



ATHENS
ROAD  **RUNNERS**

A newsletter of the Athens Road Runners

PACE

SPRING 2014

A Look Back at the Athens Track Club

By John Kissane

This year's Marigold 10K, set for 7:30 a.m. on May 17th, is the 39th edition of a race initiated in 1976 by the Athens Track Club, our community's first running organization. The ATC was still quite new that year, having been organized by a small group of track and distance running enthusiasts just a couple years earlier. Although the ATC merged this winter with the ARR and thus technically no longer exists, the organization's legacy lives on in the Marigold. Our club has made a commitment to keep this venerable race going for another 39 years and then some.

Recent years have witnessed a surge of interest in local running, but it was back in the mid-1970s that the nation's first running boom resonated here. Benji Durden, a 1973 UGA grad, determined with a few friends in 1974 that a running club was in order. Durden eventually achieved remarkable things as a marathoner -- a No. 7 world ranking in 1982, a 2:09.58 third-place finish at Boston in 1983, and no fewer than 25 sub-2:20 marathon finishes within the span of nine years -- but in 1974 all that was in the future.

"There were like a half dozen of us or so who felt we needed a running club," Durden recalled recently from his home in Boulder, CO. "And it was more track-oriented at first than it was road racing. We screen-printed a bunch of sleeveless t-shirts -- underwear, actually -- that was our gear. We had some cross country fun runs we ran on the UGA practice fields, and we also had track meets, and we gave out awards we made, round medallions with different colored ribbons glued to them."

Header photo: Athens Road Runners competing in the Chick Fil-A Half Marathon or 5K gather before the start at the statue of Athena.

Club Highlights

Marigold 10K

We are excited to lead our club's first race on May 17 in Winterville. See our website athensrr.org for details.

All-Comers Track Meets

This summer we will help to host three All-Comers track meets. These Thursday evening family-friendly events provide an opportunity for athletes of all ages and abilities to participate in a variety of races and field events. Meets will take place at the Athens Academy track on June 5, June 19 and July 3 from 6:30-8:30pm. Bring a blanket and spend the evening.

National Running Day – Wednesday, June 4.

Join us at Bishop Park for a runner and cookout. Details to come. Read more about this coast-to-coast celebration of running at <http://www.runningday.org>



Saturday Morning Group Run

Join us at 8 AM at the Bottleworks Parking Lot.

A Look Back at Athens Track Club, continued

The new club was a mix of local people and interest grew quickly. A favorite local race those early years was the Dean Tate 2-Mile. "Tate himself had been an accomplished cross country runner," Durden said of the legendary UGA administrator. "The race was from south campus up to north campus and I remember winning one year."

Opportunities to race were limited at first, according to Durden. "Greenville Track Club ran against us a little in cross country," he said. "Eventually some on our club kind of migrated over to the Atlanta Track Club's competitive team, because we had more racing opportunities with them. But I do remember running Peachtree and U.S. marathon nationals in 1976 wearing my Athens Track Club singlet." In the latter race, run in Lafayette, Louisiana, Durden scored a 2:20.23 runner-up finish in the AAU National Marathon Championship. It was a breakthrough that sparked his elite career, and Durden subsequently relocated to Stone Mountain to begin working at Jeff Galloway's Ansley Park Phidippides running store and training with Atlanta-area runners.

Through the remainder of the 1970s the ATC continued putting on local meets and a few road races, including Marigold which began in 1976. The club experienced a lull around 1979 or 1980 and was apparently inactive for a brief period, although Marigold continued uninterrupted.

Current ARR member Doug Mathews got interested in running in 1983, by which time the ATC had been resurrected and was going strong. "I recall there were several hundred members and large turnouts at club Christmas parties, pool parties, and running events," Mathews said recently. Still living in Winterville and one of the ATC's long-serving board members, Mathews developed into a strong regional runner and still wins with regularity in the 65-69 age group.

The club, according to Mathews, was increasingly active in race management in the 1980s, taking on planning, organization and race day timing. "At one time that was my responsibility with the ATC, and I seem to remember we charged \$200 per event," he said. "We continued this until we were approached by an enterprising club member who wanted to take this on and make a business out of it."

"We screen-printed a bunch of sleeveless t-shirts – underwear, actually – that was our gear."

– Benji Durden, co-founder of the Athens Track Club

That enterprising fellow was none other than Will Chamberlain, who went on to found Classic Race Services in 1989 and become a fixture in Georgia road racing. "If you have lived in Athens very long and gone to races," Mathews noted, "he was the tall thin guy with the beard you saw at the finish line and usually calling out the winners as awards were presented. Will passed away in 2010 at only 57. His friend Carole Black has continued where Will left off and still operates Classic Race Services." Interestingly, Mathews also mentioned that ATC put on a short-lived full and half marathon, with the full marathon laid out on a hilly course that wound its way to Winterville before returning to Athens.

The peak of ATC's popularity was probably in the late 1980s, and then a gradual decline set in that eventually brought the club to the conclusion that it was time to disband and merge with ARR. In addition to Mathews, former ATC members Marty Carr, Pascale Riley and Mike Smith did much over the past two decades to keep the club going despite dwindling membership.

We appreciate their hard work just as we applaud the efforts of earlier Athens running enthusiasts who advanced running, fitness and friendship through the Athens Track Club. Our careful management of the Marigold 10K will be a tangible way for us to demonstrate that appreciation in the years to come.

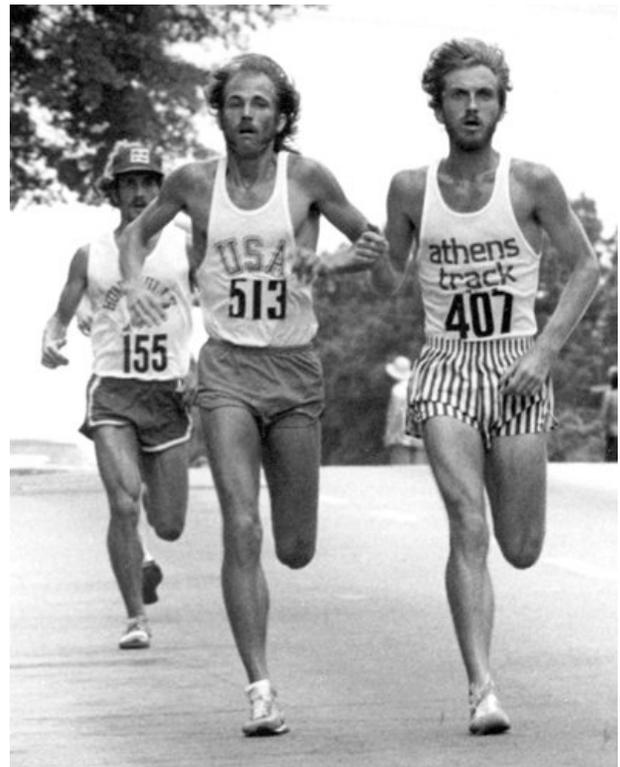


Photo -- 1976 Peachtree 10K: ATC co-founder Benji Durden (407) battles 1972 Olympian Jeff Galloway (513) and Huntsville, Alabama's Steve Bolt, the first American to clock both a sub-4:00 mile and sub-2:15 marathon (155). Durden placed sixth in 30:38.

[Photo courtesy Benji Durden.]

Training Tips: Safety

by Athens Road Runners Coach Al Jeffers

One of the purposes of Athens Road Runners is to promote safe running. On my many trips in and around town, I see many runners (some without even realizing it) narrowly missing extremely dangerous situations. In our town, the unsafe circumstances typically involve runners and motorists. That is a battle the runner will never win. From what I have observed, most runners assume that the motorist is watching the runner. This is a very dangerous assumption, especially when today's drivers can be seen texting, talking on the phone, or eating while driving. Below is a list from the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) for all to review. Please take a few minutes to read and pass the word to other runners so we all can enjoy a run free from physical harm.

RRCA RUNNING SAFETY TIPS

- **Don't wear headphones.** Use your ears to be aware of your surroundings.
- **Run against traffic so you can observe approaching automobiles.** By facing oncoming traffic, you may be able to react more quickly than if it is behind you.
- **Look both ways before crossing.** Be sure the driver of a car acknowledges your right-of-way before crossing in front of a vehicle. Obey traffic signals.
- **Carry identification or write your name, phone number, and blood type on the inside sole of your running shoe.** Include any medical information.
- **Always stay alert and aware of what's going on around you.** The more aware you are, the less vulnerable you are.
- **Carry a cell phone** or know the locations of public phones along your regular route.
- **Trust your intuition about a person or an area.** React on your intuition.
- **Alter or vary your running route pattern;** run in familiar areas if possible. In unfamiliar areas, such as while traveling, contact a local RRCA club or running store. Know where open businesses or stores are located in case of emergency.
- **Run with a partner.** Run with a dog.
- **Write down or leave word of the direction of your run.** Tell friends and family of your favorite running routes.
- **Ignore verbal harassment and do not verbally harass others.** Use discretion in acknowledging strangers. Look directly at others and be observant, but keep your distance and keep moving.
- **Wear reflective material if you must run before dawn or after dark.** Avoid running on the street when it is dark.
- **Practice memorizing license tags or identifying characteristics of strangers.**
- **When using multi-use trails, follow the rules of the road.** If you alter your direction, look over your shoulder before crossing the trail to avoid a potential collision with an oncoming cyclist or passing runner.
- **Call Police Immediately** if something happens to you or someone else, or you notice anyone out of the ordinary. It is important to report incidents immediately.



Sam McGuire, Stefan Billmeyer and David Duncan celebrate after the Albany Marathon.



Virginia Brooks with her Female Masters awards from the Chick Fil-A Half Marathon.



Many of the age group awards winners in the Athens Ridge 5K, part of the Twilight Criterium Weekend.



Sydney Marshall and Cameron Wagonbrenner were two of the six ARR members in the \$1000 Mile. Sydney won the women's race in 5:10.

FEATURED LOCAL RACES

(These events have member discounts. See weekly emails for details.)

Saturday, May 17

Marigold 10k, Winterville, 7:30am

Saturday, May 31

Kids Tri the Y Youth Triathlon, YWCO
(sign up by May 23)

Thursday, June 5, June 19 and July 3

All-Comers Track Meets, Athens Academy Track, 6:30pm
No entry fee for ARR members.

RACING AHEAD

(This list is not all inclusive. For a complete list of upcoming races visit the "RACE" page of our website at athensrr.org)

Saturday May 10,

Terrapin 5k plus one mile (4.2k), Athens

Saturday May 17

Bella of the Ball 5k, Watkinsville

Saturday May 24

Almost Memorial Day at Memorial Park 5.32k trail run

Monday May 26

Running with the Dawgs 5k, Athens

Wednesday June 11

North Georgia Conf. of United Methodist Church 5k

Shazam Super 5k Run/Walk - Athens



Athens Road Runners is a supportive community of runners of all ages and abilities.

Our mission is to inspire and engage individuals to achieve health, fitness and training goals through running.

Thank you to our sponsors:



Welcome, Jennifer!

Jennifer Givan is the newest board member of Athens Road Runners. She works with our training committee to develop training programs for runners of all abilities. She has run dozens of half marathons and a few marathons and has participated in WoW Bootcamp for the past five years. Jennifer works as a paralegal in Athens.

ARR IN ACTION
The Boston Marathon



by Dan DeLamater

I have experienced few flights with as much turbulence as Delta 1600 from Atlanta to Boston. The 118th Boston Marathon would start in 48 hours and I was bouncing around the clouds. That seemed appropriate since few marathoners reach the starting line in Hopkinton without some form of turbulence in their running career. That rough air helped me reflect on my particular path to Boston. Several failed qualifying attempts, an injured and rehabbed Achilles, and uncertainty after the Boston attacks in 2013 made this a particularly difficult starting line to reach. We all saw the images from that cowardly bombing at the 117th Boston - four dead, hundreds injured, thousands stranded along the course, and a city gripped by fear.

What a difference a year makes. My 3:10:56 PR and BQ in the Myrtle Beach Marathon was enough to earn admission to the 2014 event. And more importantly, plans for an epic 118th Boston Marathon were immediately underway. Outstanding police work, coordinated planning by all involved, a city too tough to be defeated, and a running community too stubborn to quit all contributed to an event hard for me to describe.

While searching for words to recount the 2014 Boston Marathon, "triumphant" seems the most appropriate. After all, I am of the humble belief that we all raced individually to earn a prized spot in Boston... but the bigger success was found during a collective celebration spanning 26 miles + 385 yards. Hundreds of thousands of people from across the globe worked together to reclaim the finish line on Boylston Street. And with that, love conquered hate. Bravery conquered fear.

As I thanked a fireman in Newton, he may have summarized the event better than anyone. "With every step, you are helping us reclaim our city," he said tearfully. His sentiments seemed to be shared by everyone. The race course crowd was raucous. The girls of Wellesley were frisky. The masses on Heartbreak Hill were energized. The students of Boston College were enthusiastic. The Boylston Street grandstands were wild. The city embraced runners as we arrived into town and as we traversed their city's streets. We even received an ovation at the airport while departing.

To say I am overwhelmed by the attention and support received during Boston week is an understatement. The applause certainly does not belong on the shoulders of the runners alone, though. Area first responders, the BAA, volunteers, and spectators were all amazing. This event was successful because we all stood behind a common cause. We proved how to be Boston Strong.

Congratulations to all of our Athens Road Runners who completed the Boston Marathon. In finish order: Erik Ness -2:56:57; Raymond Swetenburg – 3:01, Payton Joyner - 3:13:40, Monica Huff – 3:20:26, Renee Jackson - 3:37:52, Dan DeLamater – 3:40:28, Stephanie Loftin - 3:44:18, Cindy Adams - 4:09:36.

