

# Dewald places 20th in Boston Marathon



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Matt Dewald had put aside his running career for his professional career, but a move to Colorado sparked a resurgence.

The Yankton native's return to marathon running paid off on Monday with a 20th place finish in the 117th Boston Marathon, clocking a net time of 2:19:35.

Dewald had returned to his hotel before the explosions near the finish line.

"My goal was to finish in the top 15 and run a 2:18, 2:19, so I hit my goal for time. Place-wise, I was other people wouldn't run as well and I'd place higher," Dewald said by phone from Boston after the race. "But it went well. I'm very happy with my time. My training pointed that I was ready to do that."

Dewald's former high school coach, current

University of South Dakota head cross country and assistant track and field coach Dan Fitzsimmons, said that the USD track and field offices were buzzing about Dewald's accomplishments Monday afternoon.

"We're all excited here in the offices," Fitzsimmons said. "Matt's probably one of the most committed and dedicated runners I've ever had go through our high school program and they had go through the University."

"It goes back to that adage that good things happen to those who persevere. He's been able to balance everything and still find time to train at the level you need to train at to be that successful. That's just a credit to him. He's basically done a lot of this all on his own."

Dewald, whose running resume includes victories in the Lincoln National Guard Marathon in 2009 and the

Monumental Challenge Marathon in Hill City in 2007, had been focused on qualifying for the 2012 Olympic Trials. But when he didn't make the trials, he stepped away from competitive running for more than a year.

"I was disappointed in not being able to get that breakthrough. I put a lot of time into it, so it was frustrating," he said. "Also, I had a pretty busy year with work, getting married and moving and so forth. I thought I was going to be done with running at that point."

Dewald, a physical therapist, found his passion for running again when he and his wife Hannah moved to Denver, where she is completing her residency to become a OB/GYN.

"Once I got out to Colorado, I started training again," he said. "Now I have some goals to accomplish again."

Dewald's clocking ranks him seventh among SD natives all-time in the

marathon.

The hours leading up to the race are "kinda chaotic," Dewald said.

"With 27,000 runners, leading up to the race, I was outside, freezing cold, standing in line for porta-potties. That was a bad start to the race," he said. "But once the gun went off it was absolutely perfect, 50 degrees."

Dewald followed Dunlop's advice, and his splits were nearly identical, despite the course being tougher on the second half.

"I was stuck in no-man's land for 5-to-10 miles of the race, then I caught up to a group of runners that I kinda tucked in with for 10 miles, until we hit the hills. Then I made a break there," he said. "My splits were pretty even on a course that is tougher on the second half. I ran well. I didn't hit the wall or anything like, so I'm happy about that."

With a personal best time behind him, Dewald

is now looking at another shot at qualifying for the Olympic Trials.

"My next focus is to qualify for the 2016 Olympic Trials," he said. At time of 2:18 is needed to qualify, and times do not count until Aug. 1 of this year. "My first chance will probably be the Twin Cities Marathon, which is also the USA Championships, and that's in October."

And Fitzsimmons is happy to watch Dewald continue to excel.

"That's what we always said was so great about running, was that it wasn't something you had to give up after high school or college," he said. "It's not like some of the team sports, where you need 22 people to play the game. Here's something that you can always do on your own, it's a lifetime activity."

"Most people aren't able to stay with it long enough to have the experiences that Matt's having right now."

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