



## **Correcting Footstrike: Running Slow to Run Faster**

by Ken Mierke

Almost every runner naturally reaches forward with the foot in an effort to artificially lengthen the stride, maintain balance, and make some use of the unnecessarily thick slab of runner under the heel of running shoes. Many runners understand that landing with the foot directly beneath the hip is more efficient, but still struggle to make this change.

One way to make it easier to keep footstrike in the correct location is to practice VERY slow running. I have many very fast athletes (sub 5 min/mile triathlon 10K males, sub 6 females) run extremely slowly as drill work when trying to adjust footstrike placement. Frequently I will have the athlete run in place on a stationary treadmill for 1 minute and then increase the speed by 1 mph each minute until they reach basic endurance pace to complete the warmup. This may seem silly, but running this slowly makes the technique that will help you run faster almost automatic.

Placing the foot out in front uses momentum to carry the body up over the position of footstrike, where the athlete can extend the hip to generate propulsion. With almost no forward momentum, the foot MUST remain directly beneath the hips at footstrike. Be careful, every time you increase speed, to generate propulsion for the speed increase in the rear quadrant, underneath and behind the hips.

*© 2005 - Ken Mierke is author of *The Triathlete's Guide to Run Training* and developer of *Evolution Running*. Two of Ken's fifteen clients won world championships in 2005 using these techniques. More information is available at [www.EvolutionRunning.com](http://www.EvolutionRunning.com)*