

# *It was turkey and Newsom*

By Charles Clines

James Newsom and turkey on Thanksgiving Day once was almost a tradition. The veteran runner from Fort Worth practically made the Fort Worth YMCA's Turkey Trot's 10K his personal event. In 1996, James won his second consecutive title of the several he would collect. And with Thanksgiving fast approaching, I thought it would be interesting to take a glance back at that race and maybe get everyone in the mood for another turkey race.



Even though James easily won on the cool Thanksgiving morning, he was somewhat displeased with his winning time of 33:26 over the rolling 6.2-mile course. He said his tempo runs during training were at about the same pace as his winning time. Plus, he had been logging about 80 miles a week. He believed his expected speed and strength would carry him to a faster time. Yet, he was 14 seconds slower than the year before, which to him didn't make any sense.

“Last year I wasn't running at all .... about half of what I'm doing now,” James said after the run.

James, 32 years old in '96, said he had reached the first mile in 5:10, but felt he was running at a 4:50 pace. “That's when I knew that my legs weren't here today,” he said.

In the women's division, Jennifer Bam, an outstanding runner who had moved from South Africa, won the title with a 36:51. The main thing she was wishing for during the run were some warm gloves. Her hands were red and cold on the morning when temperatures were in the mid-30s to the low 40s. Jennifer had planned to run in the Dallas Turkey Trot, but changed her mind after she had sustained a broken bone in her left wrist on the Monday before the race after slipping and falling on some ice in the streets. (It was cold that November)

“It doesn't hurt to run, but it does to drive,” she said of her wrist, explaining why she didn't want to attempt the trip to Dallas.

In the 5K, Megan Flowers also was a repeat winner. Megan, a former Fort Worth Trinity Valley and University of Arkansas standout, won in 17:11 for her second consecutive victory. However, her time also was slower than the previous year, when she won in 16:36. But Megan said she hadn't been training quite so intense.

In the men's division, Chad Schacht, a former University of Oregon runner who was visiting for the holidays, won in 15:53. He had trailed Hershel Hugnutz until the final 50 yards. His sprint to the finish edged Hershel by a second.

There were 2,494 entrants that year, up from 1,900 the previous year.

As a footnote, James Newsom was runner-up at the Jingle Bell Run on the Saturday night after Thanksgiving. It was a night when participants battled winds that gusted to an estimated 60 mph and had debris whirling around the city. "It seemed like we were always against it," James said as the downtown buildings created a funnel-like effect. James chased winner Jeremy Nelson, a 19-year-old who was a sophomore at the University of Texas to the finish. Jeremy, from Grapevine, won by 26 seconds with a 15:41 over the winding and windy course.

"When he ran a 4:44 in the first mile, I was running next to Greg House and he told me, 'He'll come back to us,'" James said. "But he was looking good. I tried to catch him, but just couldn't."

Jeremy's father, Don, won the masters trophy in 17 minutes. Don continues to be a regular at area races.

Jennifer Bam followed her Turkey Trot victory by winning in 17:33. She passed runner-up Wendy Andersen of Arlington about a mile into the race and won by more than a minute.