

Jacqueline Hansen...A Giant in women's distance running



Born in Binghamton, New York, Hansen moved to Southern California at age eight. Hansen began her career in track & field at Granada Hills High School where she excelled in all events. At California State University, Northridge she became serious about long distance running. In 1972, she won her first marathon, the Western Hemisphere Marathon in Culver City.

In 1973, Hansen won the Boston Marathon. Training under Laszlo Tabori, going to college and working full-time, she repeated her win of the Western Hemisphere setting her first world record of 2:43:55. In 1974, she won the collegiate mile champion title and graduated from college.

In 1975, Hansen became the first woman to go below 2:40, winning the Nike-Oregon Track Club Marathon in Eugene, Oregon in 2:38.19. Only two months later she won the Honolulu Marathon in course record time.

In 1978 Hansen set several American records at the 50-mile AAU Championship track race. She also won three Catalina Marathon titles and at age 36 qualified for the 1984 Olympic Marathon Trials for women. Additionally, she was World Masters Association (WMA) Champion in the 1500 and 5000 meters.

As gritty and determined off the track as on the track Hansen was instrumental in gaining women the opportunity to compete in long distance races. As President of the International Runners Committee she and her group lobbied and cajoled the running establishment to include the women's marathon in the Olympic Games. She spearheaded an international class action lawsuit against the IOC to gain the 5,000 and 10,000-meter races for women in the Games as well.

Hansen was a volunteer coach for Team Diabetes for seven years and continues to do private coaching. She was Athletic Director, Health and P.E. teacher, Track & Field and Cross Country coach at St. Monica High School. Subsequently she also coached track and cross-country at Brentwood School, Notre Dame High School and St. Bernard's High School.

Her teaching credential and Masters degree in Education were completed at Loyola Marymount University, where she continues to teach Health Education to teacher credential candidates in the graduate division of the School of Education. Jacqueline also coaches Track & Field with Olympian Willie Banks for World Record Camps all around the world.

She has received various awards including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Southern California, Annual Award for Leadership and the Athletics Congress-USA Annual Recognition Award, "Woman of the Year." She is a Road Runners Club of America (RRC), Hall of Fame Inductee. She was inducted in the Cal State Northridge Hall of Fame in 1988.

In 2004, Jacqueline was honored by the Southern California Association of USA Track and Field with a Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2012, she was inducted into the USA National Distance Running Hall of Fame.

In 2013, on her 40th anniversary of winning the Boston Marathon she was the official starter for the women's elite field. In 2014, she was awarded the Women's Leadership Award by Running USA, and in 2015 she was awarded the Joseph Robichaux Award by USATF Women's Track and Field Committee at their annual meeting.

In 2018, she was honored with the Road Race Management Lifetime Achievement Award. She was also recognized by California State University, Northridge with a Volunteer Service Award, representing the Athletics Department.

In December 2021, Hansen was honored by the Museum of World Athletics. She donated her world record shoes to the MOWA Heritage Collection which are displayed in their Monaco location and their virtual museum. They were part of a traveling display at the 2022 World Championships in Eugene, OR in July 2022 (the site of her record breaking performance).