

Tim Walker

Tim Walker was born to be a sprinter, but an accident with his MRA Hall of Fame older brother, Bob, when he was in Grade 5 changed him from a fast twitch specialist to being an accomplished distance runner. The boys were tobogganing together and fell over one another, breaking Tim's leg. Although he recovered from the accident, he was left with one leg shorter than the other and was no longer one of the three fastest runners in his school. While attending River Heights Junior High, he tried the chalk oval painted on the school grounds and found an interest in running distance. When he entered Grade 10 at Grant Park High, he followed Bob into the Razorback Track Club coached by Dave Lyon and found himself doing some onerous workouts, such as 40 repeat intervals of 400M. The result of the intense training was that he was finishing in the top 10 in the City cross country meets. There were 5 runners from Daniel McIntyre High that owned the top 5 places, but in one race at Assiniboine Park, the Daniel team was late and Tim took advantage of the opportunity to place first, for his only win that season.

Tim ran track as well, specializing in middle distances from the half mile (880) to the mile (1500M). He won the inter-high championships in the intermediate 880 category, with a time of 2:06 at the age of 16. While Tim was running for the U of M Bisons, he lowered his 800M time to 1:59. For several years he ran the 1500M at the 4:20 level but was having difficulty improving his time. However, at the age of 19, after his first date with his wife Judy (his date for the social for Owen Thompson, another prominent runner of the time), he had a 1500 to run a few days later and she was coming out to watch. He ran a 4:08, bettering his PR by 12 seconds! This was clearly someone he needed in his life! Their union produced identical twin sons, Brian and Jeremy, who have become dominant figures on the road running scene here over the past 20 years.

One of his favourite stories is about Grant Park field day, spread over several days. He won the 440, the 880 and the 2 mile, and was the favorite to win the mile, being a sub 5 minute miler. On the night before the race, he came down with the flu and could hardly run. He went to the race anyway, competing against a cohort of 5 minute milers who were sure that they could never beat him due to his past superior performances. In order to have a chance to win, Tim slowed the pace and the competition followed suit behind him. At the end, Tim was able to out-kick the others for the last 200M, clocking a time of 5:25 which was exceptionally slow for all runners involved. There is definitely a mental element to

running!

Tim stopped running for several years in the 1970's but was inspired to come back to try the first Manitoba Marathon in 1979. On training that could not exceed 50 miles a week, because that was all his body could tolerate, he ran the first half of the race at 3 hour pace but then had to walk and jog due to blisters on his feet, finishing in 3:40. He was better prepared in 1980 and ran 2:50, 50 minutes faster! The next year when he ran 2:49, he was discouraged at only improving by one minute. When he started working with Bob at their father's accounting firm, the two would run 5 to 6 miles a day at sub-6 minute pace at lunchtime. When he ran the Athlete's Wear 10K in 1983, he ran his all-time best 33:56. A couple of weeks later, he completed the Manitoba Marathon in exactly even splits in 2:37:46, again his all-time best! Although he was not among the top finishers (32nd) with that time in that era, results show that in the last 20 years, his time would have placed him first 4 times, second 7 times and third 5 times. How times have changed!

Tim served as treasurer of the MB Track and Field Association for several years after which his accounting firm became auditors for MTFA for many years. Tim has been unable to run since needing his first of three hip replacements at the young age of 49!

Tim's favourite races were the Manitoba Marathon and the Athlete's Wear 10K, and his most satisfying achievement was that even-split 2:37 marathon in 1983, achieved on only 50 miles per week training. His worst experience was the 1979 Manitoba Marathon. Another negative experience was being late for the start of a 10K race by 30 seconds; on a positive note, he never passed so many runners in a race and finished in 34:10.

Tim's best 800M was 1:59; best 1500M was 4:08; best 5K was just over 16 minutes; best 10K was 33:56; best 10 mile was just over 56 minutes; best 15K was around 53 minutes; best 20K was just over 72 minutes; best half marathon was just over 1:16; and best marathon was that 2:37:46, now surpassed by both of his twin sons.