

## Interviewing The Runners

When I first started this project it was nothing more than gathering some specific details from a few runners I knew on how they ran during high school. My intent was to find some common denominator's of state mile and 1600m champions. In the beginning I had a list of questions that I thought were relevant in determining what was required to win a state mile title. However, as I started interviewing the first few runners, my list of questions was modified with input from the runners and then standardized for the rest of the interviews.

Interviewing these runners was a great pleasure. Without exception, every single one of the runners I called up, out of the blue, returned my call and offered their time and information freely. The runners spent anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours on the phone with me. They answered my questions while they were traveling on business, watching the kids or even during the dinner hour. I would call them up introduce myself and schedule a future interview call with them. I would call back for the interview at scheduled time and they would have their scrapbooks out, workout logs and even offer names and contacts of other runners that won the title with recommendations that I call. One of the double title winners, Mason Ward from Colerain, was in the active military and I was able to interview him before he shipped out to Afghanistan. Olympians like Mark Croghan and Bob Kennedy showed no hesitation revealing their high school workout routines. Calling and interviewing my own childhood idol, Dave Wottle, caused some hesitation on my part. His 1972 gold-medal performance in Munich was burned into my memory and my own state titles were run mimicking Dave. I would run in last place for the first half of the race and on the bell lap imagine that the final runners I passed were the same Kenyans and Russian that Dave beat to win the 800m gold medal.

The interview questions and answers along with narrative from the runners are documented in the following chapters. I tried to keep out the runners individual thoughts and theories on training and stay with just the details and facts. I also limited the documented responses to only what happened in high school and removed any details of post-high school running.