



Michele Bush: A Rare Combination Of Running Talent

Michele Bush, a 19-year-old sophomore who is a top half-miler for the UCLA women's track team, is now emerging as a runner with a rare combination of talents. Contributing to the rarity of Bush's talent is the fact that she is an emerging black distance runner, and also the fact that she never runs on Saturday — the usual day for track.

Scott Chisholm, Bush's UCLA track coach for the past two years, says, "A rare thing about Michele is that she can run good fast short races and she can also distances. . . could be up to the marathon. That's something she is capable of doing."

Chisholm substantiates his statement by pointing out that "She's been a finalist in the 800 meters and a finalist in the 10,000. She's the only girl I can say that about. Many who have the 800, don't have the 10,000 en-

duration. That's a rare combination."

Bush, an attractive 5-2, 110-pound pre-nursing student, is already among the top people in running. In the 1980 Olympic Trials last summer at the University of Oregon in Eugene, she competed as a track runner, and was a finalist.

While more recently, March 15 in Pasadena, California, she was a finalist in the longest race she has ever run, the Avon Half-Marathon (13.1 miles) in which she won 21 points giving her second place status — the first place being 22 points.

This race was a part of the Avon International Running Circuit, a unique series of women's distance competitions involving athletes from 35 countries, and ranging in distance from three kilometers to the full marathon, which is the Avon International Marathon Championship to be held this year on

August 23 in Ottawa, Canada. As winner of 21 running circuit points in the Avon Half-Marathon, Bush will be sent — expenses paid — to Ottawa, fulfilling one of her goals "to run that marathon" of 26.2 miles. "In Ottawa, I hope to go under three hours," she says sending her words racing cheerfully through the air.

"I'm glad I did well in the Half-Marathon," she continues, "because I have potential as a distance runner." She pauses reflectively, and then adds with a chuckle, "It makes me feel very good. It's been kind of a myth in the past that blacks can't do distance running."

Bush believes if the talent is there, color, ethnic group or religion won't stand in the way. She says, "It's just a matter of work and training."

Because of religious preference, Bush is not

able to run many of the important races. She is a Seventh Day Adventist. That requires that she refrain from running from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. With running being mainly a Saturday sport, she takes what she can get in terms of races, according to her coach.

Chisholm and Bush take a positive attitude about what would seem a formidable problem. Chisholm speaks with unwavering confidence and optimism when he says, "We are not worrying about what we're missing. We think of it this way, her glass is half-full, not half-empty. We don't concern ourselves with what she is missing out on." However, hesitantly, Chisholm does admit that "It can be frustrating having such a fine athlete and not being about to use her."

The activities at Bush's church are very important to her. "I do a lot with my church," she says with devoted attachment. "It's where I spend a lot of my time when I'm not studying, training or running."

It is here that girls who want to run often come to her for advice, and she tells them to first set a goal and then to strive for it. . . and not to let anything get in the way of that goal. . . to temper all things, including eating in order to maintain physical condition and running weight (her best running weight is 110 pounds, if she goes over 111 pounds, she finds that she gets winded faster). . . to listen to their coach and to communicate with the coach.

To make a point about one's inner resources, Bush tells them of her most memorable experience in running. "It was the Perrier Race," she says, "I had just seen a movie on TV about running. I started running the race as usual. And at one point, I felt myself becom-

ing tired and was working toward his associate's degree in accounting at Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) in Charlotte. He is a check proof operator at Wachovia's operations center and his supervisor, Lon Williford, said that Russel is dedicated to work, school and sports.

"Joe has a lot of determination to be holding down a full-time job here, taking several courses at CPCC, and doing so much in sports," Williford said. "All of us at Wachovia really admire Joe."

Russel says his goal is to press over 350 pounds by 1984, and maintain his weight of 124 pounds to stay in the featherweight division. He eventually wants to compete in international Olympic games for the handicapped.

"Weightlifting gives me self-fulfillment," Russel said. "Working out makes me feel good because it gives me the strength to push my chair easier and it helps me move around more on my own, without help. And weightlifting is one thing I can do to keep my good health; something that is very important to me."

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ing winded, and I wasn't sure I could go on. And then I remembered that movie and the perseverance I had seen, and it inspired me to go on. Although I ran with a lot of pain, I did a lot better than I thought I could."

Bush is a very intense athlete and also a very intense student. She works very hard at her studies, a necessity if she is to maintain her four-year scholarship at UCLA.

According to Chisholm, when they are recruiting runners, they look for academics first, because unless the person is capable of doing the work here, the individual can't make it. He asserts "we are concerned first about the kind of record one has in high school. Then our next concern is coachability and potential. That is, we try to predict success. We look for someone who is good, but is going to get better."

"Michele is still very young as a distance runner," Chisholm says, "she needs three or four years under her belt. She is not going to reach her maximum until then." On the national scale, all top distance runners are in their late 20's. Most peak when they are 24 or 25 years old, if they can survive financially.

"Thanks to my family," Bush says, "they are loving and supportive in every way, including financially." Her father, a medical doctor, her mother a nurse, and her two older brothers, former track runners, have backed her efforts from the very beginning. Bush started running when she was 12 or 13 years old in her home town of Palos Verdes, California.

She says, "I started for the fun of it. My friend's father was a coach, and I would go and run just because I liked it. He felt that I had potential and he was the first to encourage me. It was during my freshman year in high school that I began to take running seriously. That's when I started competing as a sprinter. I was always sports oriented. Before high school, I played soccer. Then one year I went out for basketball, but the practice began to get in the way of my running and I gave it up."

Running has been a guiding force in Bush's life, and she is pleased that she got into it while she was very young. She says, "I'm glad I did it in my youth, I didn't get into some of the negative things many young people get into. I was too busy running and my life was focused another way."

The National Collegiate Championship race which is 6.2 miles is next in focus for Bush. She wants to do well in the 5,000 meters, and she says she can if she trains for it.

She is now training twice daily, five days a week. In the morning, she runs thirty minutes to one hour and a half. In the evening, she does track running, hill running, steady pace running for four to six miles and trains with weights.

As women distance runners continue to surge forward, dispelling old myths and creating positive image models, Bush, a new talent, is hard at work, training and setting goals, that are now realistic, but would have seemed impossible five years ago.

As Bush trains for the fourth annual Avon International Marathon Championship, she is aware that she will be among the top runners of the world. Avon is sending the world's top seven women marathoners to that competition, as well as the top distance runner from each of the over thirty countries where it has a facility and



MICHELE BUSH

Distance Runner May Destroy Myth

also the top three finishers of the 1980 Avon Marathon. Avon reports that a field of 1,000 women is expected to compete. Not only will there be world class athletes, but there will also be women of all ages and abilities, who run for fitness, health and fun.

This marathon will be the first international championship since the Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee voted to include the women's marathon in the Olympic Games, beginning in Los Angeles in 1984. Until recently, the IOC contended that there was not enough

widespread interest to warrant its inclusion in the Olympic rules, any new event in track or field must be regularly contested in 25 countries and on two continents.

However, this became a difficult contention after the 1980 Avon International Marathon in London, because this race more than met the requirements as nationally ranked women runners from 27 countries and five continents participated.

With all of this in the background, Bush sets her long term goal to make the Olympic Games. "If I don't make it in 1984, I'll

try in '88. . . if I don't make it then, I'll try in '92. . . if I don't make it then. . . well. . ." and her voice trails off into a small wistful laugh.

When asked to describe herself, Bush takes a little longer than usual to respond. As she thinks, she continues to laugh, now somewhat self-consciously as she remarks, "It's kind of hard to answer." However, after some thought and reflection, she finally responds as she comes out of her deep concentration with a refreshing and wholesome sigh. Then she says, "I think 'persevering' describes me."

Is There A Double Standard In NCAA Punishment

Elson Armstrong, Jr.
Remember that earthquake that shook the West Coast last year this time when five members of the powerful Pac-Ten Conference were placed on probation for various acts of cheating?

Two of the league's "glamour" schools — Southern California and UCLA — were among those caught with their hands in the cookie jar. But did you notice that they hardly seemed to suffer from their punishment?

Both schools appeared on national television at least once (USC twice) and they both were ranked by the national polls. What gives? Aren't teams that are on probation supposed to be banished from TV and sacked by the NCAA so hard that they won't cheat again?

For one thing, the punishment doled out to both Los Angeles schools was by their league and not by the NCAA. The NCAA has the option to add to the probations if it sees fit, but from here, it appears that the NCAA has a hands off policy when certain universities are involved.

The scandals at UCLA and USC seemed to be far worse than an earlier one at Oklahoma. Yet, the Sooners were banished from TV, one poll, and bowl games for two years while USC and UCLA were only slapped on the wrist. Why?

One rumor (hopefully untrue) has it that the NCAA bowed to pressure from the ABC-Television network not to further

punish two of their biggest drawing cards (USC vs. UCLA, USC vs. Notre Dame, and UCLA vs. Ohio State were all big in the ratings).

If this rumor is even close to true, then the NCAA rules committee should go out of business. Why punish Oklahoma, Minnesota, or Long Beach State and let the "biggies" go scott free?

Another rumor says that if the NCAA really investigated the two LA powers, then a whole load of national titles won by both schools would be

forfeited! Is the NCAA too embarrassed to admit that these schools were pulling the wool over their eyes for all these years.

When the sanctions were announced against both universities last summer, fans of both said with confidence, "So, we can't go to the Rose Bowl this year, will make after that, the NCAA knows who to sack and who not to sack."

As I said, if any of this is remotely true, then the NCAA should bow its head in shame!!!

Albany St. Announces '81 Football Slate

ALBANY, GA. — A ten-game football schedule for the 1981 season has been announced by Albany State College's athletic director.

Wilburn A. Campbell released a slate with four home dates and six games on the road. Bill Williamson, about to begin his second season at the Rams' helm, sends his Rams against Morehouse in the season opener in Atlanta on September 12.

The first home game, a night contest, will be on September 26 against perennial SIAC power, Alabama A&M. After successive trips on the road — October 3 and 10, against Tuskegee and Bethune-Cookman in Orlando, Florida, the Rams return to the friendly environs of Mills Memorial Stadium for an October 17 date with Alabama State

Troy (AL.) State is the only new opponent on the Rams' '81 card. The two teams will meet on September 19 in Dothan, Alabama in a 7:30 p.m. kickoff.

Homecoming this year has been set for November 7 with the archival Morris Brown Wolverines providing the opposition. As has been custom for years now, Albany State closes its season with successive Saturday's competition with traditional intrastate rivals Savannah State (November 14) at Savannah and Fort Valley State (November 21) here at Mills Stadium.

Williamson's charges closed the season with two wins to end up with a 4 and 7 mark in '80. With 48 letterman returning and bumper recruiting year, the outlook for the season is one of optimism.



Bronze Medalist

Joe Russel of Charlotte practices his weightlifting. He won a bronze medal June 19 for third place in weightlifting competition at the National Wheelchair Games in Seattle, Washington.

Tarheel Takes Bronze In Weightlifting Nationals

Joe Russel of Charlotte won a bronze medal last Friday for third place in weightlifting competition in the National Wheelchair Games at the University of Washington in Seattle. Russel has only been lifting weights competitively since last year.

"Since I had placed first in two regional contests in weightlifting, I was used to the gold medals," Russel said. "But placing third in my first national competition against the fifteen best wheelchair featherweight lifters in the country, and this being the fourth meet in my entire life I have competed in, you could say I'm overjoyed."

Russel lifted 245 pounds, 15 less than the first-place winner. The national record set in 1976 is 275 pounds.

"Some days are better than others, but I know if I practice all year, I will be a top contender for the gold next year," the 24-year-old Russel said. Russel's participation

was sponsored by Wachovia Bank and Trust Company, where he works in Charlotte.

In preparation for the games, Russel worked out about four hours a day for several weeks before he left for Seattle June 16. "I've been lifting weights for five years, and that was the hardest I have ever worked out on a continual basis. I wanted to get to the point where I could press 260 pounds or better most anytime I wanted to."

During May, Russel competed in two regional contests for wheelchair athletes. At the Dixie regional games in Marietta, Ga., he finished first in weightlifting in the featherweight division. He also placed first in table tennis, and placed third in the shot put, javelin and discus contests.

At the Mid-Atlantic games in Fishersville, Va., Russel again placed first in weightlifting. "In order to go to the nationals I had to lift over 185 pounds at a

regional contest, and I lifted 255 in Virginia, so I guess that qualified me well enough," Russel said with a smile.

A car accident in 1976 left Russel's legs paralyzed. "I began using weights after the wreck to rehabilitate my body," Russel said.

Russel has approached weightlifting scientifically. "Learning anatomy has helped me understand how to tone up any muscle in my body," Russel said.

He follows a special diet, consisting mostly of fresh fruit and vegetables, with meat only once or twice a week. "In this diet, you can eat all you want a remain fit and trim and nutritionally very healthy," Russel said. He eats no sweets, except for foods which have natural sweetness, such as raisins and dates.

Total conditioning has kept him in shape for many activities. He plays on the Charlotte wheelchair basketball team — the Carolina Tar