

## Brian Walker

Brian has for many years been one of the fastest distance road racers in Manitoba. He and his identical twin brother Jeremy (their parents can tell them apart) have been running since they were in Grade 2, with the encouragement of their father, Tim, and the inspiration of their uncle Bob. Brian, Tim and Bob all practiced at the same accounting firm.

It was evident from a very young age that Brian had talent for endurance events, beginning with a sub-22 minute 5 km performance at Bird's Hill in grade 2! He continued in run clubs in school and university and steadily improved through those years. He also did Manitoba Marathon events with his family. Brian liked road running because of the large, enthusiastic crowds that participated, as opposed to 8 or fewer runners in a track race.

A highlight of Brian's career was his fastest marathon, 2:24:11, in Chicago in 2013. By chance, he was on the same pace as the leading women in that race, and so the motorcycles and cameras were there with him for much of the race, giving him extra inspiration. He has also done a 2:25 full. He has a 15:03 5 km, a 30:53 10 km, a 52:37 10 miler and a 1:09:55 half marathon.

Brian loves road running because of the camaraderie of the runners, before and after the runs. He particularly likes the Pat Riddell series (formerly Puma and then Pure) that launches the season each spring. He has had quite a few excellent WPS half marathons as well. The Manitoba Marathon is an annual favourite.

Despite all his success, Brian has had some adverse experiences on the roads. When he did his first Manitoba Full Marathon in 2009, he went out too fast and after running the first half in 1:19, he walked and jogged in with a time of 2:47 (good enough for 5<sup>th</sup> place). It would be 2 years before he attempted another full marathon.

There was also an Air Force half marathon where the organizers decided to start the race minutes before the scheduled start time. Brian and Bradley Keefe arrived to find the race well underway with a 7 minute head start on them. They passed everyone, including the leader at mile 7. His official time was 1:19, but on his watch it was 1:12. Nice to be passing all those runners though!

In 2019, Brian had not done much training because of an Achilles injury, but went to Minneapolis with his brother Jeremy and his friend and colleague, Bradley Keefe, to support them in the Twin Cities marathon.

Brian had not planned to run, but entered on a whim at the last moment, despite having only one ten mile run in training in the time leading up to this event. Brian ran it in 2:34 despite all of that, and finished ahead of Jeremy and Bradley. A week later, Brian won the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Half Marathon by almost a minute in 1:13:16. The talent on display at that 5km at Bird's Hill in Grade 2 was no mirage!