

This is why I run

By Maj. Samuel L. Volkman
Far East District Central Resident Office

The 21st Annual Army Ten Miler was held October 2, 2005 at Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, the original race route had to be diverted due to security reasons during the actual running of the race and official times and places were not available. While disappointing to some of the individuals and teams who had hopes of winning (The Eight Army Korea Team would have won), the event only proved to strengthened my answer to the constant question of "Why do you run?"

Indoctrinated into the U.S. Army, we run for physical fitness. Yes, there are many physical benefits to running. Along with the 10 Miler, I'm preparing for a marathon (26.2 miles or 42.195 km.) in November, which has me running over 60 miles a week. This type of regiment pretty much allows me to eat anything and everything all the time and still not gain weight. Surely, running provides a great cardio respiratory and muscle endurance exercise. It increases the volume of oxygen that my body can process which allows me to perform longer without fatigue.

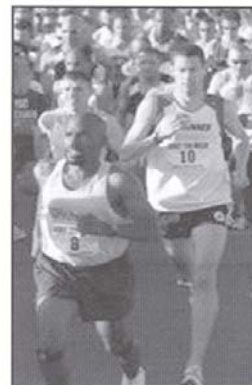
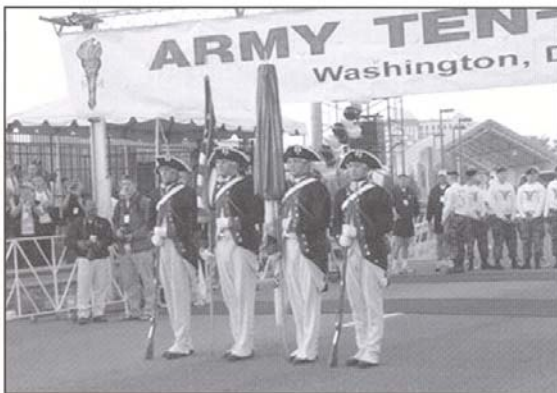
**My answer to why do
I run is simply
"I enjoy running;
it pleases me."**

Leaders tell us, we run for esprit de corps and unit cohesion. Yes, there is something motivational about a large group of people moving in the same direction. The energy level of 1000s of people standing eagerly at a start line or a company of soldiers singing cadence sends a chill down most anyone's spine. Individually, it is a lot harder to slow down when your peers to the front, left, right, and rear are counting on you. Definitely, a sense of accomplishment is felt when completing a race or run.

Others will tell us, we run to relieve stress. True, I have my best thoughts while running, and I have often been told by friends and peers not to run because of those thoughts. Yet, runners like dogs behave much better after they run. Scientists have proven the human body produces certain endorphins during extended exercise, which may or may not reduce stress.

My answer to why do I run is simply "I enjoy running; it pleases me."

(My unofficial 2005 Army 11.3 Mile Fun Run time was 1:00:28 which comes out to a 5:21min/mile pace, and I unofficially 22nd overall.)



Pictures of the start of Army Ten Miler 2005