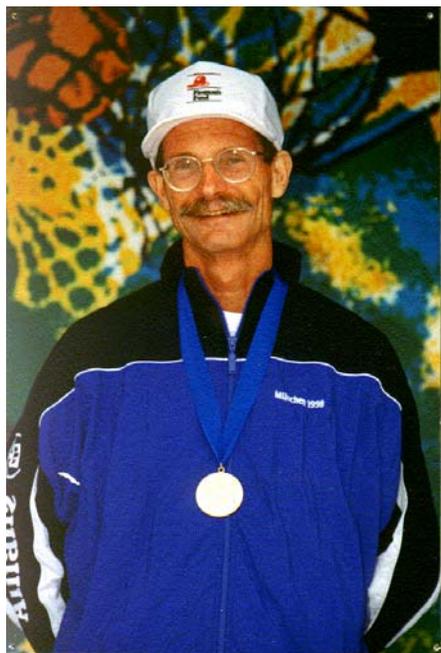# DAN PRESTON

b. 4/12/1942

Dan '409' Preston began running competitively at Saint Augustine High in San Diego but in 4 years never managed to break 5 minutes in the mile. He graduated in 1960 and, lacking funds for college, joined the army where he got another shot at the mile in basic training. This time he did it, 4:58—in combat boots! Later at San Diego City College, Dan ran and won his first collegiate cross country race and clocked his first track mile in 4:38. The next year he brought his mile time down to 4:15 and won himself a scholarship to UCLA.

A veritable track star for the Bruins, Dan set his PR in the mile as a junior in 4:09, which later earned him his Empire Runners Club nickname. As a college senior he set equally impressive PR's in the two mile and three mile races, in 8:58 and 13:51.

Dan graduated from UCLA in 1969 with a degree in economics and immediately flew with his new bride, Marilyn, to Washington, DC, where he began punching numbers for the Federal Highway Administration. In DC he discovered his life-long career as a computer programmer. In later moves to San Mateo and Novato, running took a back seat to work and raising a family.

In 1975, Dan and Marilyn bought a home in Santa Rosa. Dan commuted to his job with Fireman's Fund in Novato, but in Santa Rosa he became involved with two running clubs, first the Valley of the Moon Running Club and then a brand new one, called the Empire Runners.

Though work and raising his two kids dominated his focus, Dan gradually found time to run and train more seriously. As he entered his 50's he experienced a level of success to rival that of his college years.

Competing in the senior division, Dan was twice crowned PAUSATF Cross Country Series Grand Prix champion and Road Series champion once. He also starred as a corporate team member, twice representing Fireman's Fund at track competitions held in Germany.

Some of Dan's phenomenal times as a senior runner:
- Mile—4:59, age 56 (open division equivalent: 4:08.9)
- 3K—9:46.4, age 52 (open division equiv.: 8:24.7)
- 2M—10:31, age 52 (open division equiv.: 9:03)
- 5K—18:47, age 58 (open division equiv.: 15:22)
- 8K—29:14, age 56 (open division equiv.: 24:20)
- 10K—35:55, age 55 (open division equiv.: 30:09)
- 12K—42:26, age 53 (open division equiv.: 36:18)
- 10M—1:01:03, age 54 (open div. equiv.: 51:58)
- 1/2marathon—1:19:36, age 55 (open equiv.: 1:07:24)
- Marathon—2:52:16, age 53 (open equiv.: 2:30:10)

It could be argued that Dan's contributions to running as volunteer and coach surpass his exploits as a runner. As a member of the Empire Runners Club, Dan served as treasure and president. He set up the club website and membership database, edited the club newsletter, sat on innumerable committees, and regularly helped at club races. He also served for several years as a club representative to the PA/USATF, managed the PA's website and served as scorer for the PA Cross Country Series. Twice Dan was awarded as PA/USATF Volunteer of the Year. For several years Dan helped Bob Shor coach young runners with the Santa Rosa Express and for 2 years was assistant coach of Cardinal Newman High School track and cross country teams.

Dan and Marilyn moved to Vancouver, Washington, in 2008 to be with their daughter's growing family. As of this date, they still own their house in Santa Rosa. Maybe the northern winters will convince them to come back home. *January 2009*