

## Marathon Man, by Bill Rodgers and Matthew Shepatin

By Gary Pulver

This is the first of many book reviews about running that I will be posting at Clines Running Corner. I am partial to books that tell the story of runners and what they have accomplished. There also are technical books, how to run books, and even some running novels that are quite good that I will be reviewing, but I probably will review many like *Marathon Man* as they are my favorite kind of books about running.

*Marathon Man* is quite special to me because I was able to purchase this book directly from Bill Rodgers in West Virginia before a 10K that I ran there. I was drawn immediately to his booth before the race started and got to speak to him for quite awhile. He was there to both start the race and to be there at the finish line. He had run that race before but was not running it that year. I remember him giving me lots of advice but the one thing that stuck out the most to me was his strong recommendation that I do as little running on concrete as possible.

This memoir is written in two parts, all of the events that led up to Bill's running and winning the Boston Marathon for the first time in 1975, and a detailed account of the 1975 race itself. Bill details his past, which includes countless laps around a local reservoir where the path was softer than the road, a time when he quit running and even took up smoking, and a gift from Steve Prefontaine a few days before his memorable race.

Such running legends as Amby Burfoot and Frank Shorter frequent the pages, but Bill and Matthew are wonderful about telling Bill's tale. You will feel like he is talking only to you when you read this book. You will marvel at his training techniques. Bill did so much to help in the running boom of the 70s and still does his part with the current running boom. He ended up winning the Boston Marathon and the New York Marathon four times each.

*Marathon Man* is available at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) for \$20.55 in hardback and \$12.99 for the Kindle edition. I also found the book available for \$10.95 at [half.com](https://www.half.com). This book certainly helped motivate me to sign up for my first marathon. I am very proud to have it in my collection.

Some Editorial Reviews as can be seen on Amazon:

"I've been reading Bill Rodgers' book, *Marathon Man*, and they let him go. And I tried to visualize that, race the way he did." —*Meb Keflezighi, moments after winning the 2014 Boston Marathon*

"This book is more than a good read. It's my new Bible." —*Fitness*

“An absorbing portrait...of the grueling stress and subtle strategizing of long-distance races, and of the plucky, slapdash subculture of marathoning in its salad days.”  
—*Publishers Weekly*

“Bill Rodgers is the most celebrated men's distance runner in history.” —*National Distance Running Hall of Fame*

“If anyone can rally runners to a cause, it is Rodgers, who remains by some measures the most popular road racer of all time” —*Runners World*

“Trace the popularity of road running today, and the roots lead back to Rodgers.”  
—*South Bend Tribune*