

Former Jesuit runner Jordan Schilit inspires others with his pen

By [Joey Knight](#), Times Staff Writer

Thursday, July 30, 2009

TAMPA — They say it's tough to quantify initiative. Yet **Jordan Schilit** has medals — and manuscripts — to prove otherwise.

In the span of a decade, the 18-year-old **Jesuit High** graduate has evolved into a self-made runner and self-published author.

His distance-running career to date, from his first 5K in flip-flops to his 4x800-meter relay team's victory at May's Class 2A state track meet, is chronicled in a 180-page book titled *In the Long Run*.

Retail price of this initial literary endeavor: \$16.95. Profit, however, isn't the point. **Schilit**, who will run next fall at Division III Haverford College just outside Philadelphia, said the book was borne of detail and benevolence.

"I'm a pretty meticulous note-taker," said **Schilit**, who has reams of running logs stowed in the bedroom of his Avila home. "(The book) kind of went along with Haverford's mission to try to change the world. I figured writing a book, you know, helping people in the world, one runner at a time I guess."

As **Schilit** explains from the outset, the book's purpose is intended to "inspire anyone who has a desire to excel, despite having ordinary skills." A de facto autobiography, it's comprised of anecdotal evidence, photos, newspaper excerpts, charts and graphics chronicling **Schilit**'s rise from prepubescent recreational runner to scrawny Jesuit freshman to state champion.

"I was impressed with his humility," said **Jesuit cross country coach Greg Maurin**, who watched **Schilit** win a district title and place seventh at the 2A state meet last fall.



[Courtesy of Jordan Schilit]
Jordan Schilit's self-published book, a product of his precise running logs, is aimed at "anyone who has a desire to excel."

"A first reaction might be, 'What business does an 18-year-old who doesn't have much life experience have writing a memoir?' But I was surprised how accurate and how humble he was in terms of writing of his achievements."

Physiologically, **Schilit**, guided through the book-writing process by his dad and some self-publishing Web sites, bares his soul — and skinny origins. He makes no secret of the fact that he entered Jesuit as an 80-pound ninth-grader who was informed by then-Tigers coach **Mike Boza** he would have to add calories to his diet if he were to shed seconds off his times.

By essentially transferring the notes from his running logs to the pages of his book, **Schilit** details the training programs and workout schedules that helped him evolve into a state track champ who routinely eclipsed the 16-minute mark in 5K races.

"It's hard enough for me to get guys to keep track of their mileage from week to week," **Maurin** said. "So it's extremely impressive to me how he kept logs of all these workouts ... over all that time. That's extraordinary."

Schilit, marketing the book through a Web site (inthelongrunbook.com) and mailouts, said he has sold a "few hundred copies." He hopes to increase sales by putting it on Amazon.com and eBay, among other sites.

"First, it's really neat to write a book before I even graduated," said **Schilit**, who acknowledges pulling several all-nighters in an effort to finish the book before starting college. "But I think more important is, someone who started off as a freshman, for him to get to the level I got to as a senior by reading my book, that's a great reward."