

CROSS COUNTRY JOURNAL

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Cross Country and Parents

by the ~~CCJ~~ Panel of Experienced Coaches

Every Cross Country runner comes with at least one parent or guardian. So, we asked our panel of experienced coaches the following question.

In what ways do you help parents provide a supportive home environment for the runner?

How do you deal with the over zealous parent?

As in the past, our new panel is a distinguished one. On average, they have over 15 years' experience coaching Cross Country and more than two state or national championships. The majority coach both males and females.

**Art Hansen, Fremont HS,
Plain City, UT**

The most important thing we do to gain parental support is to hold a parent meeting at the beginning of the season just before our first time trial. We discuss topics such as: what is Cross Country, how it is scored, the role spectators play, team needs, rules and expectations. We also discuss how the parents can offer support at home by making sure the athletes are keeping their grades up, sleeping enough, eating healthy meals, etc. We discuss how the parents can offer positive reinforcement without trying to be overbearing.

As mentioned previously, this is discussed at our pre-season parent meeting. I tell the parents what role I need them to take and what my role as the coach is. I think this is important to establish right from the beginning. Training, race strategy and race analysis should be a coach/ athlete issue and not a parent/



The latest from Herb Parson (see note p.8)
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athlete issue. Their role should be one of support. I attempt to get the over zealous parent involved with the booster club, having them help me with the organization of (and officiating at) meets, to let them know they are important and appreciated.
**Ralph Heiss, Salesianum HS,
Wilmington, DE**

Over the years, we have had tremendous support from our parents. I hold a parents' meeting near the start of the season to explain the program's values and expectations, to review decision making, and to describe the practice and meet schedule. Our parents are encouraged to come to the meets (most do). Many help to conduct our major, mid-season invitational. Several parents take meet pictures, which the runners love. At the school after the season, we have a

family banquet, most of which is arranged by the parents. I have noticed in many Cross Country programs that it does not seem necessary to encourage the parents to participate - they step forward on their own. We had eighty-five boys on the team this year. Our parents know that each runner is given a full chance to give his best level of participation. I often speak with parents after practices or on meet days, during the school day or at home. The parents generally come to know what it takes to do Cross Country (they sometimes try running/jogging/walking the courses, which never fails to impress). They see the camaraderie of this shared experience, and they are pleased that their

(continued on page two)

Publisher's Two Cents Worth: Creative Retirement Delay

by Knowles Dougherty



One day this last November we received a bulk order for Joe Newton's Long Green Line. The order wiped out our supply and then some. It was time to call the printer for more copies.

I called Joe to see if he also needed more copies and caught him at home going through his old files in preparation for a move.

In the course of our conversation, Joe was obviously delighted when I asked how his 2002 Cross Country season had gone. Not only had his harriers racked up York High School's 22nd State Boys Class AA Title, but they set three other "firsts" in the process.

* It was the first time his team had ever won the state title after not winning the sectional (qualifying) meet. And that sectional meet was no fluke as the winner was a team that had beaten York twice during the season.

* The 2002 York HS squad was the youngest ever to win the Illinois Class AA (large school) State Meet.

* It was the first time the Illinois Class AA State Meet was won by a team with a freshman scorer. In fact, York's 4th and 5th runners were both freshmen.

As exciting as all that was, it wasn't what Joe was most jubilant about. After the race, he was approached by Dr. Linda Yonke, the York HS principal, congratulating him on the 22nd title and adding, "Coach, you're on a roll. Let's go for 25!"

Being a bit beyond the normal retirement age myself and also wondering what I would do with myself if I were ever to retire, it wasn't hard for me to imagine how Joe felt when he got a glimpse of an opportunity to continue coaching a few more years.

In the meantime, we will keep on hand a good supply of his Long Green Line so that others can read about how he got that string of state titles started.

—CCJ→

Editorial note: The best place to go to obtain a copy of the Long Green Line and/or Joe Newton's more recent Coaching Cross Country Successfully or his audio tape on Even Pacing and State Meet Strategy is at our website: www.ccjournal.com. Or you can call, toll free: 1-800-828-1231.

Cross Country and Parents

(continued from page one)

children are doing this sport.

The "over zealous" parent is rare here, possibly because much is done ahead of time to inform them of the season's progress. Occasionally there are questions about how runners are placed on varsity or JV levels. The central issue in this matter is that of respect, which coaches and parents have to recognize as a two-way street.

Rob & Kathy Hipwood, Los Alamos HS, NM

First, we attempt to develop a supportive team environment, which is demonstrated at practice and

meets. Then, we try to share our philosophies with the families and keep them involved through meetings, team letters, and team gatherings. Parents are always welcome to participate in practice and strongly encouraged to attend meets. Fortunately, we live in a community in which parents want to be involved and the highly supportive atmosphere is contagious. Finally, we try to maintain open lines of communication.

John Mahr, Sultana HS, Hesperia, CA

With over 50% of our parents active in our Booster Club, communication is at a higher premium. Between

(continued on page three)

Interested in Writing for the Cross Country Journal?

We are glad to receive material from anyone who has had experience with Cross Country: coaches, runners, parents, athletic directors, etc. The Journal compensates its contributors for original material according to its length. Some folks hesitate to send their writings on the grounds that they don't have anything to say that some more famous coach could say much better or with more authority. Don't let yourself be stifled in such a manner.

Know a Good Cartoonist? The Cross Country Journal is always looking for good cartoons and pays twenty-five dollars for each original one published.

Cross Country and Parents

(continued from page two)

emails, phone calls and informative newsletter-type mailouts (2 or 3 times a year) I get the word out. Many parents are very receptive and sort of become "home bound" assistant coaches. This is one of the foremost challenges for me, getting the parents and me on the same page.

As with my academic classes, coaching semesters and athletic training, I always have objectives and goals that are the basic reasons for why I do what I do. I have a working relationship with my athletes through training and competition. If the kids understand the "whys and wherefors", usually the parents do. I communicate, personally, to the "over zealous" parent, stay focused positively on the "long term picture", am professional and stick to my guns.

Tom Mittman, City HS, Iowa City, IA

I think the best thing we can do is keep parents aware of what we do and offer them opportunities to be involved. Once parents see that we have a supportive positive environment on our teams, they are eager to be involved in it as well. We emphasize the importance of all our athletes to our team. We take great pride in recognizing the accomplishments of our Junior Varsity and Freshman/Sophomore teams and they participate in all meets except District and State.

Each season we have our athletes address and stuff envelopes with material for their parents. Included are our meet schedule, web address, expectations of the kids, a description of how meets work, a sign up sheet for the State Meet fan bus, a form for our fund-raising workout/run which they support financially and monitor (and some run as well), and a list of volunteer opportunities. Then, immediately after our time trial we have a parent meeting to reinforce the mailing. Some (but not all) of the things we have parents volunteer for are:

1) Timing and recording at each meet,

2) Arranging post meet meals for all the kids at the meet site (sandwiches, fruit, juice and desserts),

3) Organizing the extra buses to the State Meet,

4) Clipping and Xeroxing articles for our season book: given to each athlete,

5) Helping with our Senior night activities,

6) Organizing, and monitoring traffic at our fund-raiser workout and our special mid-season workout where we run from our high school to our "shared program high school" 8.5 miles away.

I have been quite fortunate with parents and find that any "overzealousness" tends to be more in the form of pressure applied on the athlete. I try to defuse this by providing positive feedback to the athlete regarding his performance and practice. If I have a parent that I feel is detrimentally pressuring a kid I will go out of my way to speak to the parent about the positive accomplishments of their child.

Rick Weinheimer, Columbus North HS, Coumbus, IN

We communicate to parents at our Parent Night and through newsletters/information sheets sent home. The two main points of emphasis for parents (which will have a positive impact) are:

A. Good health—proper nutrition, sleep, and good shoes.

B. Positive attitude—accentuate and reinforce the importance of giving the best effort every day.

Over-zealous parents usually err by worrying about the effects of heavy training on their athletes or by wanting their athletes to succeed at the expense of teammates. We try to be pro-active, mentioning these areas at the beginning of the season and encouraging parents not to let them become "trouble spots."

—CCJ—



Got a Question?

Have a question you would like to address to our next panel of Experienced Coaches? Let us hear from you!

Snail Mail : 403 NW 5th Place or P.O. Box 1004, Austin, Mn 5591

Email: idea_inc@smig.net, or mckoch@wolf.co.net



Running Too Many Meets?

Skip Stolley responds to our Publisher's "Two Cents Worth" (Sept/Oct 2002)

First, let me point out that the peaking study you cited (conducted by the British Athletics Federation) was on track racing, not Cross Country or road racing. Having been a successful HS Cross Country coach myself, I do think there are some differences, particularly in Cross Country where pack running, team tactics, and attempting (to put 5 runners across the finish line before your opponents with no more effort than is necessary) is often the rule, especially in early season or dual meet situations.

The majority of the typical 12-14 meet schedules you site for high schools consists of mandatory conference or league dual/triple or double/dual meets, a conference championship, sometimes a county championship, and the first rung of the ladder to advance to the state meet. That usually leaves a maximum of 3 open weekends to run invitational meets. Good Cross Country coaches plan how to introduce and manage stress when they plan their team's and athletes' training within the context of a frequent racing schedule. In doing so, they will often conduct early season meets over distances shorter than the 3M or 5K. Frosh/Sophomore and JV teams (laden with younger runners) will run fewer meets and end their season with their conference meet. And, good coaches will be judicious in choosing invitational meets to fill out their varsity team schedule.

What's more, the specificity of training is important. The most event-specific training that Cross Country runners can do is run their race. Racing, therefore, is critical training. Good HS coaches treat it as such and will often do additional training (drills, plyometrics, sprint reps, or an exceptionally long warm down) when they have planned for a race to serve their training in a particular way. After a race, they will

also plan for recovery and rejuvenation in the same way they do following a hard training session.

In my mind, the frequency of racing is not as big an issue as the distances currently being run by sub-varsity boys and girls. I think it is crazy for us to expect complete novices (many of whom have never even run around their block without stopping) to race 3 miles. I believe that sub-varsity boys and girls should be racing 3K to 2M. There are in fact, 12 states that are currently doing so and each of them report an increase in participation. That should be no surprise to anyone. In support, I would like to point out that we have fewer 4-minute milers now than we did in the 1960's when the Cross Country distances were 1.8M for HS and 4M for collegians. There is also more recent precedent for running shorter distances with the emergence of 4K "short course" Cross Country. There has been a 4K men's and women's race at the World Cross Country Championships since 1997 and this year some 50 collegiate invitationals across the U.S. included M/W 4K races - specifically as a way to get middle distance runners back running Cross Country.

CCJ

Editorial Note: Skip Stolley was a successful Chicago area high school coach in the 1970's and guided the Cross Country teams at two different high schools to seven top-3 state-meet finishes. Skip was also head coach at Indiana State University for both men and women's track and Cross Country. In 1983, he became executive director of the Los Angeles-based Puma Energizer Track Club, which placed 14 of its members on the 1984 U.S. Olympic team and won national men's and women's team titles in 1983, 1984, and 1985. In 1986, Skip created Track West, a USATF club dedicated to developing promising post collegiate distance runners. Skip was also Director of Coaching Education for the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles. Skip created the AAF/CIF Coaching Program and organized and directed more than 250 coaching clinics. He also created and managed the AAF Run for Fun Program. In 1999, he received USA Track & Field's Outstanding Contributor award.

John C. Dickey responds to our Publisher's "Two Cents Worth" (Sept/Oct 2002)

You had an interesting column in the Sept/Oct '02 CCJ questioning whether anything should be done about the large number of meets in high school Cross Country and how the coach of a small team can cope.

I personally disagree with the thought that there are too many meets for high school Cross Country teams. I think back to my days in high school and college and I never felt that I was over-raced. In fact, in college I felt that I was under-raced. I look aghast at many college teams now that may have only five competitions on their schedules. Those are not colleges I

would have wanted to attend.

I believe we should first ask this question: What do the kids want? Remember, for most kids, high school will mark the end of their competitive running. Ask the kids and I think they will say that they want to race. Most won't care (I'm sure I didn't) that over-racing might mean not fully reaching their potential.

At the very least, I believe there should be one dual meet during the week and one invitational on Saturday. That gives everyone on the team a chance for at least one race a week since many invitationals only

(continued on page five)

The History of Cross Country in America (in conclusion)

by E. H. Baynes, *Outing*, March, 1894, Vol. XXIII, No. 6

(*Outing* was one of the earliest American Sports and Outdoor publications. The first part of Baynes' article was republished in CCI's Sept/Oct '02 & Nov/Dec '02 issues)

This season, 1893 the prospects look much brighter; and, as the present interest in the sport has come naturally, it will probably last the longer. The Prospect Harriers, who disbanded last year, have reorganized, and are running twice a week, under the captaincy of E. H. Whitlatch. And the Union Athletic Club, also of Brooklyn, has already this season held a big handicap race.

The Suburban Harriers will hold their annual handicap at Fort George, April fourteenth, and their captain, Mr. E. C. Carter, has been lecturing on the subject here and there, and has succeeded in starting a pack at The Young Men's Institute, in Englewood, N. J. On election day, the New York Athletic Club held an old-fashioned paper-chase over six or seven miles of country in the vicinity of Travers' Island. Curiously enough, the pacemaker on that occasion was Mortimer Bishop, who first followed the trail as a member of the old American Athletic Club Harriers.

But the sport seems to be taking firmest hold at present amongst the members of the Young Men's Christian Association. Almost every branch in the city has a pack, and there are some first-class runners amongst them. The New England branches are also strong in distance runners, as was evidenced by the showing made in the relay race from New Haven to New York, held last May, when each runner covered five miles of road.

Once a real start is made, all the clubs will, it is to be hoped, unite in supporting the best interests of the game, for their athletes are eager as ever to race over furrow and stream. The Xavier, New Jersey, St. George, Columbia, Riverside, Acorn, Pastime, Union,

Yonkers, Star, Allerton, New York, and many other athletic clubs, besides the Prospect Harriers and Suburban Harriers, have taken up the sport at one time or another, and only lack the occasion to make cross-country running as popular here as it is in England.

Though, as a class, the athletes usually lack both the time and inclination to take the reins in their own hands, they are ever ready to respond when others manage the races. They will plow through snow or mud, and ask only a fire and a tub on their return.

There have been many suggestions offered as to the plan upon which the National Cross-Country Association should be conducted. Perhaps it might be well if a hint were taken from the management of the Amateur Athletic Union. Hitherto the championship races have always been run within two or three miles of New York, and the majority of outsiders neither see nor hear of the sport. If the territory over which the national body has jurisdiction were divided into sections, each with its own board of governors, it would be possible to do many things.

The clubs in each section could hold a district championship where many new men, who could not qualify for the national event, would have a chance to test their ability. This would also increase the rivalry at the national championship, which, instead of being held in the same place every year as heretofore, might be run off in each of the several districts alternately—say, one year in New York, the next in Boston, and the following year in Chicago, perhaps. This would distribute the traveling expenses evenly among the several sections, and a crowd would be almost sure to come out if they got a chance to see the great race only once in three or four years.

Too Many Meets?

(John C. Dickey continued from page six)

allow seven runners per team.

I am not convinced that racing leads to injury problems in the sport of Cross-Country. If anything, a large schedule of races might reduce the injury rate. How? It forces coaches not to over-train their runners, or at least it **should** force them not to. It is the cumulative number of miles run in a week, not the number of miles raced, that most likely correlates with the number of injuries. I don't know if there has been any study of the sport that would prove or disprove such as opinion. If not, it might be an interesting study for someone to undertake.

Obviously, under my philosophy, the size of a team does not matter.

Editorial Note: John Dickey ran Cross Country and Track at Champaign (IL) Centennial High School from 1969 to 1972. He also ran both at Eastern Illinois Univ. 1972-73 and 1977-80. In 1977, they were the National NCAA Division II team champions in Cross Country with a (then) record low score. John still runs as many Cross Country races as he can find. He was pleased when the Missouri Show Me State Games added Cross Country as a sport this year. He is heartened to see that the USATF appears to be urging its local associations to include Open and Masters events in their Cross Country Championships.



Dick Beardsley's Army of Sorrows

By Paul O'Shea, Summit, New Jersey

Book Review:

Staying the Course: A Runner's Toughest Race

"When sorrows come, they come not as single spies, but in battalions." Indeed, Shakespeare's somber words could well describe the life of one of America's leading runners, a marathoner whose career was filled with tragedy and missed opportunities, as well as with some of the most memorable moments in the sport.

Dick Beardsley describes his athletic successes and the accidents and mishaps (which led to drug addiction and a felony conviction) in the recently published *Staying the Course: A Runner's Toughest Race*, (University of Minnesota Press, \$22.95) written with Maureen Anderson. Like Lance Armstrong's *It's Not About the Bike*, Beardsley's autobiography is another compelling study of an athlete's ultimate victory over staggering adversity.

A generation ago, Beardsley was one of the world's top marathoners. Winning the London, Grandma's and Napa Valley races, he put together a string of times still recognized in the Guinness Book of Records. From 1977 when he ran 2:47:14 to 1982 when he clocked 2:08:53, Beardsley ran each of thirteen marathons faster than the one before. His 2:08:53 remains the fourth best American time and is faster than the PRs of the far better known Frank Shorter and Bill Rodgers.

Beardsley's greatest accomplishment came at Boston in 1982. Side by side with Alberto Salazar and leading the race from mile 17, he lost by two seconds, probably caused by a motorcycle cop who cut in front as he was going to pass Salazar 100 yards from the finish. Both broke the American record in what was, to then, the tightest marathon finish in history.

"Neither of us ran this well again," Beardsley writes. "We didn't give an inch, and about killed each other in the process. Seriously, I was never the same again, running, mentally or physically. One thing about the 1982 Boston, it's one of the very few athletic contests where people remember who got second place. These days, if you get second place in the Boston Marathon, you win something like fifty thousand dollars. In 1982, I got a clock."

After Boston, his life became an escalating series of disappointments and horror. Over-racing and over-training (six marathons in ten months interspersed with 140 mile weeks) set him up for an Achilles injury, and he never ran at the top level again. Nor was he

able to qualify for an Olympic team. He attempted a comeback at the '84 Trials but finished 45th, in 2:27.

To earn a living, Beardsley turned to dairy farming in his native Minnesota and his travails began in 1989 when he slipped and got a leg caught in a tractor, tearing apart his left knee and breaking ribs and a wrist.

Three years later, he was injured in an auto accident, suffering back and shoulder injuries. Eighteen months after that, he was struck from behind while running, re-injuring his neck and back. A month later, he lost control of his car, fracturing vertebrae and suffering neck injuries. Nine days later, he fell down stairs at home, re-injuring his back.

While recovering at home from the farm accident, an infection took over his body, his temperature rose rapidly and a doctor told him he was ten hours away from having his leg amputated. Fortunately, Beardsley's wife had ignored her husband's protests and called the doctor. Unfortunately, a misunderstanding about the effective date of an insurance policy change resulted in the lapse of Beardsley's coverage and so he had no medical insurance.

While enduring the intense pain from the serial accidents, he developed an addiction to painkillers. Finally, in 1998 he forged a prescription, was arrested and convicted and received a five-year prison term. The sentence was suspended pending drug treatment, 440 hours of community service and five years' probation. By 1999 the probation was lifted.

Today, the 47-year old Beardsley lives in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, where he is a professional speaker, fishing guide and radio announcer. And, he still runs the occasional marathon, though with reduced performances.

As the author says in the introduction, "This book isn't about falling down and getting back up again. It's about falling down, getting run over by a car, and getting back up again. Over and over and over." 

Editor's Note Following a career in corporate communications, Paul O'Shea coached a girls' high school cross country team. He writes about the sport for several American and Canadian publications and lives in Summit, New Jersey.



Running Coaches Coaching Runners

by Herb Parsons, Artist, living in North Haven, Maine, and Cross Country Coach, at its Community School

I live on a small island twelve miles off the coast of Maine and coach Cross Country at the smallest high school in the state, the North Haven Community School. Many years, MHCS has fewer than 20 students. Last year's graduating class was just one.

For athletes, I must compete, in any given year, with soccer (offered on the neighboring island), golf, rowing, tennis, and a strong theater program. During winter, basketball is king here as it is throughout most of the state. So, getting in shape for that is frequently a motivator for kids to run in the Fall. We have no track program.

I'm a firm believer in the advantages that my running with the athletes gives me as a coach. We share the experience, the camaraderie of running, and that easy banter among us. Whether young teenagers or ancient adults, often those things come only with the relaxation of running.

The students and I don't become exactly "buddy-buddy" – I'm way too old and too private a person for that. But I do catch gossip I'd otherwise never hear that gives me a fuller sense of, and a useful perspective on, the individual personalities I'm coaching. Sometimes while running, they reveal a very different side of themselves.

Early on, I was exposed to having an active coach. My high school Cross Country coach in the early 1950's ran with us, . . . and reportedly smoked a pack a day! No, not while running. Fortunately, I picked up one of his habits but not both!

My own coaching reflects the way I used to teach in the classroom. I'm a professional artist and, during my 30 years teaching art part time, I always tried to instruct from the rear. That is, I tried to avoid getting between the students and the subject matter, physically, psychologically and intellectually. This is not unusual in studio art, but even in my art history classes I stood behind the projector at the rear of the classroom so that students would look only at the projected images and not at me.

By running with the kids, I feel I'm doing the same thing. I usually run off the shoulder of whichever athlete I'm nearest, (often the slowest runner), so they'll get used to being in charge, setting the pace, and controlling the tempo. I listen to breathing patterns or watch form – especially arm carriage, elbow drive on the uphill and body angle.

The downside of this is that I am slowing with age, getting creakier by the year. As the runners improve

and I inevitably slow down, I may soon end up having to be scraped off the pavement by them.

But the year 2002 was unique. For most of the Fall season, I had just one runner – the first time I've had less than three in my eight years here. Kelsey was a sophomore and five-year veteran of our program who I long ago nicknamed "Crazylegs." She was something between being a business partner – our workouts were definitely all business – and a friend, with a one to one bond. Kelsey had to be pretty motivated to commit herself totally, as she did, to training with a, uh, gray-haired, balding, skinny, 65 year old agitator day after day after day.

Kelsey and I are both relatively quiet and serious. We stretched before each training session in almost complete silence. We talked now and again as we ran on the easy days. On the hard days, we pushed each other: whether blasting up hills, pounding out fartlek, or practicing cutting each other off (legally) as we rounded corners at full throttle!

Four days a week, we ran every step together, the repeat hill workouts on the road and the long sprints. We never walked during these workouts. Because of Kelsey's strong preparation over the summer, we started the hard stuff early, by late August. She had more speed, I had more strength. But by season's end, she had become incredibly strong and outran me most of the time. We both knew she was ready for a great effort. And that's exactly what she gave, placing third in the Maine State Class D Championships. It was a great moment for both of us.

Being a coach who runs is also helpful during a meet. I rush off to different spots on the course – two-thirds of the way up a major hill is particularly useful. I offer advice and encouragement, as well as information on how each athlete's teammates are doing, how their competitors are doing, or how far each athlete is ahead of the next runner.

Being a running coach is also useful dealing with injuries. I've had a good many injuries over the years and have learned a lot about what works and what doesn't. When Cross Country kids get hurt, I check my old running logs as well as my usual books and file folders of magazine articles for anecdotal, red hot cures. And my own, often current, injuries remind me vividly of the mental and physical strains of being hurt, and of how to cope.

My running helps me evaluate team members' levels of stress and tiredness. It allows me to experi-

(continued on page eight)

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USATF Annual Awards Banquet

The following are the awards given specifically for achievements in Cross Country.

MEN: *Cross Country Merit Award:* Abdi Abdirahman, Tucson, AZ, and Jorge Torres, Boulder, CO.

WOMEN: *Cross Country Athletes-of-the-year:* Deena Drossin, Colleen De Reuck, Jen Rhines, Milena Glusac, Amy Rudolph and Elva Dryer (World Cross Country Championships 8K silver medal team).

Doris Heritage Award (Outstanding contribution to women's Cross Country): Anne Timmons, Missoula, MT

Cross Country Contributor-of-the-year: Rick Hill/Great American Sports

Running Coaches Coaching Running

(continued from page seven)

ment on myself, still after 50 year of running, with different routines of stretching, diet, sleep, and training. If I can survive, for example, a certain quantity of fartlek without my body falling apart, then likely most of my kids can, too, because I get injured at least as easily as they do.

This year, for instance, I tried a greater and longer end-of-season taper based on my own race preparation this past summer, which in turn was based on advice from a very experienced college coaching friend. As a still-active racer, I can better sense how much pre-race psyche is appropriate for the kids and avoid revving them up too much. Running may be a simple sport but there's always something to be tried, if not learned.

Because I'm motivated to run and to compete, it helps me motivate the kids. They, like most distance runners, possess considerable self-discipline. They train on their own for their long Sunday runs, and on

weekday mornings before school when they know they'll have to miss an afternoon practice, because of a doctor's appointment or to take their lobster boats out to haul right after school for instance. We are, after all, in the middle of the most productive lobster fishing grounds on the East Coast, and in recent years there's been good money to be made.

Being a running coach may not be for everyone. But it has worked well for me during the tremendously satisfying eight seasons I've had with MHCS Cross Country.

Editorial Note: Herb Parsons has provided the front page illustration for the CCJ during all of the last 18 years. We are delighted that we could include, on the front page of this issue, a new Parsons' illustration which will also be available on our t-shirts, notecards and posters. In the 10,000 meter run at the 2002 USATF National Masters Track & Field Championships, he placed second in the 65-to-69 age group, covering the distance in well under 44 minutes.

