Danny Moon, Miler & USCAA Hall of Famer

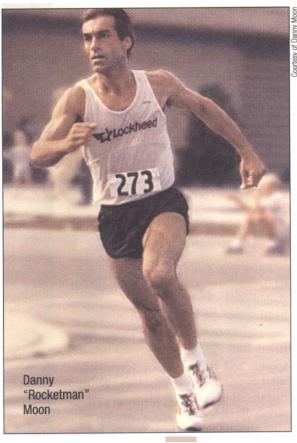
BY MARK WINIT7

At the start of the new year, many runners set their annual goals. For some it's a new PR, tackling a new race distance, peaking for a favored race, or simply to keep on running. For Danny Moon, 54, selecting a goal is no problem. It comes with the territory.

In 2002, he is focusing on running a mile race in under 5 minutes. Okay, an ambitious aim for many recreational runners, particularly if you're a "senior." But, there's a catch here. Moon has maintained a sub-5 streak for the past 21 consecutive years-a remarkable string, especially considering he entered 2002 with 123 sub-fives under his belt. That's an average of more than ten a year-in mile races only (no 1500meter conversions), all officially timed on measured tracks, or in mile road races.

Not suprisingly, one of Moon's role models is American mile record holder Steve Scott, who ran 136 sub-4 miles over a span of about 16 years. Although Scott recorded his share of 100-mile training weeks on his way to the top ranks among milers, Danny hasn't averaged more than 35 since high school (when he ran about 50). He now squeaks by on a modest 22 to 24 miles during a typical week.

Last year, Moon was inducted into the United States Corporate Athletics Association's Hall of Fame-a talented group of about 40 individuals recognized for their performances in USCAA's National Corporate Cup competition. Just call Danny Moon the Steve Scott of everyday runners.



VITAL STATS

Age: 54

Height: 5 feet, 6 inches Weight: 135 pounds

Residence: Lives in Saratoga, California with his wife, Madelyn, who is also a runner

Nickname: "Rocketman" (not only is he fast, he also works as a senior planner for the aerospace company Lockheed Martin)

First Mile Race: 5:45 as a 15-year-old in gym class at Santa Cruz (Calif.) High School on no training.

PRs: Mile: 4:35, 220: 23.9, 440: 53.6, 800m: 2:03.5, 10K: 33:58 Marathon: 2:59:28 (tethered as part of a centipede)

USATF Club Affiliation: West Valley Joggers and Striders

Corporate Team Affiliation: Lockheed Martin

ContributionsNolunteerism: National team co-captain for Lockheed Martin's corporate running team. Serves on the Board of Directors for the United States Corporate Athletics Association and is Vice President of the Bay Area Corporate Athletics Association (BACAA), a regional affiliate of USCAA. Coached the Cupertino Yearlings, a girls' track and field club, and founded the Santa Clara Valley Golden Girls' Club.

Quirks: Annual ocean cruises where he circles 5-miles on the deck with Madelyn every morning. Owns eight tuxedos from these cruises, all of different colors, which he sometimes wears to road races.

On the Mile Distance: "It's a distance that intrigues and grabs me. I've always felt comfortable with it, and I've always been able to pace myself well. I also just love being on the track. I ran my first sub-5 mile, a 4:58, as a high schooler in 1965 at the Hollister Relays. I didn't start running again until 1975, and in 1980 I ran under five again at an all-comers meet. That's when the string started."

Most Memorable Mile: "At an all-comers meet in Los Gatos, Calif., I ran 4:47 at the age of 50. A buddy of mine, Brad Holbrook, and I kept trading off the lead for the whole race. On the final straightaway, youth won because Brads about 20 years younger than me. It's a race I've visualized over and over again-a lot of fun."

Most Forgettable Mile: "It happened early last year. Again, I was running in an all-comers race, this time with a bunch of high school kids. I was coming down the stretch with the kids, looking for about a 5:06. About 25 meters before the finish, my legs just went out from under me. I rolled over, got up, and finished. It was

one of my most embarrassing moments."

Training Regimen: "I've never run many miles a week-about 34 in the past. When I started dating Madelyn, in 1987, it dropped to the mid 20s and it's pretty much stayed there. I used to gear my training specifically for the mile just leading up to, and during, track season. I could run sub-5s and sub-60-second quarters pretty easily. When I turned 50, it became more difficult. I found I needed to stay in tip-top shape year around.

Last year, my very supportive training partner, Rich Stiller, and I figured out that running 400- and 800-meter interval workouts throughout the year-instead of just during the season-is the key for me. Those workouts give me the extra strength and stamina to hold sub-5 pace over the last lap of a race. Now my focus is to try and run a sub-5 mile whenever I can get it during the year. It doesn't matter which season."

Other Distances: "These days, I race 400 meters to 5K, in order to keep within the mile range. I'll race an occasional IOK, but won't go out of my way to do it. And training for the mile definitely helps when I do get into a 5K. Recently, I ran 18-flat and was pretty happy with that."

Life After Sub-5: "My goal is to keep running under five as long as I can. If I can do it until I'm 60 years old, it would be great. After that, I'll see how many years I can go sub-6."

Running Philosophy: "Run for fun. That's the most important thing. Generate sunshine. Encourage the other guy. Don't get up tight. It doesn't matter if we win or lose, but how we play. Why be out there if it isn't fun?"

Ifyou know an "everyduy" track and field athlete, long distance runner, or race walker that deserves a profile in CALIFORNIA TRACK & RUNNING NEWS, contact Managing Editor Cynci Calvin at ccrun@psyber.com.