehan
SBAA Member since 1995, I think.



MEMBER DISCOUNTS

Massage Therapy, Tobi Chauvet, LMT, Deep tissue, sports, canine, heated stone therapy. 15% discount, 455-2778.

Dr. Jim Cochran, chiropractor specializing in foot, knee, hip & back problems. Free exam. 683-1476.

Channel Islands Chiropractic. Two adjustments for \$40. Dr. Aaron Austin, 966-7771.

10% discount at AJA restaurant, 3132 State Street (Tim Mock)

Precision Biomechanics Physical Therapy: Free initial screening. Wednesday evenings 5:00 - 6:00. For an appointment call 681-7440.

Justin Kojima, Real Estate Appraiser, 964-0646.

Outfooters - 15% off shoes & apparel

Hourglass - \$1 off per group

Kevin Young, RE/MAX - 687-2600

West Maui oceanfront condo, great for cross training, 30% off. Steve or Julie, 962-1895. www.halekai.com

Goleta Sports Center - 10% off shoes & apparel.

Montecito Sports - 10% off.

Stephen Fountain Sports Massage - \$10 off, 965-5339.