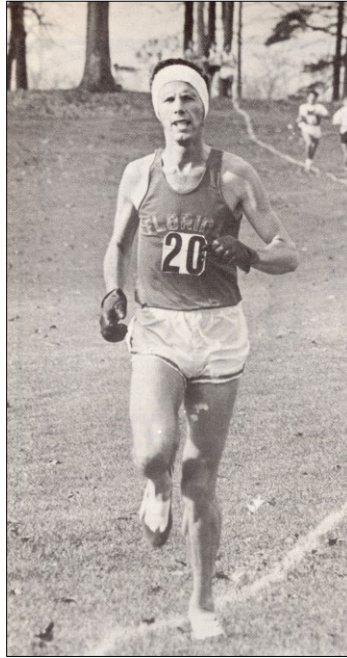


Jack Bachelor – Birmingham Seaholm 1962



At 6-6, Bachelor played basketball for Seaholm High, but as a senior, he decided to try the cross country team. He found he liked it better, saying, “I was skinny and not real aggressive.” In his only high school season he ran 3rd in the mile at the Class A Finals in 4:28.0.

At Miami of Ohio, Bachelor devoted himself to running, and the results came fast. In the '64 Olympic Trials, he placed 11th in the steeplechase. He finished 7th in the NCAA cross country that fall, and in 1966 he was NCAA runner-up in the steeplechase. But longer distances beckoned.

After graduation, he became part of the Florida Track Club where he would put in plenty of miles with Frank Shorter. He made the Olympic 5000 squad in 1968. In Mexico City, he qualified for the final, feeling good in the high altitude. “First, it was enough for me to make the Trials,” he said. “Then when I made them, it would have been enough to make the team. Now that I’ve made the team, I’m thinking about placing.”

However, dysentery struck and Bachelor was unable to even make it to the final.

Over the next few years, Bachelor won two USA titles at 6M/10K and another in cross country. Famous for his brutal training, he and Frank Shorter worked themselves into incredible shape. In 1972, after failing to make the Olympic team at 10,000 (he was passed in the stretch for the last spot, then disqualified), he opted for the Trials marathon, placing 3rd.

At the Munich Olympics, Shorter won the gold, Kenny Moore placed 4th, and Bachelor finished 9th. It was one of the best U.S. team marathon performances ever. For Bachelor, it was torture. He feet swelled up in the closing miles. Four runners passed him. He lost 9 toenails.

He summed it all up: “If there’s one quality that a distance runner needs above all others, it’s persistence.”

He earned a total of 12 Track & Field News Top 10 U.S. Rankings: steeplechase (No. 6 in '66), 5000 (5 times, No. 1 in '70), 10,000 (5 times, No. 1 in '69) and marathon (No. 3 in '72).

Professionally, he made his career as a professor of entomology; he is currently a professor emeritus at North Carolina State, specializing in cotton pest management.