



MEMBERS FEATURE KEVIN CASS



Kevin is a friendly face who loves to greet new runners, especially at Druid runs. He leads our 5:15 am morning runs each week and is a regular on the local race circuit. Make sure to say hello to him next time you're on the trails before sun-up!



What's your running background? How did you find trail running?

"The 2007 St. Margaret Foundation Fitness Classic 5K was the start of my running journey, and I never looked back...unless it was to check who's on my heels. 2018 was the year I really started pushing beyond 5k and 10ks, with my first half marathon. Now it's full marathons, 50 milers, or whatever challenge I want to push for next. Trail running was always just the occasional fun run in the woods while camping until 2018, when while hiking the RCTC I had to run the last 9 miles to avoid the cutoff. That's when I really caught the bug. In the spring of 2020 I ran my first NPTR run with the Druids and found a great community to be a part of. I really do wish I could make more of the weekly runs, but my kid's activities tend to dominate my evenings."

Favorite go-to gear?

"If you haven't guessed by now, I'm not a fan of pants. I love my VRST Accelerate Run shorts, specifically for the phone pocket built right into the boxer-brief lining. But I also love my Altras. I just wish they had a longer lifespan."



Where is your favorite place to run?

"The south ridge has so many options. I love the variety in the routes and terrain. You could run there every day for a month and find a new route each time."

Any races that you find memorable?

- 2020 RCTC (Rachel Carson Trail Challenge): Canceled for Covid, so I ran the entire RCT on my own instead...on the hottest day of the year, 90s!
- 2020 Northern Ohio Marathon: First "in-person" full marathon.
- 2022 RCTC: I was finally fast enough to get out ahead of the "Friends and Family" hike by maybe 30 seconds. Those who know, know.
- 2022 Baker Trail Ultrachallenge: First "official" 50 miler."



How do you find motivation on days you don't want to run?

"I tell myself the worst day on the trail/road is still better than sitting in the office working. And sometimes I still give in and miss a run. It's not always easy. But regardless of whatever slump you're in or how long the time off has been, it just takes one run to make progress."



What's your life like outside of running?

Kids. With an 8- and 5-year-old, they dominate my life and they're totally worth it. As a family we love car camping and beach vacations. We're huge fans of Cook Forest and Marathon Florida. When not running or with the kids and family, I love to play guitar. I was in a blues/rock band that went on long-term hiatus following the Covid pandemic. We're just now starting to pull something back together. I guess this is a good opportunity to plug my next gig. Wednesday night Rock n Bowl at Arsenal Lanes, May 17th 9PM-midnight, all-you-can-bowl with live music."

Why North Park?

"It's Awesome! Whether road or trail, flat or hilly, there's always great options. They just need to add a track at the football field and I'd be in heaven. And I can get to just about any corner of the park from home in about 5-15 minutes."

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