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# RUNNING TIMES

DECEMBER 1998

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spring marathon



GUIDE

half marathon

Florence Griffith Joyner

1959-1998

often with a months-long training program for youngsters leading up to the event. And now Nike, a longtime supporter of youth fitness, has stepped up its involvement by teaming with the United States Conference of Mayors to launch the Mayors' Sports Challenge, a children's running program in 11 U.S. cities. The goal is to promote children's interest in running and make every child feel like a winner.

Nike kicked off the program at NikeTown in New York City, with Carl Lewis on hand to join in making the announcement and lead a group of local schoolchildren on a short run through Central Park. The plan is for volunteers and staff from NikeTowns, along with school personnel, to give running clinics and distribute NikeTown Running Starter Kits, which include a stopwatch, relay batons, starting blocks, a coaching manual and letters of encouragement from the local mayor and Lewis. "These kits are going to make the kids feel just like professionals, and that will motivate them," said Lewis.

The Mayors' Sports Challenge is the brainchild of Salt Lake City mayor Deedee Conradini, president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. "I've made a promise to focus on the health and well-being of the youth of our cities, and last year I approached Nike with the idea of an alliance benefiting kids."

The 11 cities involved are Atlanta; Boston; Chicago; Costa Mesa, CA; Honolulu; Las Vegas; New York; Portland, OR; Salt Lake City; San Francisco and Seattle. In June Lewis will attend each city's Mayors' Sports Challenge track meet, featuring races at distances from 50 meters to the mile. According to Nike's vice president for global retail Charlie Baker, the program hopes to involve 15,000 budding Carl Lewises.

FEATS

Try Keeping Up With This Jones

Last summer runner and activist Tom Jones succeeded in running 115 miles daily for 100 days straight, first from the Oregon-California state line to the Mexican border, and then from San Francisco to his hometown of Huntington Beach, CA.



Californian Tom Jones plans an NY-LA run to raise money for abused children.

Jones intended his accomplishment, which was monitored by the Guinness Book of World Records, to heighten awareness of child abuse and raise money for the Orangewood Children's Foundation in Orange County, CA. To that end he succeeded, appearing in more than 25 newspaper articles and dozens of television news segments and radio shows. He also received commendations from the mayors of San Francisco and Los Angeles.

A former abused child, Jones plans to embark on the Tom Jones Abuse Awareness Run Across America next April, running the same 15 miles daily, this time from New York City to Los Angeles. He hopes to raise \$250,000. For more information, or to contribute to the Orangewood Children's Foundation, call (888) 998-KIDS.

THE SEXES

The Longer Women Go...

Recent research conducted by the Sports Information and Science Agency in South Africa brought to light this interesting tidbit: Among women age 18 to 24, 10% feel that men's superior physical strength puts women at a disadvantage in sports. But among older women, only 5% believed that men being physically stronger is a disadvantage to women.

In distance running, men's greater size, muscle strength and hemoglobin concentration in the blood and lower body-fat percentage provide a distinct advantage; men's world records at all running distances up to the marathon are roughly 5% to 10% ahead of women's and this gap is not expected to narrow significantly. The male edge is eroded slightly, however, beyond the marathon distance. And women may be better than men at pacing themselves, particularly in ultra-long-distance events. Ann Trason, the 10-time winner of the Western States 100-Mile Endurance Run, typically comes on strong over the second half of the course, sometimes passing dozens of male competitors. Tim Noakes, an exercise physiologist at South Africa's University of Cape Town, notes that if a man and a woman run the first 10K of the 55-mile Comrades Marathon in the same time, the woman will win by an hour.



Which sex heeds the "don't go out too fast" advice best?