

# Sweat and satisfaction Running feat entices Eugene joggers

By MELODY WARD  
Of the Emerald

Moving silently, intent on the approaching destination, a lone jogger swiftly pursues fitness at just past midnight.

Where else but in Eugene — fondly known as the jogging capital of the world and as "Mecca West" — would you find otherwise sane people literally running around town at all hours of the day and night? One thing's sure. No-where else will you see as many little old ladies in running shoes.

Joggers are more single-minded than children chasing after errant playthings. They dash across busy intersections and are seemingly tireless in the face of hills, exhaust fumes and sidewalk bottlenecks of pedestrians. Wiry, slender (or potentially so) joggers splash through puddles, sleet and showers or prance barelegged in the sun. Singly and in groups, for two laps or for 20, they partake in a communion of sweat and satisfaction.

Jogging first caught on in the early '60s, when a University track coach experienced the benefits of running while visiting New Zealand and brought stories and visible proof of them back to Eugene. Since then, numerous "how to" books have been written on the subject, the number of firms manufacturing jogging apparatus has increased dramatically and running suits have become acceptable attire in almost any social situation.

But jogging is hardly a fad, here today and gone tomorrow. If anything, it gets more popular, as people become increasingly aware of the benefits of being in good shape. Since its introduction to the United States, the numbers of joggers have grown steadily and more persons join their ranks daily.

Why?

Because it makes you feel good.

And that's what you keep telling yourself, out there on the track, panting lap after lap, at the start of a jogging program. Visions of a firm physique... just being able to say you made it... entice the novice runner on. It helps to run with a friend — if only because of the shame you'd feel at stopping

before finishing all the laps.

Usually non-joggers have lots of reasons why they don't run. "It's boring" is perhaps the most common one. But whether jogging is boring depends on how you go about it.

For the fairly fit individual, the prospect of flying around the same beaten track a dozen times is admittedly less than thrilling. However, Eugene offers scores of alternative jogging routes. Pre's Trail, the Amazon bike path, and the Alton Baker Park trails are a few of the specially developed scenic choices. The adventurous person can always indulge in free-form neighborhood exploration for a change of place.

According to most joggers, any boredom is far outweighed by the benefits. Trimmer figures, increased endurance, relaxed nerves and sounder sleep are among the most frequently cited side effects. And several cars

sport the claim that joggers "make better lovers."

Is running pleasant? Depends on how fit you are, say most joggers. Certainly not at first, when the body rebels at the sudden, constant, change of pace. But given a carefully planned running schedule, that same body adapts fairly quickly to new demands. And the previously mentioned benefits start to show up almost immediately. Even after the first time out, you'll feel more relaxed and surprisingly refreshed.

Conquering distance and building endurance offers other, more psychological benefits — like the realization that you can now run two or three miles without effort, when three months ago just finishing four laps was a major accomplishment.

Perhaps the most attractive aspect of jogging as a sport is that it is something one can do almost anywhere, any time, at no cost.



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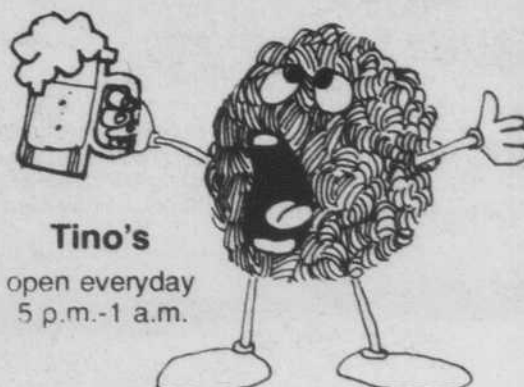
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