

2020 - Iowa Running History

Covid-19 tested the resolve of running throughout Iowa. Almost every big race cancelled, try to reschedule or went virtual. First year race director, Laura Torgerud succeeded in having one of the biggest virtual runs in the midwest with over 1800 runners recording a time. 72 year old Bill Rodgers finished in exactly 1 hour, he last won Bix 7 in 1981 with a time of 33:26. The pandemic slowed the running community but didn't stop it!



WR Elite 5k was the race of the year (pictured below). Fast runners eager to compete came from neighboring states. Compete they did as 18 men broke 15 minutes and 10 women broke 18 minutes. Perfect weather greeted this star studded field on a flat course in Des Moines Waterworks Park. All-time Iowa records were set . . . proof that competitive racing is alive & well.



times, Danna Herrick 2:39:59 and Brogan Austin 2:18:36 made Iowa proud (pictured to the right).

Teammates Shelby Houlian (Sioux City East prep) and Karrissa Schweizer (Dowling Catholic prep) continued the yearly battle on the track. At the Nike Bowerman Track Club Meet (July 10, Portland-OR)

Shelby set the 5000 meter American record in 14:23.92. Karissa was a couple seconds back under the America record too. The meet have no spectators and a limited number of athletes.



2021 - Iowa Running History

Blazing 10k Invitational was the “race of the pandemic”. Teams from Kansas City, Lincoln, Twin Cities, Chicago, Madison and hometown favorite Runablaze Iowa competed. The race had 10 men breaking 30 minutes in windy conditions and a surprise victory in the women’s race when the leader dropped out late in the race. Adding to the drama was a clean sweep of the team titles by the strong Second City Track Club out of Chicago. The men’s race was won by Minnesota Distance Elite runner Joel Reichow in 29:13 (14:49 at 5k). Teammate Dakotah Lindwurm won the women’s crown in 33:53, winning Grandma’s Marathon 2 months later. Iowans ran fast too with Austin O’Brien in 29:19 and Pasca Myers in 33:59, both 2nd 6 seconds back from the leaders.



Alex Wilson had a breakout season (pictured in the lead). In a span of a little over a month she set 4 personal records at track meets: Drake Relays 1500 in 4:11, South Dakota 800 in 2:05, New York City steeple in 9:32 and Portland 1500 in 4:07. Alex competed in the Olympic Trials steeplechase as she did in 2016. She competed sparingly on the roads but notched a 16:49 at Fifth Season 5k, 9th best time in Iowa record history.

End of an Era? The latest of the big-time Iowa races appears to be done, Living History Farms (1979-2019). The farm race considered the largest xc race in the US topped out with over 8000 entrants in 2010. Other races that have fallen to the wayside include Park to Park Half-Marathon in Cedar Falls (2001-2018)

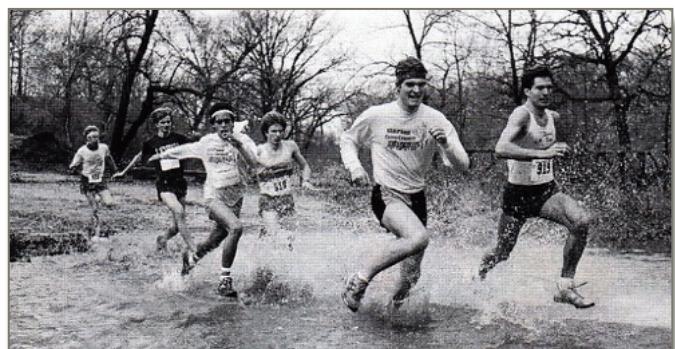
and Oktemberfest in Marshalltown (1986-2016). Both races were speedy with Park half-marathon race 18 men under 1:05 and 12 women under 1:15. The Oktemberfest, while never a big race had 4 Olympians toe the start line including a 28:52 by ISU great Jonathan Brown. A couple other races have burned out. Red Flannel Run in Des Moines has slide from 2000 entrants to a few hundred. The River Run in Iowa City has had the same fate, as it has been run only once the past 4 years.

Karissa Schweizer is the pride of Iowa. She burst onto the running scene as a collegiate during her junior year winning the NCAA cross country, indoor 5,000 meter and outdoor 5,000 meter. This year Karrissa took on

the 5,000 and 10,000 at the Olympic Trials, earning a silver in both races. At the extremely hot Tokyo Olympics she didn’t disappoint running smart finishing 11th in the 5,000 and 12th in the 10,000. A crowd of hundreds turned out for a watch party on Court Avenue in Des Moines during the wee hours to watch the 10,000 meters on a big outdoor screen



NCAA Cross Country crowned Iowa champions. Kassie Parker (pictured to the right) won the DIII women’s crown. The Gutenberg native running for Loras College was the 4th Iowa women from an Iowa college winning. Iowa State reached the podium finishing 2nd at the DI xc team championship. Their podium finishes include 1st-1989, 2nd-1990, 2nd-1991, 3rd-1993 and 1st-1994.



2022 - Iowa Running History

High School Cross Country shined with a couple of all-star performances. Dowling star Jackson Heidesch broke the 15 minute mark at state leading his team to their 8th state title in 12 years. Equally as impressive was Ballard star Paityn Noe shattering the girl's record running 16:49 at state. The two all-time iowa best didn't stop there, Jackson taking 5th at Nike nationals and Paityn 10th at Nike and 3rd at Champs Sport (Foot Locker) nationals. Amazing performances by two of the best!



Blazing 5k race was fast, unexpectedly. The fall race first held in 2020 was one of the few Midwest races for speedy runners. Could the race maintain

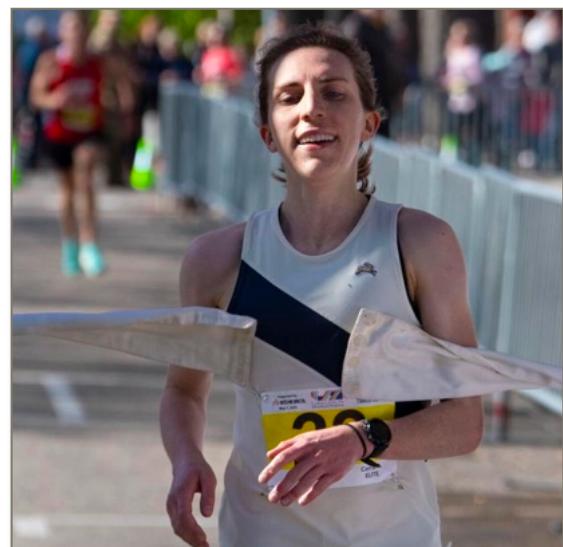
talented racers post pandemic with modest prize money? The answer was a resounding yes. 2019 NCAA cross country champion Edwin Kurgat won in 13:47 with 3 of the top 6 times in iowa history. The women were lead by Ashley Tutt in 16:17 with 2 of top 4 times in Iowa history. Both winners were former Iowa State runners.



Chicago Shamrock Shuffle 8k in March has always been a good measure of the best teams in the Midwest. Iowa has two great racing teams - Runablaze Iowa and Running Wild Elite. Runablaze Iowa won the battle taking 4th place with the best cumulative in time in their history, RWE was 3rd. Runablaze Iowa averaged sub 24 minutes with Austin O'Brien 23:51; Blake Whalen 23:56; Cody Baele 23:59 and Alec Baldwin 24:00.

Two of the team member continued to have a great season, Blake Whalen had a 2:19:27 marathon and won the DM Half-Marathon in 1:04:43. Cody Baele had two sub 50 minute 10 milers.

Emma Huston attacked the record books with one the best seasons for an Iowa women the past decade. She won Lincoln Marathon early in the year setting the Lincoln record, 2:38:19 and then later in the year scored the 5th best all-time by an Iowan, running a 2:34:31 at California International Marathon. In the fall she set records at DM Half-Marathon 1:13:48 and Capital Pursuit 10 mile 57:19. Emma had a record breaking year.



Ean Caskey was the master on the roads. He set master records in the 5k, 8k, 10 mile, half-marathon and almost the 10k. Mid-summer Ean ran Fifth Season in 25:44, then got serious in the fall: Lisbon 5k 15:20, Capital Pursuit 10 mile 52:46 and DM Half-Marathon 1:09:43. He almost set the 10k record at Drake Relays, scoring a 2nd all-time 32:09. Ean is now master of the Iowa men. Jenny Schulze owns most of the Iowa women's master records, turned 50 - now setting the grand master records in the 5k, 10 mile and half-marathon.



2023 - Iowa Running History

Callie Logue, Iowa State great, won the 4th Blazing 5k in 15:55. She broke the 31 year old Iowa record of another great Nan Doak-Davis that starred at Iowa. Callie and Nan were both 6 time All-Americans. The Blazing 5k started during

the pandemic as an outlet for fast runners looking for "safe" competition. Now it's the standard for a fast fall race. The 4 year race history is remarkable with 21 men sub 14:30 and 12 women sub 17:00.

Dowling Catholic did it again! They won their 9th High School cross country title in the last 13 years. They have been on the podium all but one year in the last 14. Dowling Catholic's dynasty tops 8 time winner Iowa City High's reign 1991-2000. The team has yet to match the Dowling Catholic girls streak of 5 consecutive titles, 2007-2011.



Iowa State men's cross country team the last 5 years is one of the best in the US. This year ranked 17th going into the NCAA championship, they impressed the field with a 5th place finish. They were 2nd in 2021 and 4th in 2019 with national individual champion Edwin Kurget.



Better with age - - Iowan Adam Bohach and Kenyan transplant Pasca Myers.

Adam, 39, tied his marathon best this year at Grandma's, 2:19:29 matching his 2016 Twin Cities Marathon. He was hoping for an Olympic Marathon Trials qualifies time 2:18, he came up short at two fall marathons one in the state of New York - 2:21 and the other in California - 2:20. Pasca, 37, tops the all-time women's state records. She ranks in the top 8 at 8 distances: 5k, 8k, 7 mile, 10k, 10 mile, 20k, half-marathon and marathon. This year she had over 10 top quality races at distances 5k to marathon. Her best race all-time was a victory at 2014 Grandma's Marathon, 2:33:45.

2024 - Iowa Running History

Happy 50th! Bix 7 started unassumingly in 1975 with 84 finishers. Bill Rodgers won in 1980 and the race has never been the same since. A unique course with 50 meters of elevation change, massive crowds, unbelievable spectators . . . the race has everything along the banks of the Mississippi. This year almost 10,000 finished the 7 mile trek, the best numbers in a decade. Iowa State great Wesley Kiptoo won the men's race. Bix was part of the prestigious PRRO circuit with \$50,000 in prize money.

Iowa State men were so close, 2nd place at the NCCA championship just 13 points from victory - amazing. They have now been on the podium (1st, 2nd, 3rd) twice the past 4

years. ISU golden years 1989-1994 they had 5 podium finishes including two championships 1989 and 1994.



7 is a lucky number for Iowa preps! Paityn Noe, Ballard high school prep continued her phenomenal running placing 7th at the NCAA cross country championship. Paityn was a

generational runner until Marissa Ferebee (pictured) broke her state xc record by 18 seconds (16:30.9) this year. Marissa also finished 7th at the Nike Cross Nationals, the premier gathering of the top high school runners. Noe is an Arkansas sophomore and Ferebee is a Pella junior.



It doesn't get a better, then it does. Karissa Schweizer at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics was 11th in the 5,000 and 12th in the 10,000. The Dowling Catholic prep struggled with injuries between Olympics but recovered just in time for the 2024 Paris Olympics. She didn't disappoint finishing 9th in the 5,000 (14:46) and 10th in the 10,000 (30:52). Karissa is in rarified air as one of the best Olympic careers for a US runner.



Cody Baele easily out distances the Iowa men on the roads with his best season to date. He started the year at Chicago Shamrock Shuffle 8k in 23:27 followed a month later at Washington DC Cherry Blossom 10 mile in 47:58. Running even splits he scored a 2:18:40 at Grandma's Marathon, #12 all-time Iowan. Sticking closer to home he ran 48:36 at the Capital Pursuit 10 mile and 1:05:30 at Des Moines half-marathon, winning both races.



The Blazing 5k in Des Moines Waterworks Park, the brainchild of Tyson Wieland, celebrated 5 years in style. Kassie Parker set the state record winning in 15:46. The race is truly blazing, shattering the all-time Iowa 5k record book with 19 men and 13 women ranked.

2025 - Iowa Running History

She is here, there & everywhere! Kassie Parker had one of the most prolific seasons of any Iowa runner, ever. She competed in over 10 national caliber races (think Bloomsday 12k, Gate River 15k, New Haven 20k, Manchester 4.7 mile, USATF xc, etc) and placed in the top 10 every time. The Gutenberg native and Loras grad was unbelievable including her best of the season a 1:10:22 at Indianapolis Half-Marathon. Kassie was also competitive in Iowa - 1st at Fifth Season, Capital Pursuit, Blazing 5k and a 7th at Bix. An amazing year!



What is the most popular race in Iowa? Easy answer, Turkey Trots. There were 20 Thanksgiving races spread out all over the state. 100s to 1000s of runners lined up on a cold windy November 27. Turkeys were everywhere.

Iowa racing teams shined in the windy city. The March Chicago Shamrock Shuffle 8k anoints the best teams in the Midwest. Iowa men teams were impressive - Fitness Sport Distance Project 3rd, Runablaze Iowa 8th, Running Wild Elite 9th and Crown Running 12th. The women were fast too, led by Fitness Sports Distance Project in 7th. Individually Gable Sieperda (FSDP) won in 22:56 and Cassie Parker (CR) was 6th in 26:32.

Adam Bohach is a running machine. His prowess at the marathon distance is legendary with a best of 2:19. Adam entered the master division (40+) capturing the oldest Iowa record set by Jim Streeby at the 1981 Grandma's Marathon. Adam beat the record by 3 minutes scoring a 2:28:11. Jim died two years ago after running over 82,000 miles in his lifetime.



Iowa State xc team was ranked #1 most of the season. At the national meet held in Missouri they finished 3rd. Along with their 2nd place podium finishes in 2021 & 2024 they are one the best teams in the nation.



Cody Baele had a breakout year. He crushed his marathon best by over 5 minutes running a 2:13:53 at Houston, early winter. 11 months later he did it again, a PR at the December Arizona Marathon Project with a 2:12:53, 4th best Iowa marathoner all-time.



10 years ago a 20 year old organized a relay in July, 100 runners each running 5k on the Johnston High School track. 28 hours later the 100 X 5k was history with runners averaging 16:49. Fast forward to today and Tyson Wieland is

the best at creating races for competitive runners. This season a spring 4 miler, summer 1 mile, fall Capital Pursuit 10 mile and the premier Blazing 5k. A modest amount of prize money, tireless promotion and recruiting the best in the Midwest is Tyson's formula that works successfully. The Blazing 5k reads like a who's who of runners that includes Olympians and the best in Iowa.

