

# In sports, pain is just part of playing the game

Did Randy Jostes give quarterback Turner Gill a "cheap shot?" Were both Warren Powers and Tom Osborne wrong in saying hit/push/check was just part of the game?

I think we can best answer that ques-



**Bill Allen**

tion by talking about jogging. Or, if you prefer, running. Or, if I prefer, pain.

A friend of mine recently convinced me to go running with her. My phone rang at 6:30 a.m. I knew in my groggy half-asleep state that I should expect this call. "Herlof." (roughly translated—hello.) "Morning, Bill, ready to run?" "Bwhar?" (roughly translated—what?) "Run. You know...jog. Up and at 'em."

"Up and at 'em," I said. "I thought that expression went out with the hula-hoop."

"Meet you downstairs in five minutes." Click.

No escape.

I rolled out of bed. I forgot I sleep in a loft eight feet up. I bounced off the floor. That was a sure sign that I was out of shape.

All sorts of thoughts were going through my head. Have you ever seen a jogger smile? They pant, wheeze, cough and breathe hard, but don't smile. You can get the same effect from smoking cigarettes.

But it's a lasting fad, and I wanted to give it a try.

"Let's go," she said, heading up the street.

I plodded after her. To my surprise I was actually beginning to enjoy it. The wind blew through my hair. My adrenaline

was flowing. My heart beat strong and true. Then we got to the end of the first block. That's when the pain set in.

I tried to take my mind off of it with conversation.

"So, how far do you run?" I asked her between pants and wheezes, without smiling.

"Oh, about three miles."

"Really. How many weeks does it take you?"

"Three miles a day," she said, laughing.

Three miles? All in the same day? I tried to remember the last time I drove three miles in the same day.

Then a dreadful thought took over. The farther away we run from our starting point, the farther we have to run to get back. Einstein couldn't have said it better.

"How far have we gone?" I asked.

"About six blocks."

"Is that three miles yet?"

It felt like 20. My feet said 40. She laughed. Nobody takes a dying man seriously these days.

"Can I ask you one more question?"

"Sure," she said.

"How strong are you?"

"Why?"

"Because I think you're going to have to carry me back."

She didn't have to. I thumbed a ride. I saw her shaking her head as she jogged into the distance.

I went back home and had a bowl of wheaties. If they're enough exercise for Bruce Jenner, then they're enough for me.

Despite my early difficulties I've promised myself I won't give up. Last Sunday I even watched the New York City Marathon in its entirety on television.

And that's what I think of the whole Randy Jostes situation.

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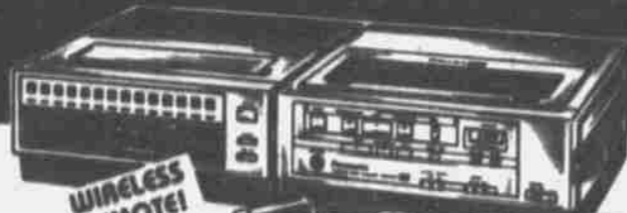
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