



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

Article from:

# The Actuary

September 1994 – Volume 28, No. 7

## Actuaries are good sports, too, II

by Mike Cowell

In the June issue, Judy Wohlt related John Dewan's fascination with sports statistics. The group of stories also covered actuaries involved in basketball and wrestling.

This summer, the U.S. Corporate Track Association's Annual Meet was at Colby College in Waterville, Maine. About 1,200 participants, representing about 30 teams, competed in road racing and track and field events. How many actuaries would you expect to be competing in a field of 1,200? Currently, about 15,000 actuaries practice in the United States in a working population of about 125 million, a ratio of 1 in 8,000. At this meet, we counted



George Young, FSA, of UNUM (second runner from left) and Bill Masterson, FSA, of CIGNA (third runner from left), are in the starting lineup for the Senior Relays at the USCTA Meet in July. They are two of the 11 actuaries participating.

no fewer than 11, which, by my statistics, is about 75 times as many as you'd expect on a random basis.

I noticed this over-representation of actuaries participating in endurance sports in the mid-1980s, when, for three years, I published

*The Actuarial Marathoner* on a quarterly basis. Other actuarial citations on the marathon scene follow, and I am encouraged by these and other examples of our profession's participation in sports and fitness.

## What makes actuaries run?

by Cecilia Green

### Sam Gutterman

A consulting actuary at Price Waterhouse in Chicago and SOA vice president, Sam Gutterman may hold the actuarial record for the longest distance in one event. He once ran 104 miles in a 24-hour race. He has entered more than 30 marathons (26.2 miles) and more than 30 ultra marathons (any race more than 26.2 miles).

"I have four goals when I race," Gutterman said. "One, to enjoy it. Two, not to be injured. Three, to finish smiling. And four, to do my best time in that distance."

He thinks more actuaries may be involved in running than the general population because they are very goal-oriented people. He equates it to the

determination needed to keep studying for exams with an actuarial designation in mind: "You keep running because you have a goal like a marathon to strive for."

### Gerald I. Wilson

Gerry Wilson, a partner at Hewitt Associates in Lincolnshire, Illinois, is believed to hold the actuarial record for the most marathons run — 117. He has slowed down now to two or three a year. Before he reached his 100th race, he was running between five to eleven a year.

"If I were to speculate why more actuaries are runners," Wilson said, "it may be because most actuaries are usually either studying or working in an office, and physical exercise brings some balance into our lives. Also, there may be some discipline and concentration aspects of running that actuaries accept better than other personalities."

He prefers the smaller marathons with no more than 2,000 runners.

"A marathon is not a race; it's an experience, a happening," Wilson said. "For most of us, it doesn't matter how fast we run it or if we win. People are very supportive and help each other."

He said in a marathon, unlike a 10K race where people sprint ahead at the end, you are more likely to see people running across the finish line arm-in-arm or holding hands.

### Steve Gathje

It would be hard to top Steve Gathje's record. He has not missed a day of running in 22 years. Since 1972, he's averaged about eight miles a day and has run in about 14 marathons, frequently finishing in the top five.

The company where he is an actuarial officer, Fortis Benefits Insurance Co. in St. Paul, Minnesota, coordinated bringing 90 people from all over the world last fall for the New York Marathon, in which Gathje ran. Running with 26,000 people through