

Run, Dick, Run!

This sentence looks like it's straight from the famous "Dick and Jane" books, whether it's Dick, Jane or Spot doing the running. The series would be rather simplistic and dull by today's literary standards. Yet that same simplicity would vault two athletes into the athletic record books and more dramatically, into the hearts of millions of fans worldwide.

Dick and Rick Hoyt have now completed 65 marathons, 224 triathalons, and 208 10K runs. They also journeyed across the USA running and pedaling 3735 miles—Dick that is—Rick's legs don't work. Nor does his speech, for that matter.



In 1962, the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck cutting off oxygen from his brain and coordination from his body. Rick's parents were given no hope for his development. Dick and his wife, however, determined to raise Rick as normally as possible. With the help of an interactive computer Rick was able to communicate, and two years after entering public school Rick told his father he wanted to participate in a five-mile benefit run for a paralyzed lacrosse player. Having not been a long

distance runner, Rick's father consented anyway. Team Hoyt has been competing ever since, with Dick pushing the wheelchair. Rick went on to graduate from high school and college, with a degree in special education. Initially, many were skeptical, and even critical of their road racing. In time, though, other athletes became much more supportive.

What is simple about Team Hoyt's accomplishments? Absolutely nothing! The simplicity is found in the dependence of Rick on his father. The significance of Team Hoyt's feats could be forgotten along with any other life accomplishment if not for their parallel to the Gospel message. Following the most famous conversation in the Bible between Jesus and Nicodemus, John 3:16 records a very simple, yet profound truth—We need only to *believe in him* to receive eternal life. God says 'Put your life in my hands; Come along for the ride; I will carry you; Just believe in Jesus'—In the same way that Rick needed to believe in his father, we need to believe in Jesus—meaning *trust in*, or *depend upon* his finished work on the cross for eternal life. Sorry to disappoint you, Nicodemus. There's nothing else you need to do. The work was done once for all by one who lived a simplistic life—born in a manger, son of a carpenter, transient preacher. Just *believe in him*.

"For God so loved the world he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

www.teamhoyt.com

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