



Race Long and Prosper

At Swim Macon, I *by Brady Thomas*

coach predominately children whose only sport is swimming. However, on the team I coached last summer at Idle Hour, the best swimmers were kids who had never swam before. Those children had experience in sports like basketball, track, cross country, soccer, and football, to name a few. And by the end of the short summer season they had some pretty impressive times.

So why were some of these kids who had only been practicing for two months able to beat kids who had been practicing nothing but swimming, many for over a year? It was because before they even jumped in the pool the first time, the Idle Hour swimmers already possessed the coordination, endurance, speed, and spatial orientation needed to succeed at any sport from ski jumping to swimming. These children were what is called "multilaterally developed." Multilateral development is simply the principle of participating in a variety of sports when a child is young and then specializing in a single sport. This specialization typically occurs between ages 14 and 16, and varies based on sport and gender.

Multilateral development has been proven time after time in long-range, empirical studies to be the surest way to ensure a long and prosperous athletic career. If one of my swimmers was to stop all other sports at around eight or nine years of age their swim times would immediately improve. However, their ability would be reduced in the long run. Nine times out of ten, a child who is multilaterally developed will have more endurance, coordination, speed, strength, and flexibility, with fewer muscle imbalances and overuse injuries than a child who specializes too early. The same studies that show the benefits of multilateral development have also found that an athlete's best performances usually come after five to eight years of focused training in a specific sport. So a seven year old who only



Brady is an awesome triathlete, excelling at all 3 sports.

plays soccer will probably have their best games between ages eleven and 14. However, a soccer player who also runs and plays softball until 15 will have her best years from 20 to 24.

Most people have probably known all along that good athletes are multilaterally developed, they just didn't know the term for it. Think of athletes like Bo Jackson, Deion Sanders, John Elway, Jarrod Shoemaker, and Julie Ertel just to name a few. All of them were very successful at multiple sports and often pursued more than one on an elite or professional level. Think of the best athlete you went to high school with—were they on just one team?

Chances are, probably not. Just like how the long runs we do in the winter months are the foundation of a good racing season, multilateral development is the foundation of a good *career*.

I firmly believe that there is no better extracurricular activity physically, emotionally, or socially for adolescents than taking part in youth sports. To keep your child in the game it's important to slow things down. There is no need to turn a game or meet for eight-year-olds into the Olympics. Be supportive of your child in competition. Always emphasize fun, tech-

(Continued on page 5)

Running Club News: *By President Sam*



Phil Brown's daughter, Catherine, kicked it in at the Al Toll 5K and won her age group!
Photo by Tim Cook

2009 is well underway and our club is doing well, too. We've continued to have many new people come our way through our presence in the community. The group Sunday Run at the Loop and Tuesday Track Night at Stratford attract people interested in getting into running and meeting new friends. Learn a little about some of them in the new member profiles.

I'm sorry to have missed the Annual Club Meeting at the Piedmont Sports Medicine Complex. I heard it was well attended and fun was had by all. Let's plan on more fun by attending this year's group socials. We'll gather at a friend's home to share running memories, training tips and great food. The first one will be on April 3rd at Troy & Amy's house (see page 3 for details). Keep an eye on the Web Calendar for more dates and times.

I'd like to mention what a great website we have. I've recently noticed that not all groups have well-organized websites. We're fortunate that Kerry Oedel has taken so much time to make sure that MTRC does. If you want to know the latest information on race dates, race results, group runs, social events and more, then visit www.macontracks.org regularly. You'll also find a great place to interact with other people on our Forum.

I hope everyone that participated in the 2009 Al Toll 5K and 15K Master's race enjoyed it as much as I did. Steve Corkery and a great team of volunteers did an outstanding job putting this 25th Anniversary race together, laying out the course, getting sponsors, and stuffing pretty nifty race packets. I loved the special hats and socks. Congratulations go out to all the runners for completing either of the two challenging courses.

Work will soon begin on our 2009 Macon Labor Day Road Race. We'll need all your help again to make this year's race another success. Anyone is welcome to volunteer on any of the committees. Sign-up lists will be available soon on our website, or via email.

Thank you all for continuing to make the Macon Tracks Running Club a great place for people in our community to learn about and enjoy the sport of running.

Run Strong Friends,
Sam

2008 Challenge of the Miles Award Winners:

200-300 Miles

Terri Duncan
Brenley Martinez

>500 Miles

Robin Martinez
Donna Segelken

>900 Miles

Brian Grimsley

1000-1200 Miles

Stefanie Swanger
Mary Katz
Andi Berger
Monika Bubacz

1200-1400 Miles

Jonathan Dark
Cindy Beck
Jim Baldwin
Jerome Douglas
David Perry
Andrew Strickland

1500-1600 Miles

Kerry Oedel
Chris Woodgeard
David Tinkey
Autumn Perry
Tom Jones
Elizabeth Jones

2000+ Miles

Johnny Jones (2,106)
Dan Ash (2,341)
Sam Martinez (2,500)

*For information about
Challenge of the Miles
2009, visit*

www.macontracks.org and
click on the Programs link.

New Member Profiles

Ben Wilton

I'm still relatively new to the sport of running. I began running in February of 2007 after a buddy of mine challenged me to run in the Peachtree Road Race. It took me from February to July of that year to build up to running a full 6.2 miles, but with the encouragement of my friend I stuck with the challenge and I haven't looked back since. I have grown to love the sport of running and I can't imagine my life without it now! It has changed my body as well as my mental outlook on life. With each running goal I achieve, I gain a new sense of accomplishment. I have found that if I set a goal, focus and train hard enough, I can do just about anything I set out to do.

After running in the Peachtree in 07, I started entering local races. In the first 5k I entered I finished 3rd in my age group. A couple of months later I entered another 5k and finished 3rd again. After that I was hooked on competitive running. I realized then if I kept training hard that I might actually have a chance to be a decent competitor in this sport.

So far I've run 5k's, 8k's, 10k's, a half-marathon and a Sprint Triathlon. Out of all of those events, I would have to say that the 5k is my favorite race because that is where I think I'm the most competitive. My goal for this year is to break the 20 minute mark in the 5k. My current p.r. is 20:26, so I'm right on the edge, but I know that shaving those extra 27 seconds off aren't going to be easy, especially with the warmer



Ben Wilton (right) with his wife and children. You may have seen Ben at the 5th mile marker on the Al Toll course. He generously volunteered to call splits for us.

weather approaching. My long term goals for life are to get my kids involved in the sport, encourage as many people as possible to get involved in it and to run as long as my body will allow. Hopefully that will be well into my retirement years!

I have a couple of sayings that I use as motivation. My favorite is, "I do today what others won't, so I can do tomorrow what others can't." During my races, as I am approaching the last part of the race, I tell myself over and over to "finish strong!" My favorite scripture that I use as motivation is Philippians 4:13, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

John Harvey Sr.

I'm 42 years old and live in Warner Robins, Georgia. I grew up and lived in Macon for 41 of those years. I'm married to my wife, Lisa, and have three boys (John Jr., Brandon, and Bradley).

I've always dabbled with "jogging" over the years but have recently become more interested in running. The only road race I had ever run until last year



John Harvey Jr. competed in the Al Toll 5K race, coming in 3rd in his age group. Photo by Sam Martinez.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

was the 96' Labor Day Road Race because several family members were participating and they talked me into it the week before the race. I wasn't running any at the time. I did enjoy it however! My wife and oldest son ran a 5K with me in February of last year and it was freezing and sleeting. Overall, it was still a good experience though. In the fall, my oldest son went out for Cross Country at Rutland High School. Again, someone talked me into the Labor Day race (my son). We ran the 10K as a parent and child team and came in third. We ran a couple more races before my son suffered a stress fracture in September. He was one of the leading runners on his team at the time. I was trying to help him by running the races and realized I really enjoyed it. My wife, myself, and our 9-year-old son ran a few races between then and the end of the year. We took a little break from races while the stress fractured healed. We did the Sweetheart Run which was our 4th week in a row attending a race. We went to Leesburg, Albany, and Newnan. My son's leg seems to be fine, he's running but not really training that hard. I've had p.r.'s the last few races breaking 24 minutes in the 5K. I hope to run about 25 races this year with my family.

This little guy was sure having fun at the Al Toll race on Feb. 21st!

Photo by Tim Cook



Raeanne Watkins

My husband, David, and I live in Tucker, Georgia (near Atlanta) and have been running for many years. For the past several years, we have concentrated mainly on the Run and See Georgia Series of races and each of us averages over 100 races each year. Our favorite races include



David and Raeanne Watkins, Susan Pennington, and Ronnie Owens at the Nashville Country Music Half Marathon.

the Peachtree Road Race and the Torture Trail 10K in Eatonton. While traveling around Georgia, we have met members of the Macon Tracks Club (Jim Baldwin, Susan Pennington, Tom Weitzel, David and Autumn Perry to name a few). We discovered we were already running several Macon Tracks Piedmont Sports Medicine series races each year: GEICO, Al Toll, Museum of Aviation, Sweetheart Run, Jim Herrin, and Race for Camp Little Shot, and were encouraged to join Macon Tracks! We also enjoy traveling outside of Georgia for an occasional half marathon; the most recent being the Mardi Gras Half Marathon in New Orleans on February 1st. We look forward to running more races around Macon and meeting additional Macon Tracks members in the future.

Whether you're a new member or have been a member for years, we want to hear from you! Please submit profiles, stories, race recaps, or other running-related articles to macontracks@cox.net.

(Continued from page 1)

nique, skill, sportsmanship, and personal improvement over what it says on the scoreboard or results sheet. Encourage your child to pursue whatever sport catches their eye, regardless of how absurd or wacky it may seem. You never know, that fall when your child was training for the modern pentathlon will probably be beneficial when they're trying to get that baseball scholarship.

Above all, sports, especially youth sports, should be fun. There's no sense sticking with a sport that's just not fun anymore, or a coach that your child doesn't like. These last two have been hard lessons for me to learn.

For Love of Sport,
Coach Brady

Brady R. Thomas is a swim coach at Stratford Academy and Swim Macon. He is also a triathlete and undergrad at Macon State College.

Spring Social Event of the Season

You are cordially invited to Amy and Troy Tarpley's house on Friday, April 3rd at 6:00 p.m. for a Macon Tracks gathering featuring food, fun, and friendship. Please bring a dish to share and your alcoholic beverage of choice if so desired. The address is 5119 Idleway Drive. From Wesleyan College take Tucker Road to Idleway, then turn left. Their house will be about a tenth of a mile on your left. Hope to see you there!



2009 Macon Tracks Piedmont Sports Medicine Series Races:

Sweetheart Run for Sight - Feb. 14th

Al Toll 15K & 5K - Feb. 21st

Cantrell Center 5K - Feb. 28th

GEICO 5K & 12K - March 7th

Forsythia Festival 5K - March 14th

Cherry Blossom Festival 5K /15K - March 21st

Taylor County Race for Literacy - April 25th

Run 4 Missions 5K - May 2nd

MSO Allegro 5K - May 9th

Day Lily Dash - 5K

Salute to Freedom 5K - June 20th

Bragg Jam Moonlight Miles - 5K

Jim Herrin 5K & 10K - August 8th

Macon Labor Day Road Race - Sept. 7th

Race for Camp Little Shot

Jay's Hope 5K & 10K

Peacemakers 5K

Will Robinson 5K

Bartram Forest Marathon & 50K - Nov. 28th

Reindeer Run 5K

Christmas Lane Dash 5K

Many thanks to the sponsors of this year's Al Toll Memorial 5K & 15K:

Run Fit Sports

Gateway Fitness Center (Rick Cain)

Georgia NeuroCenter & Heartworks

The Zeeman Family

And thanks also to **IKON** for hosting the event.

Need to Renew? Check your mailing label for your renewal date. Easily join online at www.macontracks.org. Thanks for supporting your local running club!

P.O. Box 26455
Macon, GA 31221



MACON
TRACKS
RUNNING CLUB

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MACON, GA
PERMIT NO. 204



Photo by Tommy Chambers, www.PeachSports.com

Terry Patterson ran strong at the Museum of Aviation Marathon on January 17th. Record numbers turned out despite the cold. Many thanks to the Robins Pacers for putting on a great race!