

Amazing Local Athlete Set to Run his 30th Consecutive Nautical Days 4 Miler August 3rd

In 1980, a 14 year old Steven Royer and his friend Willie Elder made a bet. "You can't beat me!" was the challenge. Both boys never ran a day in their lives but the Nautical Days 4 Mile Road Race would be the test. When everything was said and done Willie ended up beating Steve, but neither realized their boyhood bet would spark a lifelong love of running. Now 30 years later, Steven Royer is set to run his 30th consecutive Nautical Days 4 Mile Road Race this BC Day at 9am in Comox. The race itself is the oldest continually run race in British Columbia and this year will mark the 40th running of the Nautical Days race.

"In everyone's eyes, this was considered the impossible, to run the four mile foot race 30 years in the row," said Royer. "That was the beginning of my running career. That day inspired me to train and work hard. I was determine to beat Willie and if someone had asked me *"are you going to run for the next 30 years"* when I was 14, I would have said *"what planet are you from?"* I am living in a dream right now."



The following year Steve beat Willie. Since then he's won the Nautical Days 4 Miler 11 times, came second place 6 times and has won his age group every year since 1988. He's still racing but now gives back to the community by being a past race director for the Comox Valley ½ Marathon and a leader of running clinics, including an inaugural 4 Miler Clinic he led for this Nautical Days race.

Royer's most gratifying race was when he finally broke 20 minutes for the 4 mile course in 1995 finishing second to a young local running prodigy and now national class marathoner Jerry Ziak. When talking about past Nautical Days races, Royer laughed and told of a surprise visit to Comox by then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. Royer said "All of a sudden there was this black car showed up in the middle of the race with all these security agents. When the door flung open out popped Brian Mulroney! I almost ran right into his car."

Come join Steven and hundreds of other runners and joggers of all ages and abilities at the 40th Annual Nautical Days 4 Mile Road Race on Monday, August 4th at 9am. Registration is from 8am to 8:45 at Comox Town Hall, 1809 Beaufort Ave. Registration costs \$10.00 and refreshments and prizes are provided. Volunteers are welcome.

The Comox Valley Road Runners salutes Steven Royer on his amazing accomplishment and his ongoing commitment to community running development.