

Full Time Mission Message #1

Elder /Sister xxxxxx

Recently Roger Banister died at age 88. He has been one of the mentors of my life. His accomplishment in running the first 4 minute mile had a huge impact on my life. When I was in high school I remember reading an article in I found in an old Scientific America. It showed all the veins and arteries in a the body and proved that the heart and lungs were not capable of producing enough oxygen to allow a person to run the mile in 4 minutes. That of course proved to be more of a psychological barrier than a physical one. On the 6th of May 1954 an Oxford University medical student, who believe the barrier to be physiological not physical broke the record for the first time.



Roger Banister breaking the 4 minute mile record on 6th of May 1954 at Oxford University. He was a medical student. He said, "I knew enough medicine and physiology to know it wasn't a physical barrier, but I think it had become a psychological barrier."

Roger Banister helped me understand that we can accomplish anything we want to accomplish in life if we have the will to do it. The thing that really helped me realize what Roger Bannister had accomplished was years later they were holding the Olympic trial races in Oslo Norway. There were 11 men in the mile race to see who would go to the Olympics. I was astonished to watch as 10 of the 11 men ran the mile in less than 4 minutes. Isn't that interesting that before 1954 no one thought you could do it so they could not and now several years later if you cannot run the mile in less than 4 minutes you can't go to the Olympics.

When I was at BYU we went to a football game one night and at half time they announced that the 1/2 time show was going to be the finish of the 26 mile

marathon race. The runners had started earlier that day and it was timed just right so that the first runners would arrive just as the ball game half time started. We all thought that was weird. As we sat waiting, after a few minutes they opened the gates at the end of the field and sure enough in came a runner. The race was arranged so that the last 2 miles would be run in the stadium. That is 8 times around the track. The first runner in was a red headed kid. I don't remember his name now. No one else came in until he had gone all the way around the track twice so he was 1/2 mile ahead of them. Then a couple of others came in but he actually lapped them a couple of laps later. By then we were all pretty interested in watching this kid run. The announcer told us that he was an All American runner for BYU. Then when he got to the 7th lap (now remember he has just run 25 1/2 miles) he actually started to sprint. I could not believe it. And then the announcer told us that he just ran that 7th lap in 5 minutes. I assume you know what a 4 minute mile is..... When I was in the Army, I got one of the highest scores you can get on the PT test. As a part of that 10 event test I ran the mile in 6 minutes. I ran one mile one time in 6 minutes. I was in top physical shape and out ran all the others. This kid did it in 5 minutes after 25 1/2 miles. We all stood and gave him a standing ovation as he ran that last lap and of course won the race. But he did more than win the race. He changed my life. As I stood there and watched this kid run like poetry in motion, I realized the hours and hours of effort he must have put into that accomplishment. The discipline and self-control he exerted to train and become more than just "A RUNNER FOR BYU". He showed me that if I had the will to do it, nothing was impossible. He changed my life. I am sure we watched the rest of the football game that night, but all I remember now from that night is him running that 7th lap in 5 minutes. There is nothing we cannot accomplish in this life if we believe we can.

Brother and Sister Vail

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