

A lucky 7 in Striderland for 2014

35th Dam to Dam, the soul of Central Iowa running

You can get better with age. It's hard to do everything right but Dam to Dam succeeded and then some. The race harkens back to the best of Iowa running - grass roots, all-volunteer organizers and a sheer delight to run. While race day wasn't the best weather: runners fast and slow raved about Iowa's Distance Classic. Of special note, the 35th year entry fee was \$35, like every 5 year anniversary (ie 20th year, \$20 entry fee).

4 women qualify for 2016 Olympic Trials

Toeing the line February 15, 2016 in Los Angeles will be four Central Iowa women who have made the 2:43 B standard for the Olympic Marathon Trials. Drum role please - - Danna Herrick 2:40:11 at Grandma's, Lisa Uhl 2:40:51 at Chicago, Yelena Nanazaish 2:41:30 at California and Susie Duke 2:42:35 at Indianapolis have all made the standard. Danna ran the 2012 Marathon Trial and Lisa ran the 10,000 meter at the 2012 Olympic Games. This group is a record for Striderland women at the Marathon Trials.

He's a legend - - Phil Coppess is honored

The honorary race director for Dam to Dam declared, "I always tried to run as hard as I could". There is no doubt that Phil was the best runner ever to grace Iowa soil. His humility 30 years ago, remains the same today. He was the top US marathoner in 1985 and set the race record at Twin Cities Marathon, 2:10:05. Leading up to that fall marathon Phil ran Dam to Dam 20K in 59:23 and Capital Pursuit 10 mile in 48:00. Deservedly, in the fall Phil Coppess was inducted into the Iowa Association of Track Coaches Hall of Fame.

30th Year of Fitness Sports - the leader of running in the area

It's really time for all of us to trot on over (run if you like) to the store, club house, running news source - you name it - that has given so much to the sport of running. Steve Bobenhouse has been at the center of Striderland running selling shoes and the sport since 1984. Thousands of runners have been serviced not only for the best shoes but the thrill of running. It's time to thank Fitness Sports!

100x5K World Record - - what's that all about?

What happens when a 20 year old Johnston prep, Tyson Wieland, starts to think the unimaginable? Pretty easy. Recruit 100 runners, have them each run 5K on the track as a relay, then sit back hoping for a world record (actually sounds impossible). The relay started at 12 noon and the following afternoon Tyson fittingly was the 100th runner. The 100 person team set the record averaging 16:49 with 21 runners breaking the 16 minute barrier. A great idea captured the imagination for the best runners in Iowa.

ISU 2nd, Johnston 1st - - cross country champs

Iowa State women ran in the rarified air of the NCAA Division I Cross Country Championship, finishing 2nd. Their placing matched their 1985 team performance. Johnston High School girls placed even better. They won the Iowa High School Cross Country Championship topping their neighbor Urbandale High School who placed 2nd. Dowling Catholic High School previously had almost a lock on the championship, winning 6 of the last 7 years.

Where do we go from here?

Races have survived the color, mud, costumes, neon phase or craze. The general public including a large section of the running world think of races as crazy entertainment events or runs for charity. The sport of road racing is barely glowing . . . maybe it never was a blazing fire? Runners continue to train with the desire to set a personal record or push their limits as they age. The question remains, will there be affordable quality races for them to enter?

By Cal Murdock, observing Iowa Running for over three decades

