

THE great distance runners of yester-year would call former Yankton Buck and University of South Dakota Coyote one of their own. 2008 Olympic Marathoner Brian Sell, known for his mind-numbing weekly mileage totals, would welcome him as a fellow road warrior. Bill Rodgers and Frank Shorter would admire his will. Why? Because Matt Dewald is one tough runner. He's a throwback, you might say. A big-time mileage guy when others are looking for the "special short-cut"; browsing the internet for ways to "run a marathon in just five weeks". These shortcuts don't exist for Matt Dewald.

Dewald, who has a Doctorate in Physical Therapy, began running marathons only a month and a half after his final conference track meet for the University of South Dakota. In his first marathon, the Grandmas Marathon in Duluth, MN, Dewald finished an impressive 15th place overall and was the 5th American to cross the finish line.

What exactly drew Dewald to the marathon?

"Curiosity. I had always done big miles and was in good shape after my last season of college eligibility, so I decided to run Grandmas. I really never hit the 'wall', so I thought I had a good future in the event." Dewald recalled.

To be a competitive marathoner, there isn't a quick-fix: you can't fake fitness. Dewald tallied as much as 140 miler per week in his marathon build-ups. Besides the insane amount of calories, running 140 miles burns something else we all can't get enough of: *time*.

How does Dewald manage the commitment for such a task?

"It is such a mental sport. You have to have a few loose bolts to blast the last 10 miles of a 24 miler in under 55 minutes or run 12 x one mile on the track in the freezing cold..."

I have sacrificed girlfriends, school, money, time, and a lot of sleep. But, I would do it all again, and I will continue to do so."

(Continued on the next page)

old school marathoner



Matt Dewald makes the winning move on Moses Waweru during the final mile of the 2007 Monumental Challenge Marathon in Hill City, SD. (Photo submitted by Dewald)

(Cont.)

Dewald learned to fit training in whenever he could. In order to compete for the USD track team and finish Physical Therapy School, he had no other choice.

"I had one year of eligibility left my during my first year of PT School, and I wasn't about to give it up. The first semester was 22 credits, so I spent a lot of time in class and gross lab and I missed most of the practices. I always got the workouts from Kip (former USD distance coach Rob Kinnunen) and did my best to do them on my own. I usually combined my double days into singles. I ended up having to drive myself to many of the meets because I couldn't get out of classes to ride with the team. I also had some really crappy performances during this time because I was so worn down. But, as I said earlier, I would do it all again."

Although the loneliness of a long distance runner can seem never-ending at times, there have been many people that have helped Dewald along the way.

"I've had a combination of great coaches from Gotts (Dave Gottsleben, USD Head Track Coach) to Fitz (Current USD and former Yankton High coach Dan Fitzsimmons) to Munsen (Scott Munsen, former USD coach of the 1997 NCAA II National Championships XC team) to Kip to Hoyt (All-time USD Great, Matt Hoyt). Great training partners in Tony, Tyler, Nate, Niles, and Hoyt."

As for his devising his training, Dewald scours the internet, reads books on training theory and studies physiology research.

"Of course, I have used advice from others who have been there and done that: Hoyt, Kip, & Mike Dunlop (South Dakota marathon great). The greatest help has been from the encouragement of my fellow cult members...anyone who is reading this knows what I speak of..."

...being a runner is nothing glamorous, but the camaraderie, friendships and competition is a huge driving force for advancing my 'running career.'

Dewald: **MARATHONER**

Highlight Reel:

2:23:35 Memphis '07
6th/ 1st American

2:26:47 Grandmas '08
19th/ 2nd American

2:27:47 Grandmas '06
15th/ 5th American

2:31:38 Monumental Challenge
Overall Champion

Dewald offers advice for those serious about the marathon.

"My PRs have come when I incorporated everything I have learned: from track workouts (12x 1 mile at half marathon pace), tempo runs (last half of my long runs at marathon pace), hill repeats, to recovery days, good diet and sleep."

What does the future hold for Matt Dewald?

"A goal of mine is to run sub 2:19 and qualify for the 2012 olympic trials."

With his "old school" work ethic and unmatched dedication, our quarter says he does.

RUNsd.