



USATF Pacific Tribute

MARK WINITZ

5/4/1950 - 6/29/2023

Our USATF & USATF Pacific organizations have lost a valuable friend and contributor. His legacy so rich and far reaching that it took an army to consider just exactly how to honor, write about and compile the depth and breadth of his contributions across so many key areas of these associations since the early 80s.

Mark has outdated probably the majority of current members, and given the way he worked without need for grand gesture or seeking attention, there are no doubt many that are not aware of the extent of his many contributions or his quick dry wit, always astutely observant with a twinkle in his eyes.

In these current times, many influencers write about and talk about being humble, their humility. Mark, lived it, lived it daily, inhabited the virtue seamlessly without fanfare. So much so we were hard pressed to find photos of Mark... anywhere!

And so, we start here. This will be one of a number of tributes over the next few weeks, posted on the USATF Pacific Facebook page and website, pausatf.org.

Mark was the recipient of these USATF & USATF Pacific's most prestigious awards.

National USATF Awards

- 1993: Scott Hamilton Award - This award was established by the late Scott Hamilton to pay tribute to the leaders in this discipline at the Association level. Scott was a long-time Association officer in Hawaii and original member of the AAU's LDR committee.
- 2004: H. Browning Ross Long Distance Running Merit Award. - This award is given annually to that individual who has made an outstanding contribution and/or has been of service to the sport of long distance running. It was named in honor of the founder of the AAU LDR committee and the Road Runners Club of America, as well as the first recipient of the award in 1969.

USATF Pacific Awards

- 2008 USATF Pacific Service Awardee
- 2019 USATF Pacific Hall of Fame Inductee (Mark shown below.)



Mark has been involved with the PA since the early 1980s as a competitor and volunteer. He served as the LDR Committee Chair for many years and is hugely responsible for the ongoing success of the USATF Pacific's unrivaled LDR Grand Prix series. All the while his public relations and reporting skills continuously highlighted PA events and athletes' accomplishments.

Remember the publication *RunCal*, from back in the early days? (See next page.) Mark created and labored tirelessly with this very popular publication, all the while contributing feature, in-depth articles to the myriad of other running and track & field magazines. These included *American Track & Field Magazine*, *Runner's World*, *Running Times*, *California Track & Running News* and *California Running News* and more. Use your favorite search engine to type in the name "Mark Winitz" and the myriad of his articles will fill pages!

MARK WINITZ'S

RUNCAL

BLOSSING CALIFORNIA NEWSLETTER LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA



Winitz is a columnist and feature writer for California Track and Running News and has been the Bay Area Editor for Running Scene Magazine.

"Mark Winitz's **RunCal** is my kind of publication. It uses my favorite format, the no-nonsense newsletter, to cover running in one of my favorite states. I look forward to each issue."

—Joe Henderson, Acclaimed Running Writer

"I love training in California and the way Mark Winitz covers our sport. Luckily, California—particularly the Bay Area—can benefit from Mark's unusual talent as a writer and devoted runner."

—Nancy Ditz

"I look forward to receiving **RunCal**. I'll depend on it to keep me up to date on California's running scene when I'm in New Zealand."

—Rod Dixon

"This guy is finely in tune with California running. In his newsletter he takes the time to investigate what's really going on."

—Coach Peanut Harms, Aggie Running Club

ALL RIGHT! Start my subscription to **RunCal** Newsletter. I have enclosed \$18 for one year (12 issues), \$22 overseas airmail (U.S. currency). I will receive **RunCal** monthly, which includes the fastest results of California races possible, interviews with California runners, info on California running clubs, places to run and more.

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A step back in time: When the combination of Mark's *RunCal* publication plus all his other contributions became too great, he retired the *RunCal* effort. Then, when the owner of California Track & Running News (later scaled down to *California Running News*), Bill Cockerham, was going to cease publishing this highly valued magazine, Larry Eder of Shooting Star Media stepped up to save it. In 1999, Larry and John Mansoor collaborated to make California Track & Running News the official publication for USATF Pacific (replacing the PA's prior publication of *Pacific Athlete*), and Mark continued his work with the magazine as a regular and valued contributor. This agreement and the magazine ended in 2014, like so many other print magazines. [Click here](#) to view a 1991 issue of *California Running News*, in which Mark describes his resignation as a feature editor, in order to keep *RunCal* afloat.

Another big responsibility of Mark's was his business, Win-It!z Sports Public Relations. He provided events and organizations with his LDR knowledge and journalism skills to guide and publicize these groups from start to finish. The Napa Valley Marathon, Silicon Valley Turkey Trot, and many others benefitted from his skills.

Ever left a race thankful for officials? Wondered how things get done? More officials! Mark, a certified official himself, played a strong hand here, making it mandatory for each LDR club to provide officials for the PA Grand Prix events and other events seeking USATF sanctions.

Mark's leadership in organizing and conducting USATF Pacific Strategic Plan meetings was unparalleled. He was also involved continuously with National USATF LDR Committee work, taking part on several National LDR Committees, in turn providing his wisdom and experience to improve LDR events on a national level.

A true mentor and guiding light for the Pacific Association, many were his proteges and acolytes. We are capturing comments from these below.

Coach Carl Rose, Strawberry Canyon Track Club:

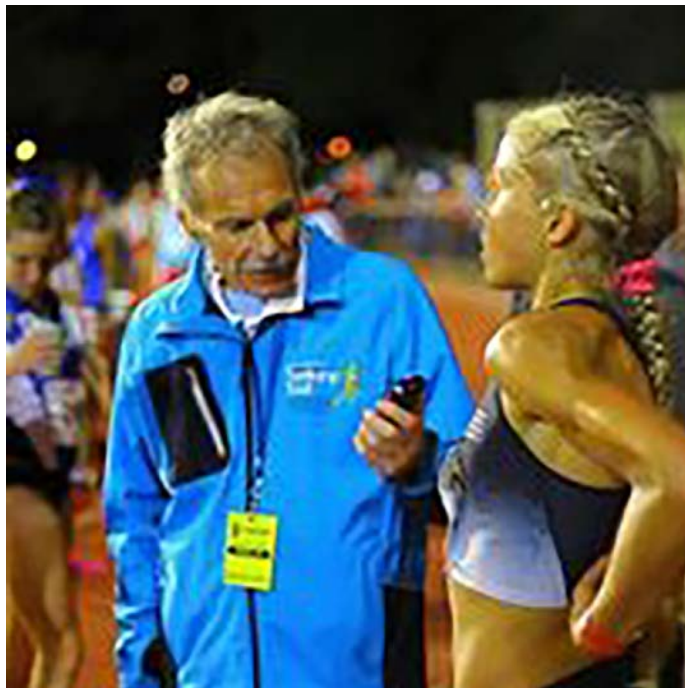
"Some people leave things better than they found it, but Mark did more than that. Without Mark, our association may not have such a strong foundation or be of the same caliber. We are arguably the best association in the country, and we all stand on Mark Winitz's shoulders in some way. He was never arrogant either, he always had time to talk and always explained things without judgment or ego. He harbored an unrivaled passion for the sport, and was in it to the end."

Jean Pommier, *fartherfasterblogspot.com*

“Omnipresent on the road racing circuit, Mark Winitz was also recognized for 40+ years serving our Pacific Association with such dedication and passion for promoting our amazing local athletes and races. Here is Mark (right) presenting a special bib to Carl Guardino, the CEO of the Silicon Vally Leadership Group and organizer of the Silicon Valley Turkey Trot, last November.” (2013) Mark interviewing Jordan Hasay at the 2014 Stanford Invitational.



Mark interviewing Jordan Hasay at the 2014 Stanford Invitational





2015 Silicon Valley Turkey Trot: Mark with Women's Winner Buze Diriba (Ethiopia)



2015 Silicon Valley Turkey Trot: Mark with Men's Winner Eliud Ngetich (Kenya)

Bob Anderson, founding publisher-owner of *Runner's World Magazine*

“He was a great writer and a really good guy who loved our sport.”

Cynci Calvin, USATF Pacific Communications Committee Chair:

”Mark did so much to publicize our athletes and service volunteers, but never stood in any kind of limelight himself.”

Lary Eder, Fortius Media and runblogrun.com:

“Mark was simply amazing.”

Please feel free to comment and leave your memories, stories, fun moments and thanks below here for Mark, to honor him and share with our community on this page. You may also email them to [Verity Breen](#) and/or [Cynci Calvin](#).

