

ON THE RUN with MATT MCGOWAN

Written by by Jim Silcott, Reprinted from March1989
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Matt McGowan, a 32 year old full time business teacher/department chairman and coach at Bishop Watterson High School in Columbus has had a lifelong interest in running. Matt first got involved with running in grade school in Wheeling, Illinois. In junior high, Matt ran the dashes. However, after his oldest brother, Bill, broke the Circleville High School 880 yard run record, Matt was moved up to that event. Matt's interest in running continued to develop while in high school. As a student at Ohio Northern University, he was a four year letter winner in Cross Country and Track. At Ohio Northern he was President of the Letterman's Club and was a seven time NCAA National Qualifier in both cross country and track. While a graduate student at Miami University, he founded and coached the Women's Cross Country program, where he worked with a number of eventual NCAA National qualifiers. He also worked with the Men's Cross Country and Track program.

Although Matt's work experience has been varied, he has never left his interest in running entirely behind. He has worked as a Promotional Representative for Converse and has managed an athletic shoe store. Now, as a teacher, he spends most of the year after school working with young men and women in the Cross Country and Track programs.

As a runner, Matt has had some outstanding success. Besides his varsity experience in college, Matt has a best Marathon time of two hours and 22 minutes and a 10km time of 29:45. He was the winner in the first Citizen Journal 10km run in Columbus under a hot 85 degree sun, and won the Glass City Marathon, only his fourth marathon race with a time of 2:27.

His proudest accomplishment was an impressive 33rd place finish in the 1980 Boston Marathon, where he failed to qualify for the Olympic Trials by only four seconds. As he remembers this important race, the weather was hot and sunny and Matt found himself in 175th place at the 10 mile mark. His eventual 33rd place finish remains one of his best personal recollections concerning his running career. In the 1982 Boston Marathon, he finished 53rd.

Matt has also been the race director of a number of road races in Ohio. He was the Coordinator of the Converse Midwest Express Racing Team for three years where seven runners qualified for the 1984 Olympic Trials and even had one runner on the 1984 team. He

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served as the Director and Host of the TAC Midwest Cross Country Championship in 1982-83 and has been an invited speaker at many health, running and sports clinics in the area.

Matt has a close “running relationship” with his younger brother, Jeff. Matt helped to coach Jeff to a second place finish in both the 1600 and 800 meter runs in the state high school competition. This past fall, in order to raise money for expensive treatment for Jeff who is battling Hodgkin’s Disease, Matt organized a race at the Circleville Pumpkin Show.

Matt hopes to make RUNOHIO a magazine which will serve all of the runners in the state.