

Shoes run into an investment

By Johna Jo Maurer
Battalion Reporter

When you make an investment of \$20 to \$100 for a new pair of running shoes, be sure you make the right choice.

To pick out the right shoe, consider how far you run, the surface you run on and the way you run, said Terry Court, manager of The Locker Room in Bryan. These factors affect the durability of your shoes, he said.

"If someone plans to run more than a couple of miles, a shoe in the \$30 range is best," said Rick Gorzycki, manager of Wyatt's Sporting Goods. Shoes in this price range will have better cushion and overall support to absorb more shock when you run on a hard surface, he said.

Runners with knee or ankle problems need shoes with more padding on the bottom, said Mark Hawkins, assistant manager of The Sportsman's Den. He said a heavier runner needs a different shoe than does a lighter runner.

Hawkins said buyers at his store usually choose running

shoes by brand, and they most often ask for Nike.

Nike is the first choice of running shoe buyers at both Wyatt's and The Locker Room, too. Adidas and Brooks are also big sellers.

Gorzycki said Nike's advertising really helps its sales. People see actors and athletes on TV wearing Nikes and they want that kind of shoe, too.

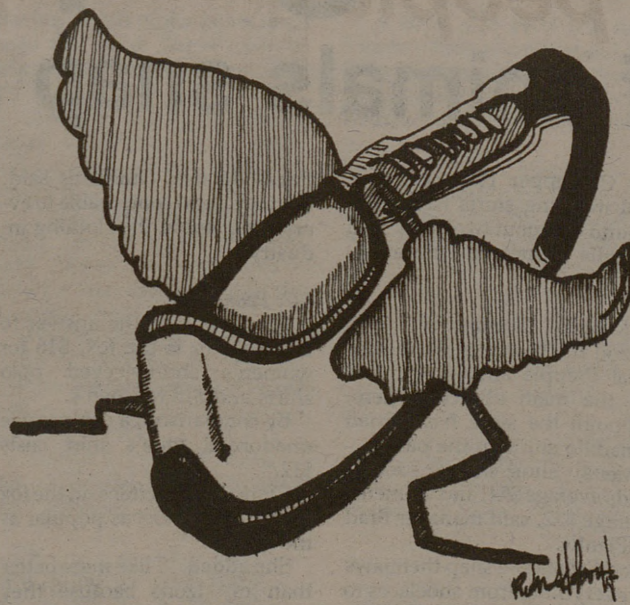
Court said the prices of the various brands are justified by the quality of the shoe.

He said his store carries a New Balance shoe costing \$72.95; this American manufacturer also makes a \$100 running shoe. The lightweight quality and materials used are the reason for the higher prices, Court said.

Nikes are priced from \$21 to \$60.

Buyers on a budget sometimes want a multi-purpose shoe, but with the greater specialization in athletic shoes, it's harder to find a versatile shoe today, Court said.

If a shoe buyer tries on a less-expensive brand and then tries



on a higher-priced one, the difference can be felt, Gorzycki said.

Hawkins said that Autry makes a less expensive shoe that is just as good as a more costly one; Autry just isn't a well-

known name.

Different brands of running shoes vary not only in price but also in type of sole. Some have waffle bottoms, some have smoother ones.

Waffle bottoms are designed

to absorb some of the shock taken by the feet and legs while running.

Gorzycki said shoe manufacturers are moving away from waffle bottoms back to the flatter type soles.

People select running shoes by color, too. Maroon is popular in College Station, but Court said it isn't as popular this year as last.

Other colors popular with running shoe buyers are white-on-white, blue-on-white, combinations of blues, and gray-on-maroon.

Running shoes also are chosen for leisure purposes. "The running bonanza is over now and it's the big thing to wear tennis shoes for everyday use," Court said.

Wyatt's manager said shoes made for running don't wear too well when used for other sports, however.

Although Nike may be the most popular brand of running shoe now, Court said people are always looking for something different. "They are always ready to try something else and when they read about a new shoe, they want to try it."

Making a necklace piece by piece

Add creativity with add-a-beads

By Mary Jo Rummel
Battalion Reporter

What are shiny, round and adding up as fast as the enrollment at Texas A&M University? Add-a-beads.

Add-a-beads are small beads that can be bought individually and added onto a necklace chain in any number or combination.

Although the smooth 14-karat gold beads are the most popular, textured gold beads, pearls and beads of jade, lapis, amethyst, tiger's eye and other semiprecious stones are available.

Gold beads range in size from three to 12 millimeters, and four to seven millimeters are the most popular. Karen Parlin of J. C. Penney's jewelry department said stones are usually seven or eight millimeters.

"Some people organize beads in graduated sizes but others prefer to stick with one size," said Manager David Gardner of the Diamond Room in College Station.

"Some people aim at filling the whole strand, but other people prefer just a few," Parlin said. It takes about 75 beads to completely fill an 18-inch chain.

About 50 percent of the add-a-beads sold are bought as gifts for special occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries. The add-a-beads are a relatively inexpensive way of giving a gift of 14-karat gold, Gardner said.

"It is hard to buy for some

ladies," said Barney Mauro of the Jewelry Store in Bryan. "And the beads are a good gift for special occasions.

"After the initial investment of the chain and starter beads, buyers can watch for sales and add on whenever they can."

Prices of beads range from under a \$1 for the three millimeter beads to \$160 for a ten millimeter bead set with a 10 point diamond.

Seven millimeter beads usually cost about \$4 to \$6. The prices for stones range from \$1.50 to \$17.50, depending on the size and rarity of the stone.

"Our average sale is about \$10 to \$15," Gardner said. He added purchases of up to \$500 have been made.

Buying beads and building

your own necklace costs about the same as buying a ready-made necklace, Mauro said. The key to the popularity of the beads is the individual can pick and design her own jewelry with different types.

Serpentine, rope and loose-linked chains of 16 and 18 inches are most popular for the bead necklaces, Parlin said. The most popular starting kit usually contains three beads.

The gold beads have been around for about two years but the popularity of the beads "took off like gang-busters" last Christmas, Gardner said.

About six years ago add-a-pearls were introduced, so this is really the second time around for the adding idea, said Debbie

Reichert of Lindsey's Jewelers.

Gardner said the add-a-bead idea has "potential for staying around for a while" because of the trend of more conservative

designs in jewelry, but no one can guarantee a fashion trend will "stay."

Add-a-beads are definitely "in" and adding up to fashion.

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