

## Bob Baumel

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*Photo Credit: RRTC Measurement News*

Bob became interested in course measuring when he lived in Canada from 1976 to 1981. He obtained a copy of Ted Corbitt's measuring instructions, bought his first Jones Counter, and got some courses certified in a fledgling Canadian certification program.

Upon returning to the US in 1981, Bob moved to Oklahoma and became the Oklahoma Certifier in 1982, at a time when only a few other states had certifiers, and served in that role through 2005. Bob also served as Arkansas Certifier during some of the early years.

In late 1982, Bob began corresponding with Pete Riegel (who would later become RRTC Chair) and became a frequent contributor to Measurement News. In 1983, he was part of the team that measured the marathon course for the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, and spent the next 7 months analyzing the data from that measurement.

From 1986 to 1992, he was Vice Chair West, and served as RRTC Secretary from 1993 to 2014.

In 1995, Bob turned some of the web pages that were being hosted for RRTC by the Road Running Information Center into a separate website for the Council. In 1996 he became the RRTC Webmaster, a position he continues to hold.

In addition, he experimented on aspects such as calibration course length and effects of surface roughness to help determine some of the procedures currently in use. He did calculations (along with Pete Riegel and Alan Jones) on effects of slope and wind, helping to define the rules on record eligibility. He has contributed to every edition of the *Course Measurement Procedures Manual*, and has been the editor of that publication since it went online in 1999.

## Alan Jones

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*Photo credit: Alan Jones*

Alan is the inventor of the “Jones Counter), the odometer-like instrument which is the only official device for measuring road race courses around the world and has been used to measure Olympic Marathons since 1976.<sup>1</sup>

In 1970, Alan ran a race near his home town that was advertised as 20 km, but his finishing time told him the course was short. Calibrating his car’s odometer on an Interstate highway, he found the course to be about a mile short. He then became the race director of the race, changed the venue, and needed a way to measure the new course. Using a counter from an old IBM machine and lashing it together with the gear from a bicycle odometer, he measured the course using Ted Corbitt’s instructions on how to measure a course. It took three measurements before Ted certified the course.

In 1972, Ted asked Alan to make 15 of the new measurement devices for him to distribute to other measurers. Alan asked his nine-year-old son, Clain, to make the counter which he did until he graduated from high school in 1982. In total, Jones made a total of 2,341 counters before turning the business over to the New York Road Runners Club.

Alan is also the author of the popular race management software *RunScore* and the creator, along with Rex Harvey, of the USATF/World Masters Athletics (WMA) age-grading tables. In addition, he founded of the Triple Cities Runners Club in the Binghamton, NY area and was president until 1986. Over the years he has trained several club members how to measure courses so that now Binghamton is known by runners as an area with many certified courses.

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<sup>1</sup> A detailed “History of the Jones Counter” can be accessed at <http://www.usatf.org/About/Committees/Long-Distance-Running/Road-Running-Technical-Council/Historical-Information/Jones-Counter.aspx>

## David Katz

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*Photo credit: David Katz*

David is widely renowned in the both USATF and IAAF, and is regarded by many to be a pioneer and an authority in the technical facets of course measurement. Over the past 40 years, he has measured more than 1,000 race courses and served both organizations in a variety of positions that require expertise in the technical aspects of road races, and track & field events. David measured his first road course in 1976 assisting with a local Turkey Trot and he has not stopped measuring since.

In 1978, he became a member of the AAU Standards Committee— chaired by the Ted Corbitt. He knew Ted Corbitt personally and considered him, in David’s words, “my teacher, mentor and friend.” David also wrote some of the original course measuring articles as well as being a member of the National Running Distance Center. Working with Ken Young, David performed some of the earliest “verification measurements” which led to the acceptance of American and World road racing records.

David is an IAAF/AIMS “A” Grade measurer who has measured in several states and countries, and at the highest levels of competition in the sport, including the four Olympic Games Marathons and race walks. He was the only appointed Road Course Measurer for the London Games in 2012, and again at the 2016 Olympics in Rio. He has also served as Technical Manager in several USA Olympic Marathon and Track & Field Trials.

Within USATF, he currently is or has served as a member of the Rules Committee and the Master's Long Distance Executive Committee. He is the USATF Technical Manager at the Masters Level, as well as a Master Official. As an RRTC officer, David has long served as the Finish Line Chair and was a contributor to both the USATF Course Measurement Manual and co-author of the USATF Finish Line Manual.

Within IAAF, he is a four term member of the IAAF Technical Committee, and one of only three international road race officials for the world. He has served as the International Cross Country & Road Race Official (ICRO) and is only second American to have served as a Technical Delegate at a World Championships –World Juniors– 2010, World Indoors 2012 & 2016. He is also a member of the Editorial Board for the IAAF Facilities Manual.

The founder of Finish Line timing company in 1978, David has since assisted in over 3,000 races internationally. He has also worked extensively with the New York Road Runners and serves as the course surveyor and technical advisor for the New York City Marathon.

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## Tom Knight

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Photo credit: Blane Bachelor

Tom became involved in course measurement in the early 1980s. He had noticed that runners' times in races of the same distance seemed to vary wildly. So he started attending meetings with other measurers on the West Coast and doing his own measurements after running races. A physicist and computer analyst, Tom was meticulous about measurement methods and quickly gained a solid reputation for accuracy at a time when the sport of road racing was becoming professionalized. In short, his pioneering efforts at validating road races helped drive home the need to make initial course measurements more accurate.

Among his many accomplishments are historical validation measurements of several high-profile races. In 1982, he validated the Nike OTC Marathon – the year Joan Benoit set a new American women's marathon record. In 1983, prior to the Bay to Breakers race, he discovered that the course was short of the advertised 12 km distance and convinced the organizers to adjust the route. That year he was also part of the measurement team for the 1984 Olympic Marathon in Los Angeles. In 1984, along with David Katz, his re-measurement of the New York City Marathon found the 1981 point-to-point course short by nearly 150 meters, thus invalidating the apparent world-record setting times of Alberto Salazar and Allison Roe.

With nearly 490 certifications currently on the USATF Course Search site — and many more that preceded the creation of the database — Tom continues his course measurement activities to this day, together with a long-standing involvement in the measurement of the San Francisco Marathon and Bay to Breakers, as well as other prestigious races such as the Big Sur Marathon and the Napa Valley Marathon. In RRTC, he has been the regional certifier for Utah and Colorado and, since 1988, for Wyoming. He is also a contributor to the Course Measurement and Certification Procedures Manual. In 2010, Tom was the recipient of the USATF Scott Hamilton Award bestowed by the Men's LDR Committee for leadership at the Association level.

Tom best sums up his course measurement career in a 2016 *Runner's World* article in which he was quoted as saying: "Just because somebody has something stamped and it says it's certified doesn't mean that it's accurate. I wasn't trying to make a name for myself. But I just thought that races that were advertised as certified should be the right distance. These were big important races, and a lot of top stars ran them. So I knew if any course was to be accurate, these should be."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Blane Bachelor, "Elite Course Measurer: 'I'm a Real Pain for Some Race Directors'"  
<http://www.runnersworld.com/general-interest/elite-course-measurer-im-a-real-pain-for-some-race-directors>

## **Amy Morss**

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*Photo credit: Amy Morss*

Amy was a leader in the integration of women into the field of course measurement, and was RRTC's first woman final signatory.

She began measuring in Connecticut in the early 1980s while serving as registrar for TAC in that state. After reading an article about the need for more measurers, Amy later wrote, "I bought the manual, a Jones Counter, and off I went." Soon she met Wayne Nicoll who, along with his wife Sally, became Amy's mentors in measurement.

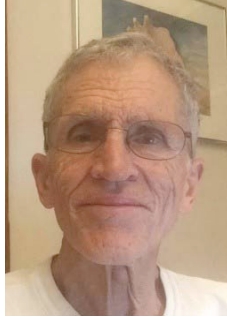
In 1988, after relocating to New York, Amy was recruited to join the first all-women's measurement team for the 1988 Olympic Marathon Trials held in Pittsburgh. She continued her involvement in Olympic-level measuring for the 1992 Women's Olympic Marathon Trials in Houston, as well as the 1996 and 2000 Women's Olympic Marathon Trials held in Columbia, SC.

In 1990, in another first, Amy was appointed Regional Certifier for New York, marking the first time a woman was a state certifier, a position she retained for 16 years before stepping down at the end of 2005.

Amy is now retired and resides in Florida.

## Bob Thurston

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*Photo credit: Bob Thurston*

Bob's career in course measurement began in 1980 with a phone call to help measure a course. Up to that point his participation in road running was as a winning ultra-runner and a 2:23 marathoner. But after learning what course measurement was all about, he found a whole new way to contribute to the sport he loves – one that he says is at least as exciting as running – and he continues to give back to the sport to this day.

Early in his measurement career, Bob worked closely with his mentor, AJ Vanderwaal. Together they would go on measurement expeditions. Bob would then complete the paperwork and map, and submit them to Ted Corbitt. In this way he was able to learn from AJ's expertise as a professional surveyor.

In 1983, Bob went on to become appointed regional certifier for DC, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia. Currently, he serves in that capacity for DC and Virginia. He has also contributed to the Course Measurement Procedures Manual. Throughout this long career, he has continued his prolific work as a measurer. As of December 2016, Bob had measured a total of nearly 880 courses for certification. As an IAAF/AIMS Grade A measurer, he has measured course in Indonesia and South Korea, and has travelled many times to Bermuda, both to measure and to train new measurers.

Bob admits to being just as fanatical about measuring as was during that phone conversation 36 years ago. He enjoys the biking, the math, drawing the maps, the involvement with distance running, meeting lots of great folks, and being part of the team of smart, dedicated measurers in RRTC. His current ambition is to find, encourage, and mentor more (younger!) folks to continue the work of course measurement.

## Ken Young

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*(Photo credit: Dobson Images)*

Ken began measuring road running courses since 1972. His first certification was for the then-TAC/USA 30K national championship in Chicago in 1973. The course comprised a two mile loop measured with a steel tape by a team of people “each holding a wooden block with a large nail protruding to guide the tape around curved sections.” Since then he has measured scores of courses in California and Arizona, many of which are in the online database.

Ken worked with Ted Corbitt early on in establishing the procedures and methods of course certification. When Ted instituted the short course prevention factor, he notes, that “made it possible for me to advance rules for road record keeping and get them accepted by (then) TAC in the early 1980's.” His contribution to the process was the post-race validation for records. He arranged for David Katz to do the first validations, these for the Gasparilla 15K and Jacksonville River Run 15K, again in the very early 1980's.

Along with Pete Riegel, Ken was also instrumental in establishing the Road Running Technical Council by getting Pete's appointment to chair the RRTC cleared through Bob Campbell, the (Men's LDR Chair at the time.

Ken's contribution to the sport, however, extends well beyond his course measurement activities and deep into the realm of record-keeping statistics for road race performances. In the 1970's, Ken founded the National Running Data Center and – because he had a lot of the data necessary to do so – was subsequently asked to keep road records for the LDR Committee, which he did officially from 1979 to 1988. Since 2003 he has headed up the website ([aars.net](http://aars.net)) for the Association of Road Running Statisticians (AARS), which the worldwide “go-to” resource for virtually any kind of road race record.