

## How They Train – New England Style

### Todd Coffin

by Michael A. Musca mmusca@maine.rr.com

Let's review what we've learned so far. The original premise of this series was: "to get back to basics and talk about proven training methods that work for real New England folks." We've met new friends and, in some cases, been reintroduced to long-time athletic colleagues by peering into their personal training manuals. We've learned that each of these outstanding runners have reached their goals using various mixtures of speed/distance/interval/cross-training, yet the consistent thread seems to be a balanced life. Running sure isn't going to pay the bills or put much food on the table (unless you intend to subsist on the free race day bagels, bananas and yogurt). Each of the runners we've profiled are pursuing professional careers, some are also raising families as well as racing at a high level. One such stellar example is this year's winner of the First Mainer award at People's Beach to Beacon 10K. Todd Coffin, a native of Bath, will become a master in May 2001 so look out all you forties males.



**Name:** Todd Coffin  
**College:** Colby College  
**Club affiliation:** CMS-Maine  
**Age:** 39

#### Best Marks:

Time	Distance
4:07	mile
8:51	2-mile
14:27	5K
24:22	5-mile
30:12	10K
50:51	10-mile
2:19:38	marathon (Houston, 1989)

#### Personal Statistics:

**Birth Date:** May 29, 1961

**Birth place:** Bath, Maine

**Married (Lorena)** - sons Alex (6 years old) and Max (one year old)

I started racing in the 7th grade and haven't been able to stop yet...

**Pre-Training Warm-up:** Easy stretching before long runs; easy stretching, followed by 15 minute warm-up, then more stretching before interval sessions.

**Log Book:** I have kept logs sporadically, including distance, time, pace and location. I have strayed from logs in the past because I have felt too inclined to track mileage numbers without enough consideration of how I felt and the need for rest or cross-training. Lately I have entered rough mileage equivalents when cross-training, such as swimming 1/2 hour equals about 5 miles running, or cycling two hours equals 8-10 miles running, etc.

**Daily workouts:** My base mileage is generally 55 to 65 miles each week. This is low for many runners, but has kept me healthy and interested in the sport for many years. When I was marathoning, my mileage would get up to 75 miles.

I now include two interval/tempo runs each week with one long run. I choose from a menu of favorite work outs and rotate to assure solid fitness year round. This would be different if I were focusing on a particular event, where a more refined training cycle would be beneficial.

#### Here are some of my favorites:

- 8X1/2 mile on the road (using a pacing watch) @ 2:22 pace; 3-minute rest intervals.
- 2X10-minute threshold runs (about 5 seconds per mile slower than 10K pace: 5:05-5:10)
- About 85 percent effort up and down a grassy or dirt road hill (hill work on a soft surface is much preferred!): 6 repeats over a total distance of about 1/2 mile
- 5X one-mile on the road (using a pacing watch): 5:50-5:00 pace; 3-minute rest interval
- 16X400m on the track at 68-70s pace.

I believe variety is key for well-rounded conditioning and peace of mind.

**Favorite/best race:** My favorite marathon is Houston, where I have run well on a course that is relatively flat. I lived for two years in Houston and got to know the terrain well.

I also enjoy the LL Bean 10K course which is always hot and challenging; it is nice to have a quality event in your home town!

**Favorite running route:** I like to train around Wolf's Neck State Park in Freeport, and the Maquoit Bay area of Brunswick. North Bath and Phippsburg are also superb running area with little traffic.

**Running Hero(es):** Bill Rodgers was my first running hero, too bad the U.S. opted out of the Moscow Olympics when he was "king of the roads."

**Who inspired you to run?** My brother (two years older) conspired with the Junior High coach to get me to run cross-country.

**Why do I run?** Running is an integral part of my lifestyle I cannot imagine being without. I feel good when I run, both physically and mentally. My heart rate is low, and I can eat pretty much whatever I want without weight gain. What more can I say?

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