

Pam Hermes is our member interview subject this month. As she explains below, her main focus is on triathlons; and she uses footraces as a component of her training.

Q. Do you run year-round, and do you run both indoors and outdoors?

A. Yes. I run 2-4 times a week. I mostly run indoors on a treadmill due to past neck and knee injuries/surgeries (bike accident in 1998), but enjoy long runs outside year round -- as long as it's not slippery outside.

Q. What are your most common running routes?

A. Usually repetitions of two different loops around University Farms in West Lafayette and/or on trails/roads on the north side of West Lafayette. Boring, but handy. Time is always an issue for me.

Q. What about races, are they part of your running routine?

I race (participate) to train. Signing up for races helps me keep my health/exercise a priority. Having a goal provides accountability. Since being allowed to return to training several years ago, I have mainly been participating in triathlons. The variety in training seems to work best for me in terms of the injuries I have had and helps me to manage chronic pain problems. I can't run very fast anymore, but my endurance is still great. Not long after I was able to start running again, I helped a friend who had just started running for the first time progress through the Indy Mini. I have been using that race since to help build an early season base. I participate in other local races occasionally.

Q. Do you have a favorite shoe model and if so, are they ever hard to find?

A. Asics Gel Kayano. I need a stability shoe with cushioning and have been wearing this shoe since my bike accident. It has been hard to find my size locally at times, so I usually have Sports Etc. order shoes for me.

Q. Do you ever travel to out-of-town triathlons; or do you find enough variety in local events?

A. Yes. I have gone to Indy and other locations in the past, especially when there were fewer local triathlons, and to Muncie the past two years to do a longer distance event. I try to support local events as much as possible because I appreciate the increasing opportunities for endurance athletes in the community. My goals now are health related, not competition driven as they were before my accident.

Q. Is there a triathlon event you would recommend to any runners who might be interested in trying one as a change from the footrace routine?

A. Yes. I would recommend the Boiler Aquatics Triathlon (late May/early June) and the Maverick Aquatics Triathlon (mid-August). Both are sprint triathlons that have short pool

swims with time trial starts, fairly flat bike courses, good organization, ample volunteers, and participants of all ranges of abilities. The BA 5K is on the road, whereas the Mav 5K is mostly a trail run. Both are great events for beginners and more experienced triathletes.

Q. You mentioned the chronic after-effects of your bike accident. Does fitness training make any difference in either alleviating or aggravating the problems; and does it make any difference in the dosages of any medications you might be taking?

A. My training makes a huge difference in managing the chronic after-effects of my bike accident. When I have been unable to train as a result of my injuries and the multiple surgeries required, there have been extended times when my ability to work and to engage in other activities was substantially limited. With the help of my healthcare providers, I was able to modify my training to accommodate my limitations and to slowly return to an active lifestyle that allows me to manage my chronic pain problem and provides significant other health benefits without aggravation of my problems. One of those benefits is a substantial reduction in the OTC and prescription medication I take.

Our thanks to Pam for sharing some of her experiences and observations with us.