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# Running After Forty



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***Running After  
Forty***

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**COVER PHOTO:** Ted Corbitt, now past 50 years of age, shows little sign of growing old. He still whips through marathons in the low 2:40s, and can run with almost anyone, any age, at distances longer than that. (Steve Murdock)

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# FOREWORD

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*“Running is part of ecology and preserving the good things. There is no such thing as growing old; you’re either growing up or stagnant. You can be old at 20.”*

George Sheehan

George Sheehan has been an instigator in the revolution—eastern United States division—from the beginning. First the New Jersey physician wrote letters. Then he began writing for his local newspaper. Then for national magazines. He spread the word (and continues to spread it through the pages of *Runner’s World* and other publications) that distance running isn’t necessarily kid’s stuff.

David H.R. Pain, a San Diego attorney, fomented revolution on the west coast. His crazy dream became reality in 1968 when he gave birth to the US Masters track and field championships—a glorified title for a small meet. . . but a highly significant one. Pain’s meet marked the formal beginning of large-scale competition for the US runner who’d witnessed 40 or more winters.

Sheehan and Pain were, and are, spokesmen for a movement whose time had come. Though the birth and boom of over-40 running has come since 1968, its roots go back a bit farther. Look back a few years earlier. You’ll see doctors expounding the virtues of jogging-running as a health restorer and preserver. You’ll see a corresponding explosion in running-for-everyone events. From this, a special 40-years-and-over competition had to arise. The already sizeable ranks of over-40s and nearly-40s demanded it.

They go by many aliases—“veterans,” “seniors,” “masters,” “those old guys who still run.” They’re so new to the scene that there isn’t yet agreement on what to call these revolutionaries. But it’s generally agreed they’re here to stay and that their number grows every day. After all, the over-40s have one undeniable advantage over other age-groups. Everyone who stays with running eventually joins them.

If over-40 running has accomplished nothing else, it has scored a first in the aging struggle. It has runners literally *looking forward* to their 40th birthdays, and their 50th, and their 60th.

Middle-aged runners stand in sharp contrast to a slovenly society. They hold themselves up as models of what perfectly normal 40-year-olds can have in the way of health and vigor. The weight-losing, heart-strengthening and energy-storing aspects of distance running are an underlying foundation. But they are a limited and mechanical feature of the sport. The men (and a few women) we’re talking about here have reached out far beyond physical fitness to capture the deeper pleasures of running. They know now and want to tell readers that running gave them a spiritual as well as physical rebirth.

While we give heavy emphasis in this booklet to the leading competitive athletes of the various age groups, we’re not saying everyone need strive for this level to gain the benefits. But we’re showing through their examples that over-40s needn’t be tied down by the limits of the past either.

**Chapter One**

***Racing Through  
The Years***



CARTOON BY BILL CANFIELD

# PORTRAIT OF A VETERAN

We went looking for the “typical” veteran distance runner—searching out common threads that tied together the best of these aging athletes. After surveying more than 80 of them, the main conclusion is that there are even fewer common threads than previously imagined.

In other words, the over-40s display all the variety of background, personality and approach of any other group of athletes. Only their age ties them together, and even that criterion isn't as clear-cut as it seems. Many of the runners we contacted think younger than the average 30- and 20-year-olds.

The key question is, do they think that way because they run, or do they run because they think that way?

We mailed questionnaires to about 100 runners, all over 40 years of age. *Runner's World* relies heavily on questionnaires for information. Return on them usually is good, averaging about 60% on general training/personality profiles. Within two weeks, 80% of the veterans had replied. That fact alone speaks well for their enthusiasm.

General similarities come out of their answers. The vets as a group show considerably less raw speed than their younger brothers, but more staying power. They are perhaps more susceptible to injuries and they heal slower, but they display wisdom and caution which helps them avoid these problems. They're limited by family and occupational obligations, but they also have the financial means to explore the running world. In short, the years have taken from the veterans, but time also has provided compensations.

The main revelation of the 80-odd questionnaires, though, was the surprising diversity of veterans running. Their basic message is that there is no “typical” runner.

California, birthplace of the US Masters and home of the booming Los Angeles Seniors Track Club, leads in veterans participation. The northeast US, where over-40s competed in road races long before a separate category came into being, is the secondary center. But activity isn't limited to the coasts. Our surveyed runners are scattered through 24 states, one lives in Canada and one in England.

Though most race above the track distances, where speeds and competitive opportunities suit them best, athletes range from quarter- and half-milers such as Bill Fitzgerald to ultra-marathoners like Ted Corbitt.

In ability, they range from world and American veteran record-holders (18 of the runners qualify on this count), to plodders, to non-competitors. The record-men provide models of what can be done and how it *has* been done. Separate stories on them will come later in the booklet. But times don't tell the whole story. Pax Beale and Larry Lewis have never set world records. But Pax, at 200-plus pounds, has relayed across California. And Larry has been running for 95 of his 104 years. They are worthwhile models, too.

A beautiful feature of veterans running is that it has room for all types. It allows long-term competitors to continue a career that may have begun a quarter-century earlier. It encourages one-time competitors to re-enter the sport. And it reserves space for those who've *never* competed. Surprisingly,

prior experience and even continuing experience are not prerequisites for success in this category. Of the veterans surveyed, four of every 10 had never run seriously until they were in their 30s. Twenty per cent hadn't competed until age 40. Another 40% returned to the sport after a layoff of 10 or more years.

Experience apparently isn't all it is cracked up to be, judging by these figures. Here is an experience breakdown on the surveyed runners:

<b>Uninterrupted since before age 20</b>	<b>20.0%</b>
<b>Returned to running after a layoff</b>	<b>41.2%</b>
Up to 10 years	1.2%
10-19 years	17.5%
20-29 years	15.0%
30-39 years	5.0%
40 or more years	2.5%
<b>Never ran before turning 30</b>	<b>38.8%</b>
Started in 30s	7.5%
Started in 40s	20.0%
Started in 50s	5.0%
Started in 60s	5.0%
Started in 70s	1.3%

Each of these three types—the regulars, the returnees and the newcomers—have contributed their record setters. Peter Mundle, Hal Higdon and Ted Corbitt have held onto good pace since their teens. Jim McDonagh returned to running in his 40s and Bill Andberg in his 50s, both with spectacular results. Monty Montgomery and Fred Grace never gave running a serious thought until they reached retirement age. Now no marathoner in their age group can touch them.

If there is a message in all this, it would be: make the most of experience if you've had it, but experience isn't essential. Apparently it's never too late to atone for sins of over-indulgence and under-exercise.

Actually, the overwhelming majority of runners surveyed have turned (or returned) to the sport only recently. Nearly half have run less than five years, and three-fourths have been at it less than a decade. But in terms of longevity, several runners have enviable records. Larry Lewis, a non-competitive loner, of course leads the pack with his 95-year streak. Californian Mike Kish began competing before World War One, and Johnny Kelley has been going strong since pre-Depression days.

These are the longevity leaders (of our sample):

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<b>NAME (AGE)</b>	<b>YEARS</b>	<b>NAME (AGE)</b>	<b>YEARS</b>
Larry Lewis (104)	95	Ted Corbitt (51)	35
Mike Kish (65)	55	Bill Emerton (51)	33
John A. Kelley (64)	44	Browning Ross (47)	32
Peter Wood (42)	36	Peter Mundle (43)	28



Richard King (51)	25	Bob Carman (40)	22
Hal Higdon (40)	24	Hal Canfield (51)	21
Nat Cirulnick (41)	24	Scott Hamilton (43)	21
Richard Packard (43)	22	Arthur Walsham (41)	21

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Those who started late started for a lot of different reasons, many of them simple and innocent. Motivations have no doubt changed over the years. But it's important to examine the starting force that would move a man to try an activity that from a distance looks grueling and unrewarding.

Significantly, most of the surveyed runners took up the sport (or returned to it) between 1966 and 1969. These were the years when the media and the medical world were coming across with the heavy message that ill health and under-exercise are closely linked. Many of our runners got moving because of a medical scare, more often than not with Kenneth Cooper's *Aerobics* as their motivator and guide.

Weight—too much of it—was the most common and obvious force pushing aging men into an alien activity like jogging-running. "My weight," says Frank McBride, a former college coach and now an outstanding veteran miler, "was no longer consistent with a satisfactory self-image."

Running eventually led McBride and the rest to other and deeper motivations, but the weight surely did come off. Excluding the runners with uninterrupted careers, the average weight loss among our sample was 13½ pounds. The weights of a half-dozen of them remained constant. No one gained. And some of the weight drops were dramatic. Jim McDonagh, now in his late 40s but still a marathoner capable of approaching 2:30, lost 42 pounds. Paul Jarrett, a Florida doctor and one of the country's best 50-year-old marathoners, shed 40 pounds.

Other big losers included: Peter Mattei (33 lbs.), Albert Cooper (28 lbs.), Flory Rodd (28 lbs.), George Lyman (27 lbs.), Bill Andberg (25 lbs.), Mary Lucille Boitano (25 lbs.) and George Major (25 lbs.).

George Sheehan has stated that weight is "the key factor in effective distance running." Low weight, says the New Jersey physician (and a world mile record-holder in his age group), must come first before fast times are possible. Statistical evidence backs him up. It suggests that "ideal weight" for a male distance runner is about twice his height in inches. This would mean that a six-foot (72-inch man) should weigh 144 pounds—give or take a few. That is considerably below normal medical recommendations.

Veterans tend to run a bit heavier than their younger counterparts. We checked the 100 or so runners who have been featured in *Runner's World* and *Racing Report* profiles. While the height-weight ratio for men 20-39 was right at 50%, the 40-and-over runners averaged about 48%—or several pounds heavier for their height.

In our survey for this booklet, only one runner in 10 showed a height-weight percentage below 45%. (Some of the exceptions, though, were significant. Professional ultra-distance star Bill Emerton, and US Masters champions Dennis Coveney, Bill Stock and Willis Kleinsasser fall into the "heavy-weight" group.)

The best runners in almost all cases are the thin ones. But they come in all heights. We won't dwell on that fact (since it's something a man can't

change), only mentioning that our sample range from 5'2" Al Clark to 6'3" Beale.

Many runners began for more serious medical reasons than weight. Heart irregularities, asthma, ulcers, high blood pressure. All were mentioned. Again, the therapeutic effects of exercise have at times been dramatic. But also serious medical problems have developed *because* of running. The most common targets are the back and lower legs, which have caused several temporary disabilities. At least two runners required hernia operations, and one contracted skin cancer as an indirect result of his running. He spent too much time under the hot sun.

The overall medical effects of running appear good. But even the experts are awaiting the results of long-term exposure among middle-aged runners. They are part of the first mass generation of runners, and their experiences may turn up many unexpected findings.

But tentatively, if our survey is any indication, running has the strongest of recommendations. Eleven men in our sample are medical doctors or workers in the medical field. If they think enough of their medicine to use it themselves, it must be valuable.

Competition contributes little to health and fitness. In fact, maximum fitness may best be achieved by *avoiding* racing and the stress that goes with it.

But to downplay the role of motivation via competition would be to ignore an obvious and powerful lure of distance racing. In fact, nearly as many runners mentioned "over-40 racing" as pointed to health benefits as their initial incentive. Veteran competition already is in its second generation, so to speak. More beginners are getting their first big boost from watching or reading of runners their age. Bill Fitzgerald, the seemingly unbeatable miler and half-miler, got his start this way.

Competition, for any number of reasons, looks quite attractive to men in their 40s who've lost many of life's basic challenges.

Peter Wood, a transplanted Briton who runs dozens of California races a year, says: "Basically, I think I'm just a conceited old man. Every time some guy is killing himself to get to the tape, it's for conceit. There's some content of feeling it's good for you, but primarily it's the feeling of accomplishment, similar to climbing a mountain. When you climb a mountain, or run your fastest time, you feel terribly pleased."

And there is the unique social side. As airline pilot Conrad Eroen says, "You just have to admire people who mix Gatorade and beer."

Running, competitive and otherwise, can be a heady experience to men who'd temporarily lost touch with simple pleasures. Peter Strudwick, the Southern California marathoner who was born without hands and feet, sums it up:

"Besides the pervasive and profound physiological changes brought on by running, I've become a part of a larger experience—my fellow runners, my city, my country. I look forward to expanding this experience throughout the world."

Like Strudwick, other veteran runners may have gotten started late in the sport. But they aren't about to quit early. The sport has given them plenty, but no more than they've given it.

# AGE OF OPPORTUNITY

Peter Mundle had slipped from his pedestal. In his previous two years of US Masters racing, Pete had won a half-dozen titles. He'd just finished the 5000 at the 1971 meet in San Diego, and it had given him only second place, same as in his other race, the 10,000.

But the Los Angeles mathematician wasn't disgusted or discouraged at being shut out. He was smiling. "I like it better this way, even when I lose," he said as if he really meant it. "It's nice to have someone to run with. I don't like it out there by myself."

The senior scene had changed a lot even since Mundle arrived just three years earlier. He got in near the start. He didn't run the first US Masters meet, but he was there for the second one. And at the time that was the only full-scale meet in the country for men his age. Otherwise, he raced through a series of masters miles that bigtime meet directors inserted into their programs for comic relief.

But far from being comic, the races caused quite a stir. Anyone expecting to see joggers wheezing and waddling through seven-minute miles got shocked into the reality of over-40 running. Particularly when Mundle was competing. He didn't look or run any different than men half his age.

Within months of his 40th birthday, Peter had whacked close to 20 seconds from the veterans mile record. But racing was a lonely affair for him then. His races were glorified time-trials. Looking back, he laughs when he remembers that many observers of over-40 running considered him unbeatable.

All that changed, and quickly. Within a year or two, Pete had all the company he could want. Veterans running changed that fast. And it's still changing, expanding and improving at a dizzying rate.

- The US Masters meet gained in 1971 the official designation of national AAU veterans and masters championship.
- The AAU also approved a national cross-country championship for veterans, the first meet scheduled for Nov. 20, 1971, near Detroit.
- The Senior Sports International meet in Los Angeles joined the veteran racing circuit in 1970, and grew in '71.
- In 1971, regional championships were held in the East (New York), Southeast (North Carolina), Midwest (Illinois) and Northeast (Oregon).
- A full US team will travel to Cologne, West Germany, in 1972 for the International Veterans championships—the Olympics of over-40 running. (Worldwide vets races already are run at 25-kilometers and the marathon.)

So, in less than five years, the prospects for an aging US runner have improved markedly. No longer limited to racing against open competition that gets progressively younger and tougher, he can race men his own age. They get tougher, too, but that's what competition is all about—equals racing on equal terms.

The boom in veterans racing has made it possible for a runner literally to race through life—age-group, high school, college, open competition, and

finally with the vets. A hard-core runner's horizons are unlimited.

It's to the credit of those organizing veterans races that they consider running itself more important than running fast. David Pain, founder of the US Masters meet and leader of the planned 1972 European tour, explains:

"One significant aspect flowing from veteran competition is the concept that any physically fit man 40 and over should be permitted to compete regardless of his skills or ability. This philosophy stems from the fact that the primary purpose of this program is to stimulate adult males to achieve physical fitness. The establishment of records is of secondary importance."

In another progressive move, the Masters program refuses to exclude so-called professionals. "The veterans believe," Pain continues, "that any man over 40 should be permitted to compete regardless of professional status. As a result, many fine athletes such as high school and collegiate coaches, YMCA instructors and former professional athletes may once again sip from the stimulating cup of competition."

The stimulating competition Pain mentions is of a special kind. Competition, of course, can also be deflating. Many athletes left the track because they could no longer keep up. As they fell off the pace, they were too visible. If they kept racing, they did it on the roads or over the country, where results weren't so obvious.

Don Pickett, a capable 44-year-old runner from California, says, "The word track scares a lot of people. They think they'll look funny when they drop back. And it is kind of embarrassing sometimes. You're so visible. You can see everyone and they can see you. When you drop back, everyone knows it. You can look across the track and see other runners, and you can watch them lap you. Yet you aren't that far back."

But the veterans races allow older runners to get back to racing on even terms with their compatriots. Over-40 competition, for that reason, has had its biggest impact and made its biggest contribution in the track distances.

Masters track racing welcomes runners who may have figured they were too slow. For one thing, only about 200 spectators watched the 1971 US Masters meet, and they were all but swallowed up by the vastness of Balboa Stadium. Runners didn't feel the pressure of critical eyes. Officials gave runners a positive boost, too. Every man was timed; every result posted. As stragglers came in during the long races, announcer Augie Escamilla urged: "Cheer these men in. Even though they aren't winning, they may be setting personal records."

While opportunity expands, so does participation. It works both ways: meets develop more runners, runners demand more races. Such supply-and-demand works at all levels of the sport. But in veterans running there's an additional factor at work. Everyone gets older; new blood is continually pumped into the veterans ranks.

With the prospect of continued racing in mind, fast runners in their 30s are sticking with the sport. Hal Higdon, who beat Peter Mundle in the 1971 Masters 10,000, says, "Guys who quit at 30 and 31 are going to hang on. What gives Mundle and me the edge now is that we haven't stopped. There'll be more and more people like us coming up."

They're already here, in fact. Onetime British world record holder Gordon Pirie is now 41 and still active (though a rumor that he recently ran a

4:04 mile apparently is unfounded). Australian Dave Power, an Olympian not many years ago, now is competing in veterans races.

And how about this trio on the brink of their 40th birthdays. Ethiopia's Mamo Wolde won the 1968 Olympic marathon. He turns 40 on June 12, 1972. Jack Foster of New Zealand recently set a world 20-mile record. He turns 40 on May 23, 1972. (Imagine two veterans winning Olympic marathon medals; could be.) And Frenchman Michel Bernard ran 5000 meters in 13:40 during the 1971 season. He turns 40 on Dec. 21, 1971.

George Young is several years off 40 yet, but already he is thinking ahead to that milestone. He recently wrote: "I believe that if you run for 20 years, as I have, you ought to progress every year and every month of the year as you run. Your times will steadily improve."

Asked if this meant he expected to keep improving until after 40, George answered indirectly: "I believe I will live to see a person 40 years of age break four minutes for the mile. I am 34, and I feel I can compete for 10 more years. I don't see any reason why a person could not make an Olympic team at 40 years of age. If you can keep your mental conditioning at a high level, you can compete."



Barefoot, taped-up John Montoya, 60, typifies the spirit of the senior runner.

# TIME--THE GREAT THIEF

Running obviously has a real and profound effect on the aging process. It can delay or even reverse much of the decay we attribute to growing old.

Dr. Michael Pollock, a Wake Forest University exercise physiologist, specializes in studying middle-aged men. Recently, he conducted tests on long-term joggers, 32 men averaging about 47 years of age. Each of these men had run for several years, but even during the controlled testing period they ran only moderately—only about 11 miles a week. Still the results were quite significant.

- Maximum oxygen uptake 20-35% higher than untrained men.
- Resting heart rates 15-25% lower than sedentary men of comparable age.
- Body fat 10-15% below typical levels.

None of this is news to runners. Other researchers have reported similar findings. Running produces a sleeker, stronger, more efficient machine, and the changes are particularly obvious against the backdrop of an over-40 population severely deficient in these qualities.

Although there are dissenters, general agreement is that moderate and carefully-planned running keeps middle-aged men young (younger than non-active compatriots, anyway) in body and spirit.

If no other point gets across in this booklet, readers should see that running needn't stop at age 30, or 40, or 50. And on the other hand, it's never too late to start. Fred Grace and Monty Montgomery, you'll recall, didn't begin until they were in their 60s; Noel Johnson discovered running after he turned 70.

But there's a big qualification here. Though running itself can and should continue up the years, there's no way a 40-year-old is going to race like he did as a 20-year-old, training being equal. Running has profound effects on the aging runner, but there are physical processes that not even running can halt.

In the physical as well as spiritual sense, man continuously slows down from his early years until the day he dies. The non-stop pace of the child bears little resemblance to the deliberate movement of his grandfather. Life is a steady process of slowing down.

We hear talk about the "peak" ages for a distance runner. It's impossible to pin down a best age for each individual. But nearly every current world and American record holder was in his 20s when he made his mark. This is the time when physical strength and endurance combine to best advantage with opportunity and enthusiasm.

Racing ability then falls off steadily as the runner goes through his 30s, 40s and on up. An individual's times can, of course, improve as he ages, providing conditioning and opportunity improve. And some old runners can beat young ones. But as age increases, *potential* for fast distance racing generally decreases.

Veterans haven't come close yet to their record potential. Records in every age group are improving so fast it's hard to keep up with them.

But they're still a long, long way from the best times by younger runners. For instance, American bests for athletes in the 40s average 11% slower than the national records; in the 50s, the spread is 23%; it stretches out to 36% in the 60s.

This chart compares records for the age groups:

Event	Record	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-Up
880	1:44.9	1:58.8 (13%)	2:09.5 (21%)	2:29.4 (42%)	3:08.6 (80%)
Mile	3:51.1	4:26.2 (15%)	4:47.8 (23%)	5:18.8 (34%)	6:32.0 (70%)
2 miles	8:22.0	9:28.0 (13%)	10:47.0 (25%)	11:27.0 (36%)	16:55.0 (101%)
3 miles	12:53.0	14:48.6 (15%)	16:44.0 (31%)	17:10e (33%)	23:35.0 (83%)
6 miles	27:11.6	31:17.0 (15%)	35:23.5 (31%)	36:00e (32%)	42:38.0 (57%)
Hour	12m527	11m629 (8%)	9m1201 (21%)	9m361 (25%)	-----
Marathon	2:11:12*	2:28:27*(13%)	2:37:42 (20%)	2:54:56*(33%)	3:45:20*(72%)
50 miles	5:15:19*	5:36:52 (6%)	5:34:01* (6%)	8:08:58*(56%)	-----
100 miles	12:54:30*	13:33:06 (5%)	-----	-----	-----

(e=estimated time enroute to longer distance; \*=certified road course)

There are sound physiological reasons for this inevitable slowdown. Dr. George Sheehan has written, "Alex Comfort, the world's reigning expert on old age, has proposed a battery of tests for the measurement of human aging. Its task: to pinpoint each man's status on the biological time clock which runs from 40 ('the end of the plateau of adult vigor') to 70 ('the end of vigor altogether')."

"A quick reading of this program, however, fails to turn up a short (less than five-minute) test requiring a minimum of equipment (a stopwatch is the only essential) available to anyone over 40. It is called a mile race."

Sheehan points out that the mile, more simply than any scientific test, has shown the insurmountable differences in racing ability between runners in their 20s, 30s, 40s, etc.

"The key to performance is the maximum pulse rate," Sheehan says. "This declines 5-10 beats a decade, and separates the men from the 40-year olds, the 40s from the 50s, and so on. This decrease in capacity for all-out effort amounts to a loss of at least 7% in performance. In a five-minute mile this would be 20 seconds, which is just about how it works out."

Note here that Dr. Sheehan is the over-50 mile record holder at 4:47.8—21.6 seconds (about 8%) slower than Peter Mundle's over-40 mark. So he's not speaking from an ivory tower of scientific research.

Dr. Sheehan quotes Scandinavian tests which indicate that a man's maximum heart rate at age 25 is about 200 beats per minute. By age 40, it drops to 182 beats, and goes down to 153 beats by the time he reaches age 65. Maximum heart rate is a key because it controls the oxygen that pumps through a racing body. The faster a man goes, the more he needs. But the older he grows, the less he gets.

"No other determination or test," Sheehan concludes, "tells more about why we need age groups to maintain certain separate areas of competition."

Other complications come with aging and preclude racing like a youth. Some directly relate to physiology; many don't.

Dr. Tom Waddell, an Olympic decathlon man in 1968, says, "The cellular changes which occur with aging are very real. As one gets older, there is less protein in the cells. There is less water in the body. The well-differentiated cells which aren't replaced when injured, like tendons, ligaments and muscles, receive less blood and are very slowly replaced by fibrous tissue. So you don't have a viable, stretchable, workable tissue."

The practical effect of this process, Waddell explains, is "if one is older, one has had more chance of injuries . . . when a tendon is injured it is *permanently* injured. These areas are calcified by the body and become scar tissue. It becomes weakened."

With injuries, the veteran loses three ways. He has had a longer period to pick up permanent ailments. He gets hurt easier now that he's older. And his injuries take longer to heal.

"Time is the greatest thief!" writes Tad Dobbs, now in his 50s and with a decades-long history of running. "If we train too hard, such as doing fast interval work, then we are subject more readily to injuries which take twice as long to heal. The older runner therefore must resort to a slower form of training and seek levels of competition commensurate with his abilities."

But the picture isn't entirely grim. In the aging process, nature provides compensations. Dr. Wassell explains: "Psychologically, I think the older you are the tougher you are. The confidence I had in 1968 was 10-fold over that of 1960 . . . I think it's important that anyone who wants to continue running simply never to allow himself to stop."

Although adjustments in routine are necessary as the years and responsibilities add up, there's no reason in the 1970s why a runner ever needs to stop running and competing. The veterans boom has progressed to the point where any man who wants it can find "competition commensurate with his abilities."

As Dr. Sheehan said, separate age-group classifications are justified on physiological grounds. Age 40 is the traditional watershed between open and veteran competition, with classes broken up in 10-year groups. Perhaps, in the name of fairness, the entire system needs a good review.

For instance, athletes now in their 30s are at a somewhat awkward age—usually (though there are significant exceptions) unable to compete on equal terms with younger runners, and too fast and young for the veterans. A man doesn't suddenly fall into veteranhood on his 40th birthday. Age adds up gradually through the 30s. Therefore the man in his mid and late 30s deserves consideration. (David Pain expresses a different opinion in the next article.)

The Senior Sports International meet in Los Angeles gave due consideration in 1971 by adding a 35-39 division. Then in the over-40s competition was split into five-year groups instead of the traditional 10-year. There are pros and cons to this move. It makes for a somewhat unwieldy meet, and endless sub-dividing like this can turn veterans meets into organizational nightmares.

But the big plus going for five-year age grouping is that it better equalizes competition. Age marches steadily upward, adding its inevitable limitations. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the records lists.



They heavily favor men in the first couple of years of the age-group (40 and 41, 50-51, etc.). Only two American record-holders— Bill Fitzgerald and Ted Corbitt—fall in the second half of their age-group decade.

Bill Andberg perhaps best summed up the need for further age-group sub-dividing when he said at the 1971 US Masters meet: "It's sure a relief to turn 60. I was getting a little tired of racing people nine years younger."

Therein lies the paradox of veterans running. While running itself delays the decay of aging and allows men like Dr. Andberg to perform remarkable racing feats, it's in racing that the inequities of age difference became all too obvious. He still has the heart for competition, but his heart is protecting him—often to his disgust—from going too fast.

# KEEP THE "KIDS" OUT

David Pain is as responsible as anyone for the current healthy state of veterans distance running in the United States. He founded and nurtured the US Masters meet, and now has moved on to bigger things. Pain, a San Diego attorney, is organizing the 1972 tour to the International Veterans championships in West Germany. Here are his observations on where veterans running should—and shouldn't—go from here.

BY DAVID PAIN

The December 1970 issue of *Track and Field News* recommended editorially that the AAU consider certain aims, one of which was lowering the starting age for veterans (over-40) competition to age 30 because "few are good enough to compete internationally after 30, and if there is no competition until 40 the majority will get out of shape and stay there."

At first blush, this recommendation appears to have merit since one generally favors a policy of inclusion rather than exclusion. However, having had intimate exposure to the veterans program, I take issue with this "aim" for a number of reasons I believe to be valid.

First, it is not true that most athletes are over the hill at 30. It is well established that many distance runners do not reach their prime until 30 or later. The number of world-class performers over 30, although diminished in number, would clearly make a shambles of veteran competition. To add the 30-39 athletes to the Masters would, frankly, inject a vastly superior class of athletes whose participation would tend to overshadow the 40-plus group.

The Masters program is basically designed to stimulate middle-aged men to become and stay fit. The competition is merely a means to that end. The re-entry into competition (assuming an athlete has dropped out at 30) is one of the most significant aspects of the seniors program as it injects an ego-stimulant at a time when many men are otherwise entering male menopause, experiencing sexual inadequacy or emotional problems at work or home.

A practical consideration here is the logistics of veterans meets. The US Masters already has three age divisions: 40-49, 50-59, 60 and over. To add another division would make the meet unduly protracted, place an excessive burden on volunteer officials and increase the sponsor's financial burden for another complete set of awards. Income already is negligible.

The Masters program is a success because there is a need for it, and because the over-40 athletes administer and nourish their own activities. There is no hand-feeding with the attendant idolatry which is frequently associated with younger athletes. If the 30-39 group wants a program badly enough, they should form their own organization and do their own thing—with *their* peers.

Sight should not be lost of the fact that the public currently looks upon Masters competition as slightly quixotic. You hear comments like, "Wow, look at that old guy go!" or "Do you really mean you train 10 miles a day?" To inject middle-aged athletes into such a program would eliminate this aspect which—currently, at least—is one of the factors which draws otherwise sedentary men into its ranks.

In evaluating this overall veterans program we must ask this question: Do we want to make the younger men older, or the older men younger?

**Chapter Two**

***Leaders Of  
All Ages***



# A CLASS BY THEMSELVES

Two runners—Larry Lewis and Bill Emerton—are in a category all their own. They don't fit into any of the groups that follow. You won't find their names on any of the record lists, since neither now races in the normal sense. However, they're perhaps the most amazing individuals in the booklet. Lewis, at age 104, still runs six miles daily. Emerton, a professional, is best known for his incredible ultra-distance feats.

## LEWIS' 95-YEAR CAREER

There could be no better testament to the incredibility of the Larry Lewis story. Writing of Lewis in *Runner's World*, his close friend Walter Stack said, "Ripley's Believe it or Not almost didn't believe him when they did a thing on his exercise routine."

True enough, Larry's story does test one's imagination. The facts alone do it. He is a 104-year-old San Franciscan. He runs six or so miles each morning. Then he hikes to the St. Francis Hotel for a full day's work as a waiter, and home again in the evening—a total of five miles.

The Lewis legend grows through the years and as it's passed from storyteller to storyteller, and occasionally the lines between fact and fiction get blurred. It's said, for instance, that Larry spurts through his pre-dawn runs around Golden Gate Park (6.7 miles) in 37 minutes. Calculations of time and/or distance seem suspect, considering the world 10,000-meter record for men half his age is slower.

Or is he so far off? In 1970, Larry reportedly raced three miles in 17:04 and five miles in 29:06, before witnesses apparently armed with reliable stopwatches. Or is this another of the Lewis legends?

Maybe by going to the source of the legend we can sort out the real Larry Lewis story, or at least get the amazing man's own version of it.

Well, a nosy reporter finds out soon enough that Larry isn't an easy man to pin down. Not that he's publicity shy. He just doesn't like to stay in one place very long. "If you really want to know my secret," he has said, "here it is. I just keep moving all the time. I have to keep occupied."

Most days, Larry is up at 4:30 and in the park for his run. Who's going to get up that early to verify his time and distance? It's obvious, just by looking at the man and watching his non-stop movement, that he's perfectly capable of going six miles. In 37 minutes? Does it really matter?

"I don't keep running for the publicity," says Lewis. "I do it because it's one of the best ways I know to keep healthy. It's almost like instinct—I run, I walk because I enjoy it. Keeping active is the way I live."

Lean (at 5'9" and no more than 140 pounds), tight-skinned, hyper-active and above all quick of mind, Lewis doesn't look or act his age. Inevitably, rumors pop up that he isn't as old as he says, that he's a 65-year-old pulling off an elaborate hoax.

Larry whips out his hand and says, "Look, I have a Masonic ring for 75 years membership. I got it in 1964, and you have to be 21 to join. That adds up, doesn't it?"

To further support his case, Lewis points out that his godfather, Navajo

Chief Henry Ironshell, is still living. He's 134. "You can check with him," Lewis says. A San Francisco columnist wrote, "I tried, but the Chief has an unlisted smoke signal."

Larry's history does check out. And a fascinating one it is. He was born June 25, 1867, in Mahutúria—an Indian village in the Arizona territory. Mahutúria is better known now by its adopted name—Phoenix.

Chief Ironshell in fact started Lewis on a running career that probably will stretch beyond 100 years. It has lasted 95 already.

"The Chief is the one who really taught me how life is to be lived," Larry recalls. "At age 9, he demanded that everyone in his village take part in athletics. He started us jogging up and down Camelback Mountain . . . It was around five miles. But oh what fun! The Chief didn't have to be hard-nosed about his order. We ran because we enjoyed it."

Lewis eventually drifted away from the village and in the 1890s joined the Barnum and Bailey circus, winding up working for 33 years as an assistant to Harry Houdini—the escape artist.

But Larry never drifted away from running. One of his longest runless periods came just before his 98th birthday. "I was involved in an auto accident with a woman driver," he says. "She died within four hours. I had 11 broken ribs, four skull fractures and five spinal fractures. A doctor gave me 72 hours to live. But in 23 days I started running Golden Gate Park again."

And he sees no reason to stop, even though he's 104 years old. Or, as he prefers to say, he has spent 104 years on earth. "That's the best way to describe a person's age. Never say that a person is so many years *old*. Old means something dilapidated and something which you eventually get rid of, like an automobile or a refrigerator. I'm not in that category. You may become mellow, but never old."

A recent interview with a reporter ran somewhat late. The reporter, no more than a third Larry's age, volunteered to give him a ride downtown to work. He declined and hustled off at a brisk walk. "If the good Lord had intended me to have an automobile," Lewis said, "he would have provided me with one when I was born, June 25, 1867."

## **EMERTON--PRO ON THE GO**

**BY BILL EMERTON**

Running has been good to me, and possibly to this day I owe my life to it. At age 17, I was very much underweight and never really enjoyed the best of health, having a lot of lung trouble—possibly tuberculosis.

My mother, being concerned about my health, took me to the local doctor, who suggested I do some light exercise such as swimming or golf. However, a distance running friend had been trying to interest me in that sport. When I casually mentioned this to the doctor, he almost went berserk. He said I would possibly die with an "athlete's heart" by the time I was 25. Well, I noticed in the obituary notices not long after that this doctor—considerably overweight, and a heavy smoker and drinker—died of a heart attack.

I started running. For one year I managed to cover six miles every evening, then I had my first race—three miles which I won in 14:55. I knew then that I was with the right exercise. My pulse had dropped from a speedy 78 to 56. (Now, at age 51, I have a resting pulse of 38.)

As an amateur and professional middle and long distance runner, I have gone on to win over 200 championships; represented Australia in the British Commonwealth Games; held Australian professional records at six miles, 10,000 meters, 10 miles, 20 miles and the marathon, and at one time had world's professional records for 12 miles and one hour.

At age 40, I decided that I would run my first 100-miler. This I did on a very hill course in 17:10. I also finished second in the Australian professional marathon championship in 2:32, ran the mile in 4:15, two miles in 9:08, three in 14:23, six in 29:28, 10 in 51:30, 15 in 1:22:50, 20 in 1:53. At age 42, a time when I could still run a mile in 4:20 and six miles in 29:49, I ran 168 miles almost non-stop in 33 hours. A year later, I ran 158 miles in 29 hours 35 minutes—covering the first “marathon” in three hours.

My first big run was 500 miles from Melbourne to Adelaide, Australia. I was 45 then. I ran this in 10 straight days. After this run, I journeyed to England to attempt the run from John O’Groat’s to Land’s End, and covered the 1000 miles in 18 days, 10 hours—averaging 50 miles a day. Six weeks later, I ran from New York to Washington, D.C. (251 miles) in four days, 23 hours.

The following year was a light one for me. But I got back into the long runs at age 47, when I ran from Toronto to Montreal for Expo—390 miles in seven days.

The highlight of my 48th year was the run through Death Valley. Before this run, I covered 30 miles a day for six weeks. My program went like this: morning—10 miles hard (60-64 minutes); midday—3-mile run on beach; evening—17 miles easy for condition work.

I started at Shoshone and ran to Scotty’s Castle, covering 130 miles in three days, with an actual running time of 29 hours. Later that same year, I ran from Scotty’s Castle to Las Vegas in three days, 15 hours. Temperatures in Death Valley were around 120 degrees at that time of year.

As age 49, I ran from Los Angeles to Ventura—80 miles. Straight after this run I caught a plane to New York, and ran 20 miles up Broadway in 90-degree heat immediately after landing. After this, I caught a plane to Houston, Tex., then had a 3½-hour physical examination by the astronauts’ doctors and was pronounced as fit as any of the astronauts in the Apollo group. The next day I started a 1080-mile run to Cape Kennedy. This was covered in 27 straight days, with the temperature every day 90 degrees or more, and the humidity equally high.

You can see from this that my truly long running didn’t begin until I was 40 years of age. I’m almost 52 now, still get in five to 30 miles a day and can see no reason to stop. Despite what my long-dead doctor said 35 years ago, the body needs exercise. And running and walking are the greatest of all exercises.

# • FORTIES Middle-age means fresh racing life.

A veteran doesn't have to race to enjoy running and to profit from the activity. But the current generation of vets also have made it clear that a man over 40 needn't limit himself to running for fun and fitness. Or even to leisurely racing.

This chapter looks at the individuals who do the best racing. They are a cross-section of competitors, representing all ages, events and approaches. We let them tell their stories in detail. This isn't to show what all veterans *should* do; only to point out what has been and can be accomplished by men (and women) over 40.

The limits are farther out than generally imagined.

No one demonstrates this better than the men in their 40s, who find new competitive life after crossing the once-dreaded frontier into middle age. They go, on one day, from being oldest of the young to youngest of the veterans.

**DENNIS COVENEY:** The Canadian (by way of England) had intended to have one good go at marathoning in 1971, then to abandon the event forever. He had a better go than he thought possible, winning the US Masters championship, and that success left him hungry for more. "I only started running in 1967 for general conditioning purposes," says Coveney. But I soon became caught up in the merry-go-round of training and racing." The former bicycle racer claims he only "learned how to run" in 1971. Who knows where another year or so of lessons might lead.

**Personal Data:** 5'10", 160 pounds; born March 23, 1931, at Faversham, England; lives in North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada; began running in 1967 at age 36.

**Best Veteran Times:** Mile—4:53 (1971); 3 miles—15:58 (71); 10 miles—55:02.6 (71); marathon—2:39:00.2 (71).

**Training:** "I have had only one season of specific marathon training, based upon the LSD concept of Arthur Lydiard. Prior to that I was doing general middle and long distance training with other club athletes but found the workouts too hard for my condition at the time. However, since acquiring a set of the computerized schedules (*Computerized Running Training Programs* by Gardner and Purdy), I find that I can now handle repetition-type training provided I follow the program suited to my level of performance.

"My typical program: Sunday—18-24 miles easy; Monday—12 miles, often fartlek; Tuesday—8-10 x 880 at 2:35-2:40; Wednesday—15 miles steady; Thursday—5-6 x mile or 1½ miles; Friday—18 miles steady; Saturday—hard run with club (10-12 miles) or race."

**BILL FITZGERALD:** Back in 1967, Bill slipped into his easy-chair to watch a track meet that would change his life. He saw veterans racing a mile. And though he hadn't run one himself in 16 years he decided, "I can keep up with those people." He found, even at age 42, he could still turn on a respectable burst of speed. That speed has been kind to him—not so kind to other veterans—ever since. Fitzgerald was the first man past age 40

to run a half-mile under two minutes. With speed like this (also 52.3 in the 440) he's all but unbeatable in tactical miles, having won three straight US Masters titles with his kick. At age 46, Bill says, "I feel that I'm still improving."

**Personal Data:** 5'10", 149 pounds; born May 20, 1925; lives in Palos Verdes, Calif.; began running in 1967 at age 41.

**Best Times:** 220—23.6 (1969); 440—52.3 (69); 880—1:59.8 (69); 1500m—4:13.7 (70); mile—4:28.0 (69).

**Training:** "I faithfully follow the interval work described in *Computerized Running Training Programs*. The book is excellent in that there is a training schedule for all distances regardless of your present physical condition. It is very logical step-by-step conditioning. I average about 50 miles a week with intervals two or three times weekly. The hard-easy concept of conditioning, I believe, is especially well suited for the older runner in that he is only under stress-type training three times a week, which still allows him competitive running on the weekend."

**HAL HIGDON:** Higdon, author of several books and dozens of freelance magazine articles, is better known for his sharp pencil and opinions than for his sharp running. Despite his light descriptions of his races, though, Hal is a more serious runner than most readers think—and faster than many imagine. In early 1971, he wrote: "On June 17, Hal Higdon will become 40 . . . In so doing I will, in what might best be described as a *coup de calendar*, become instantly competitive at the masters level. I both await eagerly this moment, and fear it." Higdon proceeded to join what he calls the "grandfather jocks" by winning the US Masters 10,000—setting a national record in his first race as a vet. Then he lapsed back into his role of clever writer. "As I grow older," he said, "I plan to run fast except when running slowly."

**Personal Data:** 5'10", 142 pounds; born June 17, 1931; lives in Michigan City, Ind.; began running in 1947 at age 16.

**Best Veteran Times:** 10,000m—32:37.8 (71); marathon—2:42:51 (71). (Earlier, Higdon ran a 4:13.8 mile at age 26, and a 2:21:55 marathon at age 32.)

**Training:** "I have found that I can hang onto 90% of my conditioning with relatively little effort. This means going out more or less daily and running about an hour, often less. This is my 'fun' level of running. To race with a moderate level of success, I need to do a shade more. Usually this means a couple of months of hard winter training. (According to the Higdon dictionary of athletic terms, 'running' becomes 'training' at about the point where it begins to hurt.) In the winter, I increase the length of my runs, and hurt a bit. Once a week, I get in a run of 15-20 miles. I use the Boston marathon as incentive.

"This Steady Training Pattern (STP) provides me with what might be best described as 'background.' I believe that a runner at the 90% level, with good background, can jump to a new plateau by a sudden incisive burst of training. I don't think he can maintain himself long on this plateau (the 95% level), but he can peak for certain races in this way.

"As an example, in 1970 I had gotten into passably good shape through a winter of long, easy training. During the early summer, I raced every weekend with moderate success. Then in August I began an intensive two-week



program of twice-a-day workouts. In the morning, I would run 4-8 miles steady. In the afternoon, I would do interval training on the track, running mostly 440s and 220s. I never did any more than 10 at a time, since another of my theories is that more than that number is wasting time and effort. At the end of the two weeks, I ran a 2:34:39 marathon—my best in many years.”

**FRANK MC BRIDE:** He seemed to be drifting away from the sport. McBride had raced quite successfully in college in the 1950s. Then he'd coached at Wayne State University in Detroit, and he quit running. Eventually he quit coaching, too. He slipped past his 39th birthday before awakening to the fact that his weight had “reached the upper limit compatible with a good self-image.” After the painful preliminaries, his enthusiasm flooded back. In the first half of 1971, Frank raced more than once a week, setting an over-40 record in the half-mile and ending the spree by finishing second to Bill Fitzgerald in the US Masters mile. After that race, McBride said, “I'm glad to be out of coaching, and even happier to be back to running.”

**Personal Data:** 5'9½”, 152 pounds; born July 15, 1930; lives in Detroit, Mich.; began running in 1970 at age 39.

**Best Veteran Times (all in 1971):** 880—1:58.8; mile—4:29.6; 2 miles—9:45.1; 3 miles—15:48 (15:16 on road); 6 miles—33:16; 10 miles—57:03.

**Training:** “After a year's gradual buildup, I won a master's mile in 5:01 (first race in 17 years) on Jan. 16, 1971, and began two-a-day training sessions the next day. I have continued the double sessions since. My morning workout is 8 x 260—the first four at about three-fourths speed and the last four at near top speed. The noon or evening sessions vary greatly, but in general have been speed interval training. Typical examples are 20 x 220 at 29 seconds or 6 x 440 at 60. I occasionally substitute a 3-5-mile run (estimated six-minute pace) for the second interval workout. An important part of my training has been races. Between January and July 1971, I competed 35 times at distances from 440 yards to 10 miles.

“More recently I have begun to increase the number of long runs—10 or 15 miles. I intend to increase mileage from 45-50 per week to about 75 in preparation for a possible marathon.”

**JIM MC DONAGH:** “How does he do it,” running observers remark. That can be taken either as a question or a statement of disbelief. The wispy little Irishman simply refuses to grow old. He won't even compete in purely veterans races, not yet feeling the need to. At 43, Jim acquired US citizenship and made the country's Pan-American Games marathon team. He ran the best time of his life (2:28:46) three years later. And a year after that he ran his best 50-mile (5:36:52). How *does* he do it?!

Jim himself doesn't provide many clues. He gives only the bare bones of his history. Former competitive cyclist . . . a runner in his youth . . . resumed running in 1964 when his weight had ballooned to 165 pounds . . . trains at “nine-minute miles. I really enjoy it that way.”

This description doesn't tell much. But whatever it is that makes distance runners fast for a long time, this man McDonagh has discovered a huge supply.

**Personal Data:** 5'4”, 123 pounds; born Feb. 4, 1924, in Ireland;

lives in Bronx, N.Y.; began running in 1964 at age 40.

**Best Times:** marathon—2:28:46 (1970); 50 miles—5:36:52 (71).

**Training:** McDonagh has said simply that he runs about 15 miles a day at easy paces. However, his friend Ted Corbitt elaborates on Jim's marathon preparation. "Morning runs are generally 13 miles, including bursts (three-fourth speed) for 50-60 seconds, and then jogging. He also includes fast pick-ups for seven to eight seconds followed by jogging; noon—3-4 miles, steady; evening—6-8 miles, either steady or as in the morning. On weekends, he runs 20 miles (or 20 miles Saturday and 15 miles on Sunday). He once ran a 65-mile workout while preparing for the London-Brighton (double marathon) event."

**PETER MUNDLE:** When talking of veterans track racing, 1968 was the Dark Ages. Over-40 competition was just getting warmed up then, and hadn't yet attracted much attention—or many top runners. Peter Mundle enters. And as he does, he changes concepts, training like younger runners and racing like them as well. Mundle proved to be a prototype for future veterans. The overwhelming dominance Pete enjoyed in 1968 slipped away. It wasn't that he had slowed, however. He had pulled others up to his level. Few runners yet can match his persistent racing and training pace, or the overall set of performances that result.

**Personal Data:** 5'11", 140 pounds; born May 20, 1928; lives in Venice, Calif.; began running in 1943 at age 14.

**Best Veteran Times:** 880—2:05.0 (1971); 1500m—4:13.9 (70); mile—4:26.2 (69); 2 miles—9:28.0 (70); 3 miles—14:48.5 (71); 5000m—15:37.7 (71); 6 miles—31:17 (69); 10,000m—32:38.2 (71); 10 miles—52:44 (69); hour—11 miles 626 yards (69); marathon—2:41:49 (70).

**Training:** (Mundle was a long-time pupil of Mihaly Igloi, and since Igloi's departure for Greece has taken over coaching Igloi's Santa Monica Track Club. Pete still employs the methods of the famed Hungarian coach, both with himself and those he trains.) "I do about 90 miles a week of interval training—intervals of 100, 220, 330, 440, 550, 660, and 880 at various speeds. Each week includes four days of intervals and three days of easy training—long easy runs. In my opinion, interval training permits one to have the most control of training toward good conditioning, and is most efficient."

**ARTHUR WALSHAM:** American veterans are only beginning to step into international competition. Tom Sturak, an *RW* contributor, was the only US runner to try the worldwide 25-kilometer championship in 1971, and he returned raving about the ability of the Europeans. Particularly impressive, he said, was Arthur Walsham of England, winner of that race. Americans will see more of him in 1972 at the international marathon championship. Or perhaps won't see him at all, judging by his times. Arthur ran a 2:21:38 marathon as a 40-year-old, and he says emphatically, "I expect to run faster."

**Personal Data:** 5'10½", 143 pounds; born June 22, 1930; lives in Stockport, England; began running in 1950 at age 20.

**Best Veteran Times:** 3000m—8:38 (71); 5000m—14:58 (70); 10,000m—31:41 (track, 71; 30:44 on road, also in 71); 10 miles—52:52 (track, 70; 51:23 on road, 71); 20 kilometers—1:02:39 (71); 15 miles—

1:17:49 (70); 25 kilometers—1:22:39 (71); marathon—2:21:38 (71); 30 miles—2:51:37 (70).

**Training:** “I consider I have wasted many years flogging myself on the track, doing interval training. Now I do very little speedwork; mostly distance running at just under six-minute mile pace. A typical weekly schedule: Sunday—20-23 miles; Monday—15 miles; Tuesday to Thursday—6½ miles in morning, 11 miles in evening; Friday—6½ miles in morning, 5 miles in evening; Saturday—race.”

**VIRGIL YEHNERT:** Two American veterans have broken 2½ hours for the marathon. You’ve already met Jim McDonagh. Yehnert is the other. The two offer a strong note of encouragement to all runners who’ve turned (or returned) to the sport recently, as neither had slogged up through the years to reach that mark. Yehnert, an Ohio school teacher, was 37 when he decided to become a marathoner. “At the start,” he says, “I had a very difficult time getting more than six miles in one training session.” Four years later, he realized his “long-time dream of running in Boston.” Yehnert ran 2:28:27—an American over-40 record.

**Personal Data:** 5’11¾”, 145 pounds; born Feb. 4, 1929; lives in Akron, Ohio; began running in 1966 at age 37.

**Best Veteran Times:** Mile—4:48 (1969); 3 miles—15:15 (70); 6 miles—31:41 (69); 10 miles—54:40 (70); 25 kilometers—1:26:27 (70); 30 kilometers—1:44:54 (70); marathon—2:28:27 (70).

**Training:** “Training sessions are from five to 20 miles, at an even pace of 6:30-7:00 per mile. I feel better on longer workouts at about 6:45 per mile than on shorter and faster ones. My average mileage for a week is about 80. I feel I am in better condition if I get 100 miles consistently, but that is difficult to maintain. I do all my running on the road and very little speedwork except for occasional pickups (half-mile to mile) thrown into the workout at random.”

# • FIFTIES A new incentive for staying sharp.

Veterans running is growing from the bottom up. The 40s group is biggest, but age doesn't stand still. New runners are continuously pushed from below into the 50s, and that category gets stronger. The 50s group grows at a more deliberate pace. But it can't help but grow.

**TED CORBITT:** Corbitt has made a career of looking beyond established limits. By age 40, standard marathons were old hat to him. He went looking for new challenges, and the natural choice was ultra-marathons. Trouble was, there weren't many available in the US in the early 1960s. That didn't bother Ted. He and his New York running buddies organized their own, and traveled to England for more. Ted ran several London-Brighton 52½-milers, the best coming when he was 49. A month later, he ran 100 miles on the track. He ran his best 50 at age 50. Unfortunately, a recent back injury did to Ted what age and distance couldn't—slowed him down.

**Personal Data:** 5'9¼", 134 pounds; born Jan. 31, 1920; lives in New York City; began running in 1936 at age 16.

**Best Veteran Times:** 10 kilometers—35:08 (60); 10 miles—54:15 (60); marathon—2:32:30 (64); 50 miles—5:34:01 (70); 100 miles—13:33:06 (69).

**Training:** "Current training is limited due to recurrence of a back injury suffered in February 1971. When able to train, the pattern is similar to that used over the past 10 years, when I've been ultra-marathon oriented. Currently I'm running five days a week, usually to work. I will select one of several courses (11-15 miles; once a month 20 miles), running all around eight minutes a mile.

"I expect to double or triple this mileage as soon as health permits. Will run around 100 miles a week when preparing for a marathon and 200 miles a week in preparing for ultra-marathons. At this time I will occasionally do hard running (2-5 miles) at lunch time, and some speed and hill work. For ultra-marathons I often do 20 miles on the way to work and 30-mile or longer workouts on weekends."

**RAY GORDON:** Gordon finds himself faced with a dilemma common among trackmen in their 50s. He wants to keep running fast. He knows how it's done. But can he stand the pounding that a fast half-mile demands? Ray says, "At 53 I have just about reached the time when I can no longer endure the pain in my legs that results from speedwork. Yet one cannot run the 440 under 60 seconds or the 880 under 2:20 unless he trains with speedwork." Ray can't resist, though. He says he'll give himself "one more year" to lower his bests of 56.5 and 2:09.5—speedy running indeed.

**Personal Data:** 6'0", 162 pounds; born May 30, 1918; lives in Washington, D.C.; began running in 1964 at age 46.

**Best Times:** 440—56.5 (1971); 880—2:09.5 (68); mile—4:52.0 (68); 2 miles—11:09.0 (69).

**Training:** "I divide my training into two categories: (1) to maintain in condition, and (2) peaking for particular races. To maintain conditioning, I run three to five miles, four times a week and compete on the weekend. Only rarely do I run over five miles in training, although I compete in races up to 25 kilometers.

"During the summer I compete in as many track meets as possible. My favorite distances are 440 and 880. To train for these races, I run interval 440s and speedwork. Intervals are run in series of six at about 75 seconds, or eight at 80. I often do 25-35 sprints of 120 yards on the grass. A speciality of mine when peaking for the mile is to run easily for 1½ miles, then run as hard as I can for a mile, and finish with an 880 jog. Running hard when one is tired really develops stamina."

**PAUL JARRETT:** Dr. Jarrett, a psychiatrist, didn't begin running with illusions of future greatness. He was simply 40 pounds overweight. He began with extreme caution and low aims. Why hurry, he thought. "I had plenty of time because I wasn't going anywhere nor trying to keep up with anybody, and I never dreamed for the first 18 months of getting into competitive running." But a funny thing happened as his weight fell and his distance picked up. He found he could "pound the blazes out of the pavement for miles" and liked it. The feeling inevitably led him into competition, and an eventual sub-2:50 marathon shortly before his 50th birthday.

**Personal Data:** 5'11", 135 pounds; born April 16, 1921; lives in Miami, Fla.; began running in 1965 at age 44.

**Best Times:** marathon—2:49:58 (1970); 2:52:40 since turning 50.

**Training:** "My daily runs are about eight miles, occasionally 10, with 14-18 miles once a week. Very slow warmup for the first one or two miles (9-10-minute pace), then conversational pace (7:30-8:00). Sometimes I run the last mile or two at 6:30 pace, but only if body and mind signal the urge. I'm always trying to make it not unpleasant so that I won't obtund the urge to keep this hobby a way of life. I experimented a little with interval work and have felt it probably improves performance. But it isn't sociable and (probably of even greater influence to me) I have avoided it because I think I would break down sooner—i.e., shorten my running career. I'm interested in five years from now, not just this year."

**PAUL REESE:** Reading what Reese has to say, you'd think he is a hobbling gentleman who has to fight to keep going; or that he is more philosopher than competitor. He details a history of ailments—asthma, collision with an automobile, severe hamstring pull. He says he has a rough time doing 10 miles a day at what he calls "meditation pace." Before giving Paul a handicap, though, take a look at his marathon progression the last few years: 2:58 at age 52; 2:51 at age 53; 2:49 at age 54. A nice way for a runner to grow old. "T'aint how old you are," Reese says, "but how you are old."

**Personal Data:** 5'10", 140 pounds; born April 17, 1917; lives in Sacramento, Calif.; began running in 1964 at age 47.

**Best Times:** marathon—2:49:46 (1971); 32 miles—3:50; 50 miles—6:38.

**Training:** "My training is meditation running at a pace somewhere between eight and nine minutes per mile. 'Meditation running' because I sashay along thinking of everything but running. I try diligently, with about an 85% success factor, to log 10 miles per day, which usually requires two workouts."

**GEORGE SHEEHAN:** Dr. Sheehan, in his various roles (physician, thinker, writer and runner), has probed into the heart and soul of the sport. The doctor's energy and versatility are astounding, both as a writer and runner. He writes both medical and philosophical columns for *Runner's World*, giving his services freely. As a runner, he's likely to run the Boston marathon one week and the Penn Relays' veteran mile the next, with equal skill. Whether prescribing cures to running ailments or philosophizing in general, Sheehan speaks from experience. He has a lot to talk about.

**Personal Data:** 5'9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", 143 pounds; born Nov. 5, 1918; lives in Rumson, N.J.; began running in 1963 at age 44.

**Best Times:** mile—4:47.8 (1969); 2 miles—11:07 (69); 10 miles—1:01:45 (67); marathon—3:02:31 (70).

**Training:** "Five or six days a week, I run an hour of LSD, also taking one day off a week and running a race every week or two. Training for the mile, I have to use speed work every once in a while.

"In the beginning I used to run two miles daily at a good clip, and I moved up to five miles at close to race pace. Since then I have experimented with a variety of procedures. I still think the fast five-mile may be one of the better methods, but I enjoy LSD and do a lot of thinking en route. One thing sure is that interval speedwork is something that has to be used with care. Staleness occurs gradually and subtly, but once it occurs you are in big trouble. I overtrained two years ago and was no good for two months".

# • SIXTIES

No time to think  
of retirement.

Running can be particularly valuable to a man in his 60s. At a time in life when comfortable routines and constructive employment are slipping away, when retirement leaves him with too much time on his hands, he has the sport to cling to. It keeps him busy, active and thinking young.

**BILL ANDBERG:** Dr. Andberg had just finished his second duel with Norman Bright at the 1971 US Masters meet, and had a second hard-won gold medal in his hand. Before this, 60-year-olds hadn't run close to these times—5:18 in the mile, and sub-6:00 pace in the 10,000. (Bill also won the 5000.) When asked about the training that led up to this, Andberg was almost apologetic. "Seventy miles a week is the most I've done. I don't know how anyone can do 100. I can't do any more than I do. Some days, if I feel tired, I may only go two miles. I don't believe in working too hard. I wonder sometimes how long these guys who run a hundred miles a week are going to be running. I've seen a lot of them come and go." Andberg is rationing his effort for a reason: "I have a lot more races ahead of me."

**Personal Data:** 5'7", 130 pounds; born June 8, 1911; lives in Anoka, Minn.; began running in 1966 at age 55.

**Best Times:** mile—5:18.8 (1971); 5000m—17:42 (71); 10,000m—37:12 (71); marathon—2:51:44 (70).

**Training:** "I run 6-12 miles daily, starting slowly, then pushing. I run this way because I don't have too much time. . . I feel I have never really been in condition for a marathon. I should do long slow distance work but never seem to get around to it. My ambition is to be number one in the 60-and-over class at the 1972 international veterans marathon, so I will try to run longer practice sessions."

**JOHN KELLEY:** Kelley should write a book on "Growing Old Gracefully While Staying Competitive." Whatever the answer is, Ol' Johnny has found it. He ran his first race in 1928. In 1935 he won the Boston marathon. Ten years later he won it again. At age 54, he ran a 2:37 race. In his 60s, he was still breaking three hours. With nearly a half-century and 1000-plus races behind him, Kelley can still say, "I run to enjoy it."

**Personal Data:** 5'6", 124 pounds; born Sept. 6, 1907; lives in Watertown, Mass.; began running in 1928 at age 20.

**Best Veteran Times:** marathon—2:37:42 (1962); (Kelley's all-time best was 2:30:40 while winning the 1945 Boston marathon; he ran 2:58:40 at age 61, and a 5:18 mile that same year.)

**Training:** "I run alone—run how I feel after a hard day's work. I run an hour a day at various speeds. It's all the time I can spare from my work and my painting (I am an artist); I sing too! I believe in *some* speedwork—not all LSD. I run on a Tartan track, roads, golf course, beach, through the woods, etc. I run for fun. . . *enjoy it!*"

**MONTY MONTGOMERY:** Kelley and Montgomery approached running from entirely different directions. But with results much the same. Monty never considered running until 1967. His life had been hardly sedentary, however. He had competed in bicycling, but gave up the sport for health reasons—"too many crashes!" Accustomed to a life of endurance exercise, he couldn't shake the habit. Monty, already pre-hardened to this sort of thing, adapted to running as if he'd been doing it all his life. He ran close to three hours for the marathon within months of starting, and has seldom been slower than three since.

**Personal Data:** 5'7", 118 pounds; born July 14, 1906; lives in Sherman Oaks, Calif.; began running in 1967 at age 61.

**Best Times:** marathon: 2:54:56 (on certified course in 1969; 2:53:53 on a reportedly short course, 1971; also 2:55:45 and 2:56:02 on full-length courses, 1971).

**Training:** "I run 70 miles per week at eight-minute pace."



At 60, Bill Andberg still can turn on the speed. He goes 5:18 for a single mile and can average better than 6:00 for six of them.



# • SEVENTIES Exploding some old-age myths.

Dr. Alex Comfort, an expert on aging, calls age 70 "the end of vigor altogether." But you wouldn't guess it by looking at Fred Grace, Noel Johnson or David Fowler—all past 70 and still bounding along like teenagers.

**DAVID FOWLER:** The retired army colonel hadn't babied himself during a long and vigorous life, and he brought a battered body into running when he started at age 63. A shell fragment lodged in his left knee during combat in Italy. A back injury eventually required surgery for the removal of a disc. He'd suffered with ulcers. Nonetheless, running suited him, and at the spry age of 71 he set a world age-group record in the half-mile. His secret he says is, "In training I never push toward exhaustion. For my own needs, I believe my program is a good one. Very seldom do I have any sore or pulled muscles or lameness in the feet; never any corns, bunions, ingrown toenails, blisters; very seldom any nausea during or after the workout."

**Personal Data:** 5'10½", 144 pounds; born Sept. 19, 1898; lives in San Diego, Calif.; began running in 1961 at age 63.

**Best Times:** 100—15.2 (1970); 220—35.0 (70); 440—1:24.1 (70); 880—3:08.6 (70); mile—7:25.1 (70); 10,000m—1:00:51 (71); 15 miles—2:35:26 (70).

**Training:** "I usually train six days each week, getting up at 4:30. Most of the time I 'jog-walk' six miles, usually between 56 and 59 minutes. At least once per week I will walk five miles hard."

**FRED GRACE:** "I've got to be doing a few things right," Fred says. "I've been training since I was about 14, but have never been in as good condition as I am now at 73." Good condition for Fred doesn't mean merely staying out of the wheelchair. It means not needing glasses, never having a cold or headache, cruising through a 20-mile run before breakfast and doing a thousand situps after dinner. His fitness formula always has included weight training and strict dietary control. But running is a rather recent addition. "I began at 65½," Grace says, "I was practicing judo but was not allowed to compete because I was 'too old'."

**Personal Data:** 5'4", 125 pounds; born Dec. 26, 1897; lives in Los Angeles, Calif.; began running in 1963 at age 65.

**Best Times:** "I keep no records." (But others do. Fred ran a 3:38:45 marathon at age 69, and did 3:45:20 at age 72. Although he scoffs at his short-racing ability—"I'm the only man in the world who can get lapped in a 220"—he ran six miles in 42:38 as a 73-year-old. Fred is proudest, though, of his three-day 100-mile; total time—19:21:18.)

**Training:** "At present I'm running (on hills) 15, 20 and 25 miles, and taking a day off. Then I run 25 and 30 or 35 and take a day off. (My reason for taking two days off a week is to keep my weight at 125. On a 25-35 mile day I drop five to seven pounds. On my off days I bounce right back to 125.)

"I'm considering running 100 miles on the track. To make it I'll have

to up this mileage considerably. The only problem I foresee is how to overcome monotony."

**NOEL JOHNSON:** Johnson, the last man in the booklet, perhaps deserves more credit than any other. He started running on Jan. 1, 1970—age 70½ years. "I made one-fourth mile in three minutes," he recalls. He persisted, his weight dropping from 150 to 132, his pulse from 76 to 54. Within six months he could go three miles comfortably in 8½-minute pace. A year later, he finished a marathon. "I have learned a lot about running this past 18 months—the hard way," he says. "Next year I will challenge anyone my age at any distance."

**Personal Data:** 5'7", 132 pounds; born July 7, 1899; lives in San Diego, Calif.; began running in 1970 at age 70.

**Best Times:** Mile—6:55 (71); 2 miles—16:55 (70); 5000m—25:10 (71); 10,000m—52:55 (71); 20 kilometers—1:47:48 (71); marathon—4:48:48 (71).

**Training:** "I run 100-150 miles per month—6-12 miles every other day at nine minutes per mile. My legs are just getting in condition so I can start to increase distance. The first year I had lots of sore legs.

"I am not in a hurry as I want to reach my peak when I am 75—three more years."

# • WOMEN

Breaking through  
the sex barriers.

Yes, women too. Slowly, hesitantly, women over 40 are stepping into distance racing. The good effects are the same with them as with the men. But the ladies have to break through added social traditions and prejudices to sample running's good effects. Those few who've broken through say it was well worth the effort.

**MARY LUCILLE BOITANO:** A woman who runs typically does it with strong family support. With the Boitanos, running is a total family affair, and Mrs. Boitano couldn't easily have avoided it. She, husband John and children Michael and Mary Etta run together. They used to race together, too. But now that the kids are veterans—Mike is 9, Mary Etta 8—they seek their own levels. While the youngsters are off chasing age-group marathon records, Mrs. Boitano settles back to enjoy her own running. It has been good to her, ridding her of high blood pressure, a kidney infection and 25 extra pounds that no woman, any age, wants to carry.

**Personal Data:** 4'11", 105 pounds; born July 8, 1923; lives in San Francisco, Calif.; began running in 1968 at age 44.

**Best Time:** marathon—4:38:16 (1970).

**Training:** "We do long slow running—one day flat work and the next day hill work. For marathons, we train in the morning on hills and the afternoon on the flat. Weekly miles are 30-50 depending on the race."

**MARCIE TRENT:** John Trent is a perpetual motion machine of a man. The big, friendly Alaskan loves to run, and he seemingly wants every other Alaskan to share that feeling. He's a non-stop runner and promoter, and in 1968 his wife figured if she was going to see him she'd have to share more fully in his hobby. She soon found he was into a good thing, and got almost as involved as John. Now, at an age when most women get sensitive about that subject, Marcie points out that she's 53 and the oldest woman marathoner in the country. She carries her age proudly and gracefully.

**Personal Data:** 5'4", 110 pounds; born Dec. 22, 1917; lives in Anchorage, Alaska; began running in 1968 at age 50.

**Best Times:** Hour—7.7 miles (71); 30 kilometers—2:51 (71); marathon (Equinox)—4:40:03 (70).

**Training:** "I run at least four miles at between seven- and 10-minute pace, non-stop when possible. Longer runs in summer (6-7 miles) once a week; this is conditioning for the marathons. I train for speed when I feel physically capable, but not more than once a week. Longer runs are made on a course with hills—lots of up and down."

# WORLD AND U.S. RECORDS

BY JACK SHEPARD

(World marks listed first, then US if different; times to Oct. 1, 1971.)

## AGES 40-49

Event	Time	Name (Country)	Site	Date
800m	1:58.6	Egisto Pederzoli (42, It)	Geneva, Switz.	23 Aug 56
	1:58.8	Frank McBride (40, US)	Detroit, Mich.	1971
880y	1:58.8	Frank McBride (40, US)	Detroit, Mich.	1971
1500m	4:13.6	Bill Fitzgerald (45, US)	Los Angeles	20 Jun 70
Mile	4:26.2	Peter Mundle (40, US)	Los Angeles	30 Jan 69
3000m	8:22.0	Alain Mimoun (41, Fr)	St. Maur, Fr.	6 Jun 62
	8:57.0	Peter Mundle (42, US)	London, Eng.	12 Aug 70
2 miles	9:28.0	Peter Mundle (42, US)	Woodland Hills	8 Jul 70
3 miles	14:22.0	Alain Mimoun (43, Fr)	Colombes	12 Jul 64
	14:48.6	Peter Mundle (43, US)	Woodland Hills	14 Jul 71
5000m	14:22.0	Alain Mimoun (43, Fr)	Colombes	12 Jul 64
	15:37.8	Peter Mundle (42, US)	Van Nuys	6 Mar 71
6 miles	29:26.0	Fred Norris (40, GB)	New London	21 Jul 62
	31:17.0	Peter Mundle (41, US)	Goleta, Cal.	26 Jul 69
10,000	29:57.4	Alain Mimoun (43, Fr)	Cambria, Fr.	1 Aug 64
	32:37.8	Hal Higdon (40, US)	San Diego	2 Jul 71
10 miles	52:44.0	Peter Mundle (41, US)	Goleta, Cal.	26 Jul 69
Hour	11m 629y	Peter Mundle (41, US)	Goleta, Cal.	26 Jul 69
Marath	2:20:12	Erik Ostbye (46, Swe)	Stockholm	26 Nov 67
	2:28:27	Virgil Yehnert (41, US)	Boston, Mass	20 Apr 70
50 miles	5:36:52.6	Jim McDonagh (47, US)	New York	21 Feb 71
100 mi	13:33:06	Ted Corbitt (49, US)	Walton, Eng.	26 Oct 69
Steeple	10:50.4	Bill Stock (41, US)	San Diego	2 Jul 71

## AGES 50-59

Event	Time	Name (Age, Country)	Site	Date
800m	2:09.5	Ray Gordon (50, US)	San Diego	4 Jul 68
880y	2:09.5	Ray Gordon (50, US)	San Diego	4 Jul 68
1500m	4:42.2	Alan Waterman (51, US)	Los Angeles	20 Jun 70
Mile	4:47.8	George Sheehan (50, US)	Ithaca, N.Y.	Feb 69
2 miles	10:47.0	John Lafferty (50, US)	San Diego	20 Jul 68
3 miles	16:39.6	Cliff Bould (53, Aus)	San Diego	Jul 69
	16:44.0	Paul Hansen (50, US)	Lansing, Mich.	18 Sep 71
5000m	17:07.9	John Gilmour (52, Aus)	San Diego	3 Jul 71
	17:30.4	James Oleson (53, US)	San Diego	3 Jul 71
	17:30.4	Ace Salmon (50, US)	San Diego	3 Jul 71
6 miles	35:23.5	Paul Hansen (50, US)	Lansing, Mich.	28 Aug 71
10,000	35:42.8	John Gilmour (52, Aus)	San Diego	2 Jul 71
	38:05.6	James Oleson (53, US)	Los Angeles	19 Jun 71
Hour	9m 1201y	Bob Long (51, US)	Goleta, Cal.	25 Jul 70
Marath	2:37:42	John Kelley (54, US)	Yonkers, N.Y.	13 May 62
50 miles	5:34:01	Ted Corbitt (50, US)	Rocklin, Cal.	18 Oct 70

## AGES 60-69

Event	Time	Name (Age, Country)	Site	Date
800m	2:29.4	Bud Deacon (60, US)	Gresham, Ore.	17 Jul 71
880y	2:29.4	Bud Deacon (60, US)	Gresham, Ore.	17 Jul 71
1500m	5:12.4	Bud Deacon (60, US)	Los Angeles	19 Jun 71
Mile	5:18.8	William Andberg (60, US)	San Diego	3 Jul 71
2 miles	11:27.0	Norman Bright (61, US)	Eugene, Ore.	10 Jul 71
3 miles	17:42.6	William Andberg (60, US)	San Diego	3 Jul 71
5000m	17:42.6	William Andberg (60, US)	San Diego	3 Jul 71
6 miles	37:12.8	William Andberg (60, US)	San Diego	2 Jul 71
10,000	37:12.8	William Andberg (60, US)	San Diego	2 Jul 71
Hour	9m 361y	Ray Williams (62, US)	Goleta, Cal.	25 Jul 71
Marath	2:54:56	Monty Montgomery (63)	Culver City	7 Dec 69
50 miles	8:08:58	Walt Stack (63, US)	Rocklin, Cal.	11 Oct 70

## AGES 70 AND UP

Event	Time	Name (Age, Country)	Site	Date
800m	3:08.6	David Fowler (71, US)	San Diego	2 Jul 70
800y	3:08.6	David Fowler (71, US)	San Diego	2 Jul 70
1500m	6:32.0	Virgil Sturgill (72, US)	Knoxville	Mar 69
Mile	6:32.0	Virgil Sturgill (72, US)	Knoxville	Mar 69
2 miles	16:55.0	Noel Johnson (70, US)	San Diego	4 Jul 70
3 miles	23:35.0	Noel Johnson (70, US)	Los Angeles	19 Jun 71
5000m	25:10.0	Noel Johnson (71, US)	San Diego	4 Jun 71
6 miles	42:38.0	Fred Grace (73, US)	Irvine, Cal.	29 May 71
10,000	52:55.8	Noel Johnson (71, US)	Los Angeles	19 Jun 71
Marath	3:45:20	Fred Grace (72, US)	San Diego	10 Jan 70



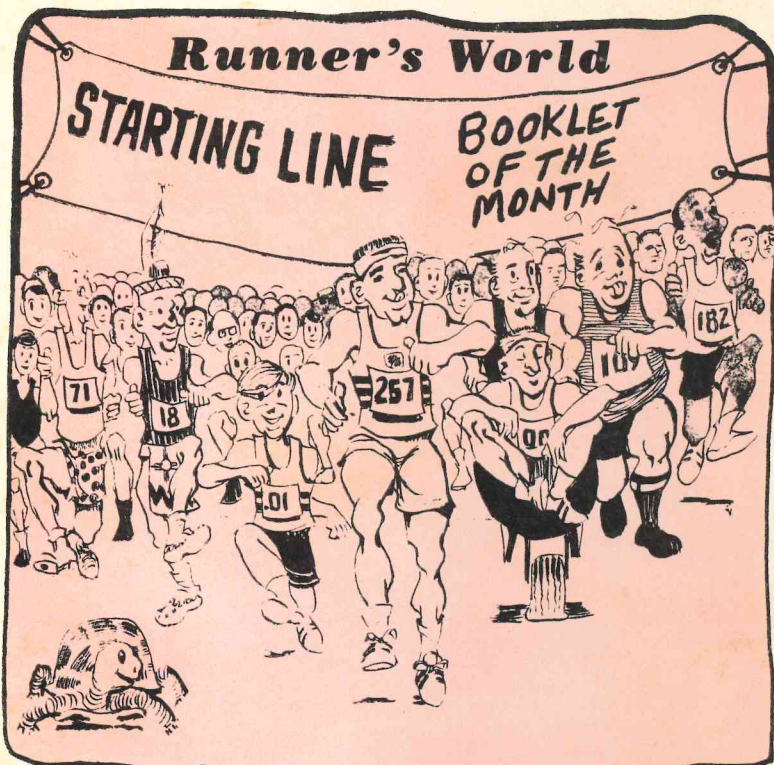
Two of the world's best veterans, Dave Power of Australia (left), and Erik Ostbye of Sweden. Ostbye bettered 2½ hours for the marathon after turning 50. Power is a one-time Olympian.

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