



Samuel Huber

The Trash Man

Milwaukee runner creates a global green movement that really moves. BY HOLLY NEARMAN

SAMUEL HUBER IS AN ECO-RUNNER. In fact, the first one.

The 28-year-old Milwaukeean concocted the idea in the spring of 2007 while on a litter-infested run through Lake Park. His concept is simple: Bring a plastic bag on a run, walk or hike, and pick up any garbage along the way.

"To be running with trash bags, you get a lot of strange looks," he says.

Not that it's fazed him. Huber averages seven full garbage bags per run. That's 35 bags a week, 140 a month, 1,820 bags of litter a year. "And that's just me," Huber says. "I think to myself, 'What if everyone did this?'"

For Huber, who was an environmental policy major at UW-Green Bay and is now a physical education teacher in Grafton, eco-running is a way to combine his love for fitness with his passion to create a more sustainable world. "Milwaukee is a pretty dirty city," he says. "You never run out of trash to collect."

Huber started a blog (eco-runner.blogspot.com) to name the movement and inspire action from others. And it's catching on. Huber says he gets e-mail from supporters across the world, and his blog gets up to 100 visitors daily from as far away as France and Singapore.

Keep California Beautiful adopted an eco-running theme for the 2008 Carlsbad Marathon, which attracted about 700 eco-runners. Huber ran the marathon in 3 hours, 37 minutes, filling 28 bags along the way. Milwaukee's Lakefront Marathon also plans to incorporate eco-running into the 2009 event.

"Our plan is to invite Sam to be a part of the race and showcase the 'leave no trace behind' concept," says Kristine Hinrichs, race director of the Lakefront Marathon. "It's important that we don't leave trash out there. We have a beautiful community and course that people from all over the country come to."

Atayne Sportswear, a company dedicated to producing sustainable performance apparel, has even contacted Huber to form a partnership. "We're working together," Huber says. "I believe this is the forefront in running." ■