

Racers are leaving the track and . . .

Hitting the road

The jogging craze is here to stay. Everyone from the toddling infant to the wizened great-grandmother is taking to the streets in new shorts and running shoes.

One tremendously popular offshoot from this jogging mania is road racing.

"I don't think it (road racing) is just growing; I think it's actually exploding," says Dr. William McChesney, father of distance star Bill McChesney. "I've run all the Butte to Buttes since the day they started, and I think there were 300 people in the first one. Last year there were 6,000."

Road races like the Butte to Butte run held each July by the Oregon Track Club have become commonplace in the Eugene area. The reasons people run in them are numerous.

"The thing I like best about road racing is the camaraderie that you find," says McChesney, who has been involved in road running for about eight years.

"I think it's that feeling that the running community seems to have. Everybody is concerned about everybody else, yet they really don't care how fast the other person runs."

McChesney's wife, Marsha, explains that "to me it's social, as well as the physical fitness part of it. We've met an awful lot of really nice, interesting people."

Paul Blint, a graduate geography student at the University who has been running road races for over 10 years, finds running to be excellent therapy.

"It's just a good feeling to be physical and not mental all the time," Blint says. "It helps me to keep in shape and keep the weight down."

Blint also enjoys the competitive aspect. "One of my motivations, in racing, is beating as many people as I can. I don't go around bragging about it, but it's self-satisfying in that respect."

Others, like Marsha McChesney, find satisfaction from within.

"I really compete against myself more than other people, trying to better my times," she says. Her style apparently works, as she holds the American record in the 3,000 meters for her age group (51). It wasn't always that easy, however.



"When I first started, I couldn't go around the whole block," she said. "That's the thing for a lot of women my age, they think 'Gee, I can't do it.' But you've got to start somewhere."

William McChesney offers some words of advice to those just beginning to run. "I'd buy a darn good pair of shoes, with good support to them," McChesney says. "I had shin splints and bad ankles and Achilles (problems), all from a bad pair of shoes."

"The second thing I'd say is just to go slow. I think most

people that get into it buy a new pair of shoes and go out and try to be Lasse Viren. You can't do that. In fact, I've found that it takes about two to three years of distance running background before you're really comfortable even being competitive in a road race. It just seems like it takes the body that long to attune to it, no matter who you are."

Another important consideration for beginners is that some people simply aren't suited to be runners.

"If your personality fits it, fine. But if it doesn't, something like swimming or riding your bike or

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