

THE STARTING LINE

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Letter from the Editor: Bob Fernee

Wow, that was quite some Gate River Run, wasn't it? The biggest and best yet? You bet. It is amazing how Race Director, Doug Alred, manages to tweak it and make it just that little bit better every year. He and his experienced race crew do an incredible job of putting all the stuff together and getting to happen on race day. An absolutely phenomenal amount of sheer physical work, I am sure.

What more can you say about the incredible Richard Fannin? Thanks to his single-handed, hard work and dedication a great field of elite runners toed the line on race day. It is due to Richard that the TenBroeck Cup came into being and it is also due to him that the Gate River Run has the most competitive team competition in America. A big thank you goes out to Richard.

Then there is the expo, all organized, as usual, by Jane Alred. I have been to a lot of expos and the GRR expo is one of the best. She did a great job of planning and executing the whole thing. The expo was also good for our club. Our booth signed up a slew of new members and sold a pile of our club merchandise.

The "other" river runs were great successes as well: The Florida Times Union 5k-Run for Charity, the adidas Junior River Run and the Diaper Dash. Club members, Jim VanCleeve and April Patterson, conducted the latter two events respectively. Thanks guys, great job!

The day before the GRR I got a phone call from Board Member, Colleen Clarson. She said television channel 4 wanted to do a story about one of our famous Streakers and she thought of me. Would I do it, would I let the cameras and the reporters into my life?

Wow, reality TV! Maybe I could turn this into the next 'Real Housewives'? I could just picture it: 'Real Running Shoe Salesmen of Baymeadows Road'. Starring me!

The reporter arrived at my workplace, 1st Place Sports, along with his microphone-holding assistant and said that to begin with he would just follow me around, camera blazing, and get some "action footage." Sure, pal, action is my middle name.

Then he would ask me some impromptu questions that I could answer as I liked. So I chose charmingly, intelligently and, of course, humorously; this was going to be easy. Besides, my audience deserves nothing less.

"What's it like to be a Streaker?" he began.

"well ... umm" I said, trying to find words and wishing there was a script.

"It's a badge of honor but also a monkey on my back."

"It means that on a certain day in March I will get out of bed and do a certain thing that I have done for over 30 years whether I want to or not."

"And there have been a few times when I haven't wanted to."

"But I have always felt that if I let my streak go I would regret it and then I would start missing the race, not showing up, and I know I would feel bad about that," I replied.

I knew this was not great TV. "This thing won't survive the pilot episode," I admitted to myself.

The piece aired on River Run morning at 7:45 right when I was posing for photos with my fellow Streakers. I didn't even set my recorder, why torture myself?

Club member, Nicole Andress, has taken over the position of Membership Secretary from Rex Reed. Rex did a fabulous job for many years and we sincerely thank him. Nicole, an up and coming runner on the local scene, who is not really the daughter of screen legend Ursula Andress (though due to a striking resemblance many think so), will be perfect in this important position. Thank you for taking it on, Nicole.

Now that the GRR is behind us it may seem as though the club is in a rather fallow period. Don't you believe it; our involvement in the Summer Track Meet Series continues and there will be two meets this season held at the University of North Florida.

As I write, we have two board members representing us at the Road Runners Club of America convention in Memphis.

Then we have our gala, the JTC Running annual awards banquet (normally held in June, actual date to be announced), which is something not to be missed. More details later.

In this issue, Mark Ryan has written another installment of his Ultra running column. This time he provides us with a stride-for-stride account of the Wolfson Children's Hospital 55-mile Ultra. It is an interesting account and a very good read, I know you will enjoy it.

Another club member, Nancy Pullo, tells us of her experiences in Guatemala. A recent vacation there convinced her to return and run in the local marathon. She invites you to join her and she will even organize your trip. It is very affordable and a spectacular course. Feel free to contact her at Nancysluggo3@gmail.com. Speaking of races, the new Guana Preserve 12k Trail Race, originally scheduled for April 7, has been moved to October 20 and will be run in tandem with our JTC Running Guana 50k Trail Ultra.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Greetings!

The 35th Gate River Run is a wrap! It was a great day for running- cloudy and cool, and more than a bit windy to evaporate all that perspiration! There were a record number of participants, but Todd Williams' record set in 1995 still stands! Mo Trafeh gave it a good try but came up exactly a minute short. On the female side Janet Cherobon not only finished first but, with the seven minute head start, she beat Mo to the finish line! Janet took the \$5000 First-to-Finish prize.

The traffic was heavy and constant at the JTC Running booth at the Runner's Expo where the Club's new vertical flags gave a more open atmosphere than the tent we used in previous years. Merchandise sales were driven by the availability of new hats and visors sporting the Club logo ordered by Merchandise Committee Chairlady Carol Fitzsimmons. A half-off sale of some inventory clearance items proved very popular. More Club memberships were sold than ever before at an expo, helped by the ability to accept credit card payments on the spot. Applicants were amazed to receive their phone text message receipt before leaving the booth! Thank you to all Board and Club members who staffed the booth, especially Franz Lerch and Doug Tillett who stayed until closing Friday night.

Outdoors, our Club Vice President Larry Sassa did a great job of organizing the Club hospitality tent. Members enjoyed coffee starting at 6:30 Saturday morning, the ability to check a bag during the race, and Firehouse Subs and beverages after the run. Having port-o-lets exclusive for Club members was also very popular. For next year, a bigger tent and more port-o-lets may be planned as Club members seem to really appreciate these amenities. Thank you to Rex Reed, Tom Kimbrough, Ellen Sassa, and Judy Roberts for their valuable help.

Board member Richard Fannin did a fantastic job of recruiting a strong field of elite runners from all over the country. Together with numerous volunteers, Richard

ensured that the elites' Jacksonville and race day experiences would motivate them to return.

My view of the race itself started at the walker's starting line where several hundred of us waited for our turn to start. We could see wave after wave of runners depart the main starting line two blocks ahead and the 5k participants two blocks behind. We crossed the walker start timing mats at 8:45 and found the course open when we made the turn onto Gator Bowl Boulevard-- unlike last year when we merged into the nine minute a mile pack of runners!

One of the perils of being a walker is finding water stations empty by the time you get there. This was certainly not the case anywhere along the route Saturday! All the stops were staffed and well-organized, and much appreciated by those of us at the tail of the pack. The volunteers from Coach were particularly enthusiastic in the execution of their duties!

I started to try to pick the best band on the course, but each one seemed better than the last until I realized they were all great. The number of people setting up lawn parties in front of their homes along the course seems to grow each year- it seems like one big block party now! At several points, banners were hung across the street over our heads. This all added to the thrill of being part of the biggest participatory event in the city of Jacksonville!

A special thanks to Race Director Doug Alred, Stuart Toomey, and literally dozens of others who worked nearly round the clock last week to present a very well organized event. A big reason for the Gate River Run's growth year after year is the quality of the experience enjoyed by the 20,000 plus participants, from the elite runners up front to the walkers bringing up the rear.

Finally, huge gratitude to Gate Petroleum for their continued support of this incredible event. Many of the Gate team volunteered before, during and after the race. A number participated, including Herb Peyton who at age 80 ran a fantastic 11:02 pace, and Jeremy Smith who ran a 7:55.



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Run A Real Exotic Marathon This Time!
The Lake Atitlan Marathon/Half Marathon
In Guatamala, May 27, 2012
Fun, Exciting, Challenging and Affordable
Nancy Pullo at Nancysluggo3@gmail.com



New/Renewing Members - Feb/March

Amy Alexander
Mike and Joan Altes
Tracy Antone
Travis Baker
Joe Barton
Marcia Barton
Keizzy Bell
Johanna Bienvenue
Steve Bruce
Ellen Carson
Sherry and David Catalano
Bryan Cichon
Nicole Clifford
Terry Collins
Michael Cowart
Rob Cowles
Helen Crawford
Tracy Darnell
Heather Davenport
William and Tammy Dockins
Diane and Bill Dowlin
Dan and Nanette Duffy
Liza Faison
David Froysa
Carley Glasser

Peyton Godwin
Abel and Brenda Greene
Erik Habres
Michael Hartley
Thom and Shirley Henkel
Tony Hudspeth
Lewis and Terry Hunt
Jennifer Jaress
Skye and Robbie Johnson
David Kattreh
Sam Langham
Kevin and Wende Larrimore
Jeanine Latimer
Mark Lay
John and Emily Leeds
Larry and Diane Longenecker
Joseph Macaluso
Manuella McDonald
Newt and Megan
McKissick
Patricia Miles
Erik Mueller
Ted and Beth Nelson
Sheila O'Connor
Maureen and Todd O'Donnell

Heather Monroe-Ossi
Chris and Jodi Parliament
Joel Perales
Gary Proctor
Donald Rasdall
Cheryl Rice
Mitchell Ritchie
Tammy Romanczuk
Jean Schubert
Richard Seal
Kathleen SESCO
Leo Sheckells
Allan Smith
Charlotte Smith
Megan Stephens
John Stivers
Marc and Mimi Tyson
Gregory Umberger
Roger VanDusen
Christine Vaughn
Craig Walcutt
James White
John Wisker
Teri Zehnacker

Back To Nature and On Your Calendar
Saturday, October 20, 2012
JTRunning presents
The Guana Trail 50k Ultra & 12k Trail Race



The Gate is a Great Motivator

Written by: Colleen Clarson



One of the most wonderful things about an event like the Gate River Run is how it involves so many people, best of all, when this includes children. Since November 2011, Cindy Glass, a teacher at Hendricks Day School, has done a great job training 22 middle school children to run the 9.3-mile race.

How many of us would have considered running that far at that age?

JTC Running Board Member, Colleen Clarson, interviewed Mrs. Glass just a few days prior to the Gate River Run.

CC: At which school are you, and are you a teacher?

CG: I am at Hendricks Day School of Jacksonville, which is at 1824 Dean Road. We are a small, preK3 through 8th grade private school with just over 300 students. The school is in its 41st year of existence. This is my second year at the school. I teach band, music for grades 2-5, and PE/health for grades 6-8. Prior to moving to Jacksonville in 2009, I taught high school and middle school band and coached cross-country (and other sports) in Ohio. I have always had a passion for both sports and music and have been fortunate enough to be able to teach both over the years.

CC: Were you a runner prior to this?

CG: This is my 30th year as a runner. I played basketball and softball until I entered college, then took up running. I ran mostly 5k races and was successful, but then began to extend my runs. I enjoy running marathons and my personal best time is 2:49, but it's been a few years since I've been in that neighborhood in terms of finish times.

I also ran cross-country at age 34 as a graduate student

(teaching full time, carrying 11 hours and running cross country at the same time) for Ashland University in Ohio. It was crazy but I learned a lot from an outstanding coach. I finished third in my age group at last year's River Run, but won't be racing this year because I want to stay with the kids.

CC: Are you training the students yourself?

CG: Yes, I outline the training plan for the students and the adults. My husband, Nathan, who will be running his very first River Run this year, comes out to help supervise during longer runs. I usually ride my bike on their longer runs so that I can keep an eye on everybody.

CC: Is this part of their PE class, or a separate class you created for them?

CG: The Gate Training class is separate from their PE class. Our middle school students have what is called ENCORE classes during their first block of the school day. The middle school staff is encouraged to offer a class that is an interest or area of expertise of theirs, and the students get to choose which classes they would like to take. These classes include video game design, math club, drama, art, recycling club, life/study skills, and others. Last year, I had a 5k training class where the students prepared for the Marty 5k. A few of them thought it would be fun to try to complete the River Run this year, so I asked our middle school principal if we could offer the training as an ENCORE class in 2012. She enthusiastically agreed, and so here we are.

CC: Are the 11 colleagues you reference all also associated with your school?

CG: We actually have 16 faculty and staff members participating in the race. We all have matching shirts with our school logo on the front and the back, a phrase that was voted on by the participants. It reads: If found on ground, please drag to finish line. We might as well provide a little humor out there while we're at it!

CC: It sounds like you have great support from your administration ... yes?

CG: Definitely! The administration readily agreed to let us do this and has been very supportive. As a matter of fact, our elementary school and middle school principals will be participating in the race as well. They want to see our students and faculty being active and setting goals for themselves. Our athletic director, who is also the school's bus driver, takes us to run bridges, track sessions, etc., when the training calls for it.

They also allowed me to start a cross-country team this fall (also an ENCORE class), and we had a very successful first season. These running classes would never have happened without the support of our administrators, the teachers and staff at school, and the parents.

The Gate is a Great Motivator

CC: How excited are the kids?

CG: They are very excited, but also nervous. The idea of running in such a large race is daunting. I've been talking a lot about what to expect on race day and we've gone over the River Run website together. I told them that they are about to become a part of a small group of 11/12/13/14 year olds who are participating in this race, and that is something to take pride in. Our goal is simply to finish the race and to enjoy the entire experience. I do have a few students who have time goals, but those are secondary. I really think that the magnitude of their accomplishment

won't hit them until they cross that finish line and receive their finisher's medal.

One thing that I am very pleased about is the fact that not one student has dropped out of the class since it began in November. Unfortunately, one young man, who was progressing very well in his training, cannot participate because he fractured his arm during a basketball game.

These kids have been a joy to be around and I'm also very proud of my colleagues who have come so far as well.

River Run Memories

Written by: Monica Landeros-Jimenez

Another great Gate River Run is behind us! I am sad to report that this year I did not get to run this great race. I am just getting over an old IT Band injury that came back to haunt me this summer after I had a (terrible) idea to run three marathons in three months.

That idea cost me the Gate River Run this year, but I still have some good memories. I got to see my husband, who did the smart thing and ran two marathons in three months, earn yet another River Run medal and collector's pilsner glass. I don't think he knows it, but I hung his running bib up in the garage with all our other bibs too.

He would be too humble to tell anyone, but this race was the perfect end cap to months of rigorous training. My husband has been running for years, but last year for his 2011 New Year Resolution he decided to run 100 miles a month. He stuck to it and dropped about 30 pounds by the end of the year. Now, in 2012, he has been a strong, disciplined, and proud runner.

This year, his Gate River Run time hovered in the 1:22 time. It is so neat to see him intrigued by all the other runners. Right after the race this year, he was telling me all about the top 10% finishers, and how he wanted but did not qualify for a top 10% finisher hat this year and probably never would. We both marvel at just how fast some of those top runners are during races like the Gate River Run!

I think the Gate River Run is a good "goal" marker for a lot of runners, like my husband. It is not as long as a half marathon and it is not as short as 5K. It's a good gauge to see how your body has responded after the dreaded heat of summer runs has passed. For this reason, and many more, the Gate has become more popular year after year and the field keeps growing.

What a great signature run for the city! I know that I'm already looking forward to next year's River Run. I'm going to make sure to take care of my legs and not overrun them just because "I'm so strong from all this training." I'm already excited just thinking of running over the Main Street bridge with my fellow runners and staring down at the St. Johns River through the grates, running through neighborhoods like San Marco and seeing fun spectators pass out mimosas, and of course, flying over the Green Monster while a Marine supporter plays a march beat on a loudspeaker.

The Gate River Run isn't just "good times" for the runners, it also makes a lot of good memories for those watching their family or friends train for months. Now, I do have to grab my husband's Gate River Run pilsner glass and put it in his lunch bag so he can proudly put it on his desk at work. Keep running friends! See you at the next race!



Kim Pawelek - Olympic Trials Recap

Written by: Trib La Prade

Photograph: Wendy Johnson Patterson



Kim Pawelek headed to her fourth Olympic Marathon Trials in what might be the best shape physically and mentally of any of her previous three - definitely better than 2004 or '08. Leading into the Trials, her workouts were going just as they should have, every week was getting a little better, and her interval times were faster than when she ran her qualifying time of 2:41:30 in the 2010 Jacksonville Marathon.

She said: "I went into it with a great attitude, wasn't too nervous, no expectations, but nervous enough to where I was looking forward to it." Her goal was seemingly modest: "break 2:40". Then at mile two, the Stitch got her again (see following article: Lull and Resurgence). It was a nasty one that made breathing particularly painful. Tricks to relieve it didn't work and she had to slow down. She finished up in a much better time than she thought she would (2:50:39), a clear testament to the shape she was in.

Whether or not she goes for OT number five remains to be determined. Over the past ten years she has matured in her training mindset and seems to completely embrace the coaching philosophy her husband/coach Keith Brantley advocates. Kim Pawelek now possesses a really great basis to be in her best shape ever in 2015, even at 42 years old. Her challenge, besides the Stitch, is to keep her competitive nature from trashing her body.

Kim Pawelek Part II, Lull and Resurgence

Kim Pawelek has been a running fixture in Jacksonville for the last decade. In the January/February 2012 issue of *The Starting Line*, (you can also get the first half on JTCRunning.com/Articles/Persons of Interest), the first half of this story

left off as her 'young-running-star-on-the-rise' status was descending into the over-training quagmire so many athletes experience at some point.

Kim was also transitioning away from her long time University of North Florida coach, Mark VanAlstyne, to a new guy on the scene, Keith Brantley.

Keith is an Olympian from 1996 and a five-time Trials qualifier ('84 - 2000), running the 5K, 10K, and Marathon. He packs a 2:12:31 Marathon PR in his bag of credentials and was winding down his competitive career while developing an interest in coaching. Occasional trips from Tampa to hang out and train with Jacksonville fast guy Jerry Lawson (Jerry briefly held the American Marathon Record: 2:09:35) brought him in contact with Kim. Over time, Kim and Keith developed a coaching and romantic relationship.

Keith has a level of experience in both running and international competition that is hard to top. He brought Kim a mindset for doing well as an "older runner" - when the recovery periods are longer and planning becomes more critical to hold the body together. He also brought a long-term approach to competitive running and the concept that one can't improve every year. Kim would have none of it though. She was, and is, stubborn (and admits it freely). She was still young and just ran hard like in her younger days, doing the same workouts that had worked previously. She occasionally had a good race that made her think she was doing things right. But those 'teaser' races were never marathons, her specialty. No flags yet, stubbornness was still winning.

They moved to Asheville, North Carolina in the fall of 2003 to take advantage of "some" elevation training in the rolling foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains - kind of a Colorado-Lite training environment. This was a part of her final cycle leading into the 2004 Olympic Trials slated for April in St. Louis. She went into the Trials feeling okay: "I knew I wasn't going to be a contender, but if I had my great day, maybe top 15, top 20", she said. It wasn't to be though, a stitch (a cramp in the ribcage of her torso) set in and it wouldn't resolve. Her pace had to slow, and she finished well back in the field. The stitches were starting to make regular appearances in high stakes events and were beginning to really frustrate the then 30-year old. She was mad and finished with competitive running. She went home to Asheville and took time off.

Eventually, and pretty much out of exercise boredom, she started running again. That part of the country lends itself to trail running, so she did a lot of it, taking advantage of the 'free-speed' that running up and down hills provides. "I just started out doing whatever I felt like doing, not really doing any workouts; I just ran the hills hard and took advantage of

Kim Pawelek - Olympic Trials Recap

running in Asheville's mountains and trails," she said.

In June of '04 she ran Grandma's Half-Marathon (Half-Marathon National Championship in Duluth, Minnesota) on a whim just to see how she'd do. Admittedly she had some residual workout shape from the April Trials, but no structured workouts. It proved to be another 'teaser' race, running 1:15:32 for a 6th place finish, only 30 seconds out of second place. Deena Kastor kicked the backside of everyone's compression shorts, coming in 4:33 ahead of second place. But this time it was different: Kim hadn't really 'trained' in her mind; the gut wrenching track intervals and the self imposed pressure to exceed her target times wasn't there, and it was enlightening.

Keith and Kim re-strategized to low pressure, unstructured workouts, based mostly in high mileage trail running. It was great for a while, but eventually reality dictated that legitimate (tempo, intervals, speed) workouts had to be a part of the equation. Her challenge was to not let the pressure of her workout target times get to her. Recovery times needed to be longer as she became older; and finally she realized that running as hard as she had been would lead to injuries, more frustration, and set backs.

They moved back to Jacksonville in 2005 and continued training. Living near Beauclerc, it was convenient to use Forrest Circle for intervals and longer repeats. She would still hit the tracks occasionally, but over time she realized it was taking longer to recover from track workouts than from the same workout on Forrest Circle. Gradually, the Circle became her track. Keith would craft workout cycles and she would "hem and haw" about them, but still do them - sort of. If she was supposed to do an easy recovery run, she'd stay on pace for the first half and then gradually pick up to a hard pace until she was done. She believed in what he was advocating, and had even experienced some of the benefits of being better rested, but her competitive nature was making it hard for her to tone down the workouts that were supposed to be 'easy' or even 'medium' paced. She wasn't listening to her body; she wasn't being smart about recovery ('recovery' doesn't always mean doing nothing; more accurate term is 'active recovery' doing an 'easy' workout is a form of recovery). Her mindset was still rooted in "Further, Farther, Faster", and every now-and-then a teaser race would confirm, in her mind, that she was training right. Keith's ideas were slowly sinking in, but competitive stubbornness was still winning.

The 2008 Trials happened in April as an adjunct to the Boston Marathon. The Stitch happened again, her time was not good by her standards, 3:07:27, and she placed one spot ahead of the last woman to finish. She should be commended though. Feeling awful and knowing her time was going to be bad, that same competitive nature that ran

her too hard in practice pushed her to finish, 24 women dropped out.

Again, like after the 2004 Trials, Kim was over competitive running, had enough, not doing it again. She bought a road bike and hit the streets of Jacksonville. She was good at it too; all those years of running had her almost instantly sitting in packs rolling along at 24 mph for many miles. She was 'social running' some with friends. Life was good, competition was history, her psyche was clear. She was relishing working out without a structured format, stopwatches, target times and all that other stuff that jacked up the pressure. In November 2008, she wrote an article for the Starting Line about her 'love hate relationship' with marathon training (see it on line JTCRunning.com=> articles=> general running/particulars). Although written as if she were training for another marathon season, she was definitely still "over it" and sounded like she could leave it forever, despite "being in love with that 'hurts so good' feeling" after a hard, leg-numbing workout.

At this point, Kim had been on a competitive running hiatus for 14 months. In June 2009, she decided to enter Jacksonville's Run for the Pies 5K. The competitive monster took over and she hammered out a 17:37 to win. Three weeks later she ran 17:49 at the Celebration Run 5k on July 4th. She wasn't in her usual 16s, but it was run on over a year of social running, bike riding and no stress. Keith's preaching from over the years was making more sense - she was getting it. Stubbornness was starting to lose.

They evaluated Kim's condition and made plans to go for a fourth Olympic Marathon Trials. She continued training as she had through the winter of 2009, biking and social running, even through the Gate River Run. Then she started training cycles with qualifier marathons as the end point for each. Her workouts emphasized paying better attention to her body's feedback, to not run herself into the ground and keep recovery workouts at recovery pace.

First up: Grandma's (Duluth) in June 2010. A three-month cycle may be kind of short, but she'd run well there before, and it would be a good evaluation to see what needs to change with training. She ran a 2:49:29. Good start, but not a 2:47 Trials qualifying time.

Next cycle: Houston in January 2011, same location as the Trials a year later in 2012. Training continued and incorporated Jacksonville's fall Half-Marathon races and the Jacksonville Marathon. The day of the Jacksonville Marathon was supposed to be a 22-mile training run where she would use the company of the race to help



Kim Pawelek - Olympic Trials Recap

grind through that week's long run. Crazy things happen though and she found herself on pace to qualify for the Trials, by a lot. As 22 miles went by, she kept going. At 23 she found herself alone and kicked in the last 5K solo, running a 2:41:30 and qualifying by five and a half minutes.

Now the trip to the 2011 Houston Marathon in January could be ditched since the qualifying time had been achieved. This was a good thing, because the Jax Marathon had set off a round of Achilles tendonitis in her right leg. It took a good five months to get where she could run again. During that time, most of her aerobic training was on the bike. In June, she ran a 1:18 at the Grandma's Half-Marathon, which seemed pretty good considering her still tender Achilles. By September, the injury was gone and she embarked on one 18-week cycle leading to the Olympic Marathon Trials in January 2012.

Athletically, Kim's past decade has been long and sometimes painful. But through some fortuitous occurrences, the disappointments of two previous Trials, and the persistence of husband Keith Brantley (they married in November 2011), Kim Pawelek has resurrected herself and her form from ten years ago when she was a 'rising star in the US distance running community'.

- More pictures from the Marathon Trials can be seen on Wendy Johnson Patterson's Facebook page (the album is 'public')
- More pictures from the Photo shoot can be seen at TribLaPrade.com/Recently
- What makes a Kim Pawelek? See JTCRunning.com/Articles/Persons of Interest

Reflections of a River Run

Written by: Bob Fernee

It was the 35th running of our club's greatest event, our showpiece: The Gate River Run. And for the 35th time I was making my way to the starting line of this great race. In the old days, I mean the real old days, circa 1978; the start and the finish of the River Run 15,000 (original name) took place along Coast Line Drive in front of the Daniel Building (probably never heard of it, have you?). On this particular morning, March 10th, 2012, I made my way for a line along the road between EverBank Field and Metropolitan Park.

"It could never be the same," I thought. "The excitement and drama of those first few River Runs compared to now. No matter what, it will never come close."

Much as I still love and enjoy the River Run, sadly, it never will.

At 7:15 AM, there weren't many people around. I took a minute to take in the swelling scene. I mused: "Man, this race has changed a lot since 2,400 people showed up for the first one in 1978."

I looked at all the construction: The tents, the banners, the stages, the trailers, the sound system, the scaffolding and everything else and said to myself, "How does all this come together? What a job! This isn't a race, it's a temporary city."

I showed up extra early so that I could have my picture taken with the other 42 Streakers, those who have run every one of the River Runs.

"Oh dear, what a grizzled old bunch of geezers we have become!" I said to myself. That is, but for Carol Newby, our only female Streaker. She still looks 30 ... or so. And the eternally youthful Pat Gaughan, our speedster, complete with his ageless, dark-as-night hair. I could have hair like that, if I dyed it three times a day.

After the photo shoot I ran off to Metro Park to have my solo, Zen-like warm up. It was great: Just the park, the mighty St. Johns River and me-very nice.

Back at the starting line, I watched as the elite women sprinted out seven minutes ahead of the elite men and the rest of the field of some 20,000 runners.

"That's a lot (of time), more than a mile," I remarked to St. Augustine's running legend, Bernie Candy, standing next to me. He agreed.

The late Whitney Houston, I knew it would be Whitney, sang the National Anthem and then we were off. I got away smoothly and swiftly. Soon the Maxwell House coffee plant filled the air with its pungent, aromatic scent as we ran by. I like coffee, so to me it was enjoyable; those who don't, well, perhaps not so. Remember when there were two Maxwell House plants and the company decided that one of them had to go? It was Jacksonville or Hoboken, New Jersey and we won. I always wondered what Frank Sinatra, still alive at the time, felt about that. He's from Hoboken, you know.

After our mini tour of downtown we surged over the Main Street bridge and onto the South Bank. Soon we were into beautiful San Marco and as we ran along River Road where the fishermen fish and the river's waves crash against the embankment, I thought of the wind. The wind was noticeable but not yet an obstacle. I recalled



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the GRR of a few years ago when the wind whipped the water so much that the waves splashed over the wall and on to the passing runners. What fun! It was merely humorous at that point, but later, on the Hart Bridge, the humor turned serious, dangerous, and almost violent.

“Not nearly so bad this time,” I thought.

We traversed beautiful San Marco and the crowds were as plentiful and wonderful as ever. I got the impression we were all feeling pretty good and still enjoying ourselves.

Some of the spectators were already boozing it up and smoking cigarettes, quite a contrast. “People choose different lifestyles,” I thought. “This can be painful, but this is far better.” Observing the healthy looking runners around me I knew I was right.

As we were about to leave San Marco, approaching Belote Place, I heard one woman say to another, “that is a beautiful yellow tree up ahead.”

“Neat,” I thought, “to notice all the beautiful things around us in the middle of a world-class race.”

Physically, I was starting to feel it as we entered Atlantic Blvd. I grabbed a cup of water and threw it on my face and down the back of my neck. I was relieved but not for long.

There seemed to be music everywhere. It struck me that the Rock & Roll series of races prides itself on “music every mile”, but in our Gate River Run we must have music every half-a-mile (and we charge less than half the price).

The St. Nicholas neighborhood was as nice as usual and its inhabitants as welcoming and supportive as always. We passed the home of long-time track club member, Jeff Pruitt, and I thought: “That has to be such a temptation for him. He could just pull off, grab a lawn chair and a beer, make himself comfortable and pick up his car later.”

But he never has, what a guy!

I noticed that it was mostly downhill and I knew I had better take advantage of it as I was running out of gas. When we exited St. Nick and turned left onto Atlantic Blvd. we hit one of my least favorite bits of the course. There is not much to look at and it is a long drive, much of it on a slight up-grade, hard work, especially at this stage of the game.

On the dreaded entrance ramp to the Hart Bridge I had a very uplifting personal moment. My wife, Nancy, and son, have made a tradition of waiting for me at the base of the ramp’s climb. Once again, they were there. They yelled and screamed and planted kisses all over me. I posed for a photo with my seven-year-old son, Norman, named after his Grandfather, a familiar local runner, who set River Run age records while 62 and 63-years old.

Having them there has become my favorite part of the race, that, and the JTC Running Hospitality Tent at the end of it all. (If you are a club member and not taking advantage of that club perk then you need to rethink your race strategy.)

I felt rejuvenated as I attacked the worst part of the whole thing: The Hart Bridge.

The wind was firmly in our faces and fought us all the way up. I remembered the wind during the GRR that I wrote of earlier and said to myself, “it’s bad alright, but no where near that bad.” It was unrelenting though and slowed our progress on the descent where we should have been having an easy run in.

With three-tenths of a mile remaining, I started to feel somewhat refreshed and attacked the finish line with all I had left. It wasn’t much and I ended up with a run that was three minutes slower than the one before. Oh well, when you are an aging Streaker you learn to take what you’re given and be (somewhat) happy with it.

As always, it was a great event and a wonderful moment. And on top of it all: The Streak is Alive!

Back To Nature and On Your Calendar
Saturday, October 20, 2012
JTCRunning presents
The Guana Trail 50k Ultra & 12k Trail Race



How to Choose a Running Store

Written by: Gene Ulishney, BS HPE, LMT, CPed

Every runner who is serious about his or her sport, and wants to run comfortably and virtually pain-free, has no choice but to try to find the best running store in their city. And, there are certain things to look for to help you make your best decision.

The first thing that you want to find out is: “are they really interested in me or do they just want to make a sale?” The second, “are they knowledgeable and well-trained?” And third, “do they have any special training or additional credentials?”

Be pleasantly mindful that most running-related problems can be “cured” by a knowledgeable salesperson. And most running stores carry an array of products to positively supplement your shoes. Running shoes are your most important pieces of equipment, but they are not the final word on comfortable running or injury prevention. Until someone invents some type of contraption which custom-mold shoes to your feet, there will always be a place for products such as foot supports and protective socks. So, don’t necessarily be put off by a salesperson suggesting additional “accessories” along with your shoes - as long as he or she clearly explains the benefits of each. Be put off if they don’t offer options that may make your running experience better and more pain free.

So, how can you tell if a salesperson is well-trained and tuned into really helping you, personally? One of the first questions a proactive salesperson should ask is: “Ok, tell me what hurts, either during or after your run?” When I’m working with a runner I sometimes have to ask 4 or 5 times before issues arise. Don’t take pain as status quo for running. Make a list and bring it in. With the right advice, this simple interaction could offer you years of pain-free running.

Always bring your worn running shoes with you when purchasing new ones. They can reveal a myriad of information that will be helpful with your new purchase. The salesperson should analyze them and explain why they are, or are not, working for you. From abnormal wear patterns they may even be able to tell you what hurts. Along with being able to explain why they feel that you are having a problem, they should also explain why their suggested recommendations should provide relief.

Running shoes all work differently and are made to potentially help different biomechanical issues. Some work better than others for a specific problem. Some just work better than others. They also are all shaped differently. Always ask what other runners are experiencing with the shoes you are trying on. “What is their track record?” “Do you have many returned?” Be suspect if you are told that “they all work alike”, or “all features are the same, it’s just how this company does it”. Always ask to try on their best-sellers for your particular needs. They sell best for a reason.

If you are still having problems in the days or weeks following your new purchase, go back to your running store for re-evaluation. Sometimes you cannot be fixed on the first try. Or someone else in the store may see a different solution for you. If not, it may be time to try another store. If left occurring too long, your pain will probably develop into an injury, which will stop you in your tracks. Most of the time, this doesn’t have to happen. Keep running!

Barefootin’

Written by: Bob Fernee

This minimalism thing just won’t go away. I thought it would die in six months or at most, a year. But the year has come and gone and minimalism is now even more rather than less. Yes, more people are thinking about it and more are trying it out.

What is “minimalism”? You might be saying that to yourself. It really comes down to the shoes. Minimalist shoes are flatter, lighter and they sit lower to the ground. One of the main things is their “drop”. Drop is a term used in the running shoe business to indicate the difference between the height of the heel in comparison to the height of the forefoot. These thicknesses are measured in millimeters. For decades the height of the

heel has been 24-millimeters and the forefoot has been 12-millimeters. This has been considered the industry standard.

But why, and how?

Running shoes in the 1970’s and earlier were lower to the ground, flatter and a lot like the shoes now currently being touted as “minimalism” shoes. I think it was about 1980 when Nike invented its first air-soled running shoe, the Tailwind. Nike created a big, fat airbag to be inserted into the Tailwind’s heel. But low and behold, the airbag didn’t fit and in order to make it fit Nike increased the height of the heel so that it could be hollowed out and the airbag neatly inserted. Problem solved; the thickness of the heel? Yes, 24-millimeters.



Barefootin'

The question of the forefoot thickness had to be addressed. A pie-shaped angle was engineered: 24-millimeters narrowing down to 12-millimeters at the toe. In the biz, this became known as 24/12.

(Today you hear of “zero-drop” shoes, meaning that a shoe could be 12-millimeters thick at the heel and 12-millimeters thick at the toe, or less. So there is no drop at all.)

That was it; and all other running shoe manufacturers (who at the time were already chasing after and imitating Nike) followed suit. Soon it was believed that thicker meant better and sure enough midsoles got thicker and thicker.

Nike had Air so all the others had to have something to clutch on to. Asics created Gel, Saucony made Grid, Adidas produced adiprene and Brooks came up with Hydroflow. We now had running shoe “technology”. It would never go away, it would only become more involved and complicated. That’s “progress”.

Runners became increasingly “shoed”. Then, an unknown fellow by the name of Christopher McDougall wrote a book, *Born To Run*, and turned an entire billion-dollar industry on its head. Talk about the power of the pen. Now we are seeing a plethora of thinner running shoes: It’s the 1970’s all over again.

The most startling part is the trend towards barefoot running.

What does that mean? It means getting as back to barefoot as possible and no company has led this charge more than the Italian company Vibram. You know, the “toe shoes”.

Yes, those funky looking, weird, paper-thin things that look more like gloves than shoes. Believe it or not, they are selling by the ton.

I now have a pair of Vibram toe-shoes and what is even more weird is that I am running in them. Yes, me, the guy who was so down on the whole idea and declared it nothing more than a passing fad.

I run in my Vibrams from my house, one mile up to Jacksonville University, and a few miles or more on the grass and trails, then home again on the road. I really enjoy the barefoot running sensation provided by the Vibrams and I think for that sort of application they are great. I tried my “Veebs” at the beach and they were great. I’m not sure, but maybe it is good for my feet and to let my feet be free and “do the work”, as they say.

Vibrams make a useful second or third pair of shoes and could be an important part of the runner’s arsenal. Would I run long distances on the sidewalk or road in such a thin shoe? No, maybe not, but a lot of people do. It can be done, obviously; maybe I’m just not that brave.

No doubt, if you are not running in the ‘good form’ way, that is, striding more on your mid-foot to forefoot rather than slamming down on your heel, you will be in trouble. Well, maybe not trouble but in pain. Heel strikers cannot survive in minimalist running shoes.

If you are interested in moving in the direction of ‘good form running’ or less shoe, then I would suggest trying one of the following shoe models before getting into zero-drop shoes: Brooks Pure line of shoes, the Cadence, Flow, Grit and Connect; the Newton line of running shoes; the New Balance Minimus Trail and Road shoes (look also into the new 890v2) and the Asics 33 series, like the Neo and the Excel.

Barefooting experts always talk of “transitioning” into these shoes and this type of running, other by running infrequently in the zero-drop shoes or by using something like a 4-drop shoe before trying a zero-drop. That choice is yours, of course.

I think that the minimalism shoes have their place and just as finishing off a workout with a few barefoot strides on a grassy field can be good for your feet, these retro shoes are too.

If nothing else, it is interesting how what came around comes around again. Now where’s my leisure suit? I know it’s here somewhere.

Welcome To A New Track Club Member!

Ian Pye

Born February 22, 2012 5 lbs. 7 ozs.

Joy and Congratulations to Amanda Mason & Todd Pye



Running in Guatemala

Written by: Nancy Pullo

Fellow JTC Running member Claudia French and I visited Guatemala in September of this year. You might ask "Why would anyone visit Guatemala?" Well, my daughter Susan lives in Panajachel in the Western Highlands of Guatemala "Land of the Living Maya." Panajachel is located on Lake Atitlan, judged by Aldous Huxley (Brave New World fame) as the world's most beautiful lake. Claudia, Susan and I ran several times thru the cobblestone streets of Panajachel and up the rolling terrain. We started with a one-hour run up, up, up the volcano. This is the beginning of the 1/2 marathon/marathon to be held in May 2012. The view is spectacular! The view from the top of the first hill is breathtaking. Lake Atitlan is surrounded by mountains and volcanoes with Mayan villages nestled at the base. We turned around after 30 minutes. Susie's dog, Boomer accompanied us on the run. Boomer loves to chase motorbikes, cars and tuk tuks (a tuk tuk is a three wheel "taxi cab"), although he never catches one! It was good to have him along.

My daughter works for a non-profit called Mayan Families. After our run we showered, ate breakfast and walked to the office of Mayan Families where we met up with the driver Juan Carlos. He drove us (Susie, Elizabeth (a co-worker of Susie), Claudia & me) to San Jorge, a village high up in the mountains. The people of this village are very poor. Upon arriving, we met the mayor, who was very welcoming. It was an honor to be greeted by him.

Mayan Families serves this village with a pre-school and a Senior Lunch Program. We first visited the pre-school that serves children 3 to 5 years old. Mayan Families provides the teachers and uniforms for the children. The children are very sweet and friendly. Without Mayan Families these children would not be ready for school when they turn 6. Mayan Families also provides lunch for Seniors and Orphans (so called if they have lost a parent) each day. Last year, before the program was started, three seniors died of starvation. As the people came in (all very elderly women) we served them lunch. We served soup (with a piece of beef floating in it) "dumplings" (not actually what they were but you get the idea), a cup of a delicious juice and a baked banana. All of the women were very elderly; one woman came in with her daughter who was blind. Some came to pick up "to go" lunches for families. There were no men present. The women said "Gracias" over and over again. This is the only meal some of these people will have that day. Susie introduced me as her "Mama" and it was clear they loved my daughter. I was so proud of her. This event brought tears to my eyes. We have so much in the USA and they have so little. After everyone had eaten, Susie, Claudia, Elizabeth & I ate lunch also. We also visited the local Catholic church which has very, very beautiful old artifacts.

As our driver, Juan Carlos, had taken the truck back to Pana, we were to take a "Chicken Bus," so called because it transports chickens and such on the top of the bus and people inside. We had to walk up, up, up a steep hill to reach the road. Thanks to my running and track work I am in good shape and was able to do

this without much effort. As we approached the top of the mountain, we saw a bus preparing to leave. We waved and he slowed down. We took a short cut up the mountain and boarded the bus. I prayed: "Dear God, guide this driver around these mountainous curves and get us back to Pana safely." My prayer was answered and we arrived back in good form.

Later that day we walked back to the center of town and had dinner at Pupuser la Bar Cheros. Two beers each and we were feeling mellow. We went across the street where a trivia game was about to start. The entry fee was Q50 for 6 people (about \$6), Susie said, "no thanks we don't want to spend that much money." We were then told three people at a table needed three more people and, since we had each had another beer we said "what the heck" and joined up. It turned out that one of the women had been at the marathon meeting so we were already friends of sorts. It was so much fun!!! Our team tied in the first round and our prize was a shot of Tequila. One more beer and we were ready for karaoke!! Claudia & I sang (badly) and had a great time. It was then time to go home. What a great day in Guatemala!!

The next day we started with a run up the mountain, the sun was shining and the temperature was about 65 degrees. Looking down across the lake you can see the villages clustered at the base of the volcanoes. We ran for one hour 15 minutes. The streets in town are cobblestone so you have to watch your footing. Boomer did not go with us this morning; he had been out all day yesterday and I think he was pooped!

After returning home, Claudia prepared sandwiches, I cut up fruit and made oatmeal and Susie swept the floor. Showers for all; fill the water bottles with the "agua pura" and we were ready to start our day. This was to be a day at the market. Here in Guatemala "gringos" decorate their dinning room chairs with "wheepils" (I know I'm not spelling this correctly). These are the colorful blouses the indigenous women wear. We first went to the used wheepil market where Susie has "connections" because she shops there. With Susie using her bargaining skills, I bought some to decorate my dining room chairs. As we didn't want to carry these around all day, we rode a tuk tuk back to the house where we used the bathroom, ate our sandwiches and left our purchases.

Another tuk tuk ride to take a chicken bus up a mountain to a village called Solola where "the people's market" is located. As we were waiting for the bus to fill up it started to sprinkle and Susie was concerned we would get caught in a downpour. She phoned her office to ask about the forecast and was told it should be okay but to keep umbrellas handy. When it rains really hard, the roads can wash out high up in the mountains. This bus was not too full so there were just two persons to a seat and no one standing.

This market is where the locals shop and it's huge; you can buy everything from material to make clothing to live baby chickens. And it's crowded! Located just outside the gates of the local church, most of it is in the open air and each vendor has a raised tarp covering their area. With Susie bargaining for me I made a purchase.



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She really had to work for this one! We then went into the church that is very, very old and very, very beautiful. As we came out of the church it started to rain. A lot of the people in the market headed for the bus stop. We were real lucky to get on this bus and did it fill up!! There were three people to each seat and, just when you thought not another person could fit, more people got on. The ride down the mountain was very fast with a lot of switchbacks. Zoom! Zoom! Zoom! went the Chicken Bus. Claudia & I were very glad we were sitting on the aisle and could not see the road. The rain was really coming down! When we arrived in Pona we located a shop that sold pepperoni because Michael (Susie's friend and co-worker) was coming to dinner and we were going to make pizza. We all pitched in, I made the pizza dough, Susie got the table ready and Claudia was the dishwasher. Michael arrived at 7 pm and we all agreed the pizza was wonderful. We drank wine, ate pizza and Michael left about 9:30. Another day filled with adventure in Guatemala!

We did not run the next day, as it was to be a hiking day. We ate our oatmeal, packed a lunch and set out for the bank to exchange some dollars for "Q's" (short name for the Guatemalan currency). We walked down to the boat dock and boarded a boat for a ride across the lake to a town named San Juan. We sat on the boat at the dock for almost an hour because the boat would not leave until it had at least 12 passengers. Finally the 12th passenger arrived and we were off across the lake. Lake Atitlan is surrounded by three volcanoes and many, very large, green-covered mountains; the ride over was very pleasant and the sun was warm.

Susie had arranged for an unofficial guide to meet us at the dock in San Juan and when we arrived, he was there. His name was Arturo and in his early 20s. We went to an art gallery where the artist was on site. His work was beautiful and reasonably priced but as we didn't want to carry anything while hiking, we decided to come back afterward.

As we looked up, Susie pointed out our destination on the top of a really, really high mountain. We could barely make out a structure at the top. We were going to hike all the way up there . . .

We walked through town to the base of the mountain and started our climb. At first it wasn't too bad, and then it started . . . we were climbing over huge boulders, up and up and up. Arturo and Susie were quite a bit ahead of us. The sweat was pouring off of me and Claudia; dripping from our chins. There were many switchbacks on this hike. Arturo said it was 7k up. As we were hiking, Susie said something about us falling behind and I told her, "this is how old women hike." In one spot there were "stairs" (I use quotation marks because you have never seen stairs like these!). Fortunately there was a railing so we could pull ourselves up. Then we heard Susie say "20 more minutes and we'll be at the top." Finally, we were at the top of the mountain. There were two benches at the top and we sat down to eat our lunch. We heard thunder in the distance and saw that black clouds were forming on another of the mountains so we hurriedly ate and were just packing up when a young woman (a tourist from Japan) and a guide came up from the other side of

the mountain; from the town of Santa Clara. The woman asked if we had come up from San Juan and when we told her that we had, she was impressed because hiking up from Santa Clara took just 20 minutes and our hike up took 2 hours! When Susie asked if we wanted to hike down to Santa Clara and take a bus to San Juan we were all over that!

Arturo & the other guide started talking and we learned that the benches were on the Santa Clara side of the mountain and we would have to pay because we sat on them!! Oh, well. The hike down the mountain was an easy walk through cornfields. Now we would have to take a bus to San Juan to be at the boat by 5 o'clock. When we approached the bus we were waved away because the bus was full. As we were walking, a pickup truck driver approached us and asked Arturo where we were going; Arturo told him San Juan. There were five Guatemalan women sitting on the floor of the truck, three men standing, a large bag of corn and a large bag of something else on the bed of the truck. Susie climbed in first, then me, then Claudia. After Claudia, a man with a large tummy climbed in behind me and Arturo hung on the back. Two more men joined us making 14 in all. The truck had a metal frame above our head and on the sides where we hung on.

The driver started up and away we went! Through the streets and down the mountain we flew!! Claudia and I were so excited to be having this experience. It was better than a Chicken Bus ride! Upon our arrival at our destination, we got in a tuk tuk and drove to a coffee processing plant where Claudia wanted to purchase coffee for her mother. Alas, it was closed. Arturo got back in the tuk tuk and left saying to Susie that he would be right back. We could see the mountain that we had climbed and Claudia & I were amazed because it is so high. In a short while Arturo pulled up driving a tuk tuk and we realized that his main job is as a tuk tuk driver. On the way to the boat we went back to the art gallery but he was closed. Bummer! Arturo then took us to a place where Claudia bought coffee for her Mom.

We paid Arturo at the dock and got on the boat for the return trip. By this time it was raining and the wind was blowing. It took us 20 minutes to get back to Pana. We went home, showered and went out to dinner. The Mayoral and Presidential election was to take place tomorrow, Sunday. Because of that, liquor was not allowed to be sold or served from Midnight Friday to 1 pm Monday afternoon. Many of the places that serve both food and booze (beer, wine and hard liquor) were closed. We ate at an outside table at a restaurant recommended by Susie. Susie had Talapia, Claudia had chicken and I had tofu kabobs. We were served a basket of hot garlic bread and each dinner came with french fries and beets; it was all good. Back home and to bed (it was before 9 pm).

During one of our runs, we talked to a man my daughter Susie knew (she seems to know everyone) his name is James. He told us that there was going to be a meeting that at 4 pm that day regarding the marathon/half marathon to be held in May 2012. We decided we would attend this meeting, which we did. The meeting



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was held across the river, walkable, but, why not? . . . we rode a tuk tuk. The meeting had just started when we arrived. The speaker was a quite famous writer and runner, Richard Morgan. Richard is a member of the committee organizing the marathon/half marathon. It was very exciting to be attending this meeting, as it was one of the first organizational meetings primarily scheduled to solicit support from local businesses. Richard lives in Panajachel and owns a hotel there. At that meeting I decided to return to Guatemala in May and run the half-marathon; I am bringing back brochures and encouraging all my "running buddies" to attend. Susie has already spoken to someone who will reserve an apartment for your stay at only \$25 per night. This is with a kitchen. The total accepted runners will be 1,500 and that's for both races combined.

Panajachel is a small town located 3 hours from Guatemala City and inhabited by Mayan people and many, many Americans and Europeans. During the 1970s it was a frequent stop for "hippies." Nightlife for "gringos" is centered around several restaurants and bars and it's a safe place to be out at night. As the main export is coffee and fabric, the shopping is great. It's a wonderful place to purchase rugs, purses and other hand-woven items.

If you have been thinking about running an international marathon or half marathon, I would recommend this one. This is scheduled to be a five-day event. Please visit atitlanmarathon.com for details.

Body Breakdown Before Gate River Run

Written by: Douglas Tillett

There is a group of people who have run in every Gate River Run and we call them The Streakers. I am not a Streaker because I didn't run in my first River Run until 1983 so I missed the first five races. I believe I know how it feels to be a Streaker, though, because it is my "must do" race of the year. There are lots of other races that I like to run but the Gate River Run is the race that I must run. It's on my schedule every year as a race I have to run so that's how I know what it feels like to be a streaker, at least somewhat. Real Streakers who are reading this article are scoffing at me in their minds, thinking that I don't know what I'm writing about, but I'm really just like them. Really.

So it was with great trepidation that I was preparing for the Gate River Run of 2012. Why, you ask? Because I've always wanted to use that word "trepidation" in a sentence and I've never had a chance before now. I was nervous and had apprehension that I'd never be able to say trepidation. But now, because I feel like a Streaker and because I have to run the Gate River Run every year, I can write it with a capital "T." Trepidation.

You see, I was injured before this year's Gate River Run and instead of training and preparing for the event I was mostly eating desserts by the boatload. While simple carbohydrate loading, in theory, sounds like a good idea for race preparation, in reality it doesn't prepare a body nearly as well as nine miles of fartlek does. And now, thanks to this article and getting to tell you about my trepidation, I've also been able to write the word "fartlek". Is this newsletter great, or what?

It was my Achilles tendon that was bothering me, the one at the bottom of my right leg. The other one was OK, so I must be a little lopsided that only my right Achilles was causing the trouble. Throughout all of 2011, I had a pretty good year running, for a fartlek as old as myself, but that right Achilles tendon just kept hurting worse, and worse, and worse, with each passing race. And I was racing a lot because I was doing sorta good in the Grand Prix and even ended up 2nd in my age group, only being beaten out by that Stephen Beard who seems to have no Achilles problem whatsoever, based on his blazing race times for a guy as old as we are.

But anyway, it got so my Achilles was just a-killin' me. People would ask me why I was limping whenever they'd see me "walk." And it got really sensitive to the touch. If I happened to brush my right Achilles tendon, it'd hurt like crazy and make my eyes water. Wearing my socks hurt my Achilles. The pressure from the bottom of my Dockers pant leg caused discomfort. It got so bad, around November of last year, that I went a little crazy and went to see a doctor. Yes, yes, I know – what was I thinking? But with it being so sensitive to the touch, and after hearing all those horrible stories about how somebody was just jogging along and their Achilles just snapped and their calf muscle "boinged" up to their knee and they fell down and it never got any better, I thought I should get some therapy, advice, and maybe some drugs if I got really lucky.

Doc was very sympathetic and told me that I needed to stretch and that sounded like really good advice because I never have stretched in 30 years of running and now I'm injured, just like they said would happen. He also said I



Body Breakdown Before Gate River Run

should put ice on it so I bought stock in “Twice the Ice” and used the ice-thingie at least twice on my Achilles. And then, on my own, I realized that if I didn’t take some time off from running, it wasn’t going to get better. When I told Doc I was going to lay off running he said if I took two weeks off, I’d be amazed at the result.

At the beginning of December, I stopped running. Doubled up on the Oreos. Hit the dessert bar. I knew that relief was only two weeks away so I might as well celebrate early. I was going to be good again. After two weeks I went out for a little two miler and my Achilles hurt as badly as it did when I started not running. Determined to fix the problem, I kept “not running” for a couple of more weeks. Christmas. Little trial run. Hurt like before. More time off. And so it went: don’t run for days, try it out a little, feel pain, don’t run for days. But on the good side, at least it didn’t hurt to touch my Achilles any more. I could actually even put some pressure against it and be OK. I could tell I was improving even though my weight had ballooned up to that of a Pontiac Bonneville.

All the way through January, I kept up the intensive no-running training program. I joined a gym and I rode my bike, although it did get annoying that my tires would pop because of my Bonneville weight. I was determined to make my Achilles better. And then it got to mid-February and the 26.2 With Donna, and even though I’d paid my half marathon entry fee back in June so it’d be cheaper (three thousand, I think) I wasn’t able to run the Donna Half. I didn’t even show up at the starting line. And that morning, which happened to be around 30 degrees with a strong wind, as I was still lying in my warm bed while all my running buddies were lined up on San Pablo Road, I thanked Jesus for making me whole once again and for giving me the wisdom not to show up at the race that I

had previously Streaked (the Donna Half.) I decided that morning that I must be cured after so long a time and it was time to get ready for the Gate River Run.

Since I’d taken about ten weeks off, I figured I’d better start out slow and short. I was startled when I actually ran how difficult it was. The run was not graceful at all – all klunky and jiggly. And my Achilles still hurt some but it was time to train and there wasn’t much time left. So I tried to run a little most days, sometimes only a mile, and extended my long run up to two miles and then three miles the week after that. By early in March, my Achilles felt under control although not pain free, I had learned a few good stretches, and I’d gotten up to five miles one time with two mile daily jogs my standard.

Every other time I had run the Gate River Run, I had good mileage under my belt and felt pretty confident but on March 10 this year I thought I was under prepared and lined up at the start with trepidation. This must be how some of those Streakers feel, I figured, especially the ones who had not run hardly at all since the previous River Run. But all of us were there at the one race we had to run, Streaker or not. And, indeed, I managed to finish the race, even though it was maybe my slowest GRR ever. I haven’t heard officially but I hope all those Streakers managed to keep their streaks alive as well. It is the finish line that’s important this day and now we all have a whole year to get properly trained for the next Gate River Run....as long as our body parts allow us to do so. Run happy, JTCRunners, and be glad that you’re able to run at all.

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By Mark Ryan – JTCRunning Board Member and Ultra Runner

Wolfson Children's Hospital 55-Mile Ultra

At the end of January I was fortunate enough to participate in a rapidly growing event in Jacksonville; the Wolfson Children's Hospital 55-Mile Ultra. The event is the featured item in a series of fundraising events for Wolfson Hospital. Let me tell you how it got started and then I'll tell you about this year's event.

Four years ago Paul Wilson, a well-known tri-athlete and ultra runner in Jacksonville, and his wife Amy had their first child, a boy. Luke was born with the lower part of his spine sticking out of his back. The doctor who delivered him told Paul there was only one hospital in the area that could help his son and that was Wolfson Children's Hospital. So their son was taken there immediately. The short version is Wolfson's did its job and today their son is a normal four-year old boy, thanks to the doctors and staff at Wolfson's.

Paul was so grateful that he wanted to do something to bring awareness to the area and show what a great resource the Wolfson Children's Hospital is for the community; it is one of the top children's hospitals in the world. Paul thought: "Wouldn't it be great if we could raise the awareness level and raise some money for the hospital at the same time?" The timing was perfect to plan events around the hospital's 55th birthday in 2010. One of the fund raising events Paul created was the 55-mile Ultra: One mile for every year the hospital was in business. The event became the main fundraiser that included a series of other events.

That brings us to this year's event, the third edition of the run. The course is a five-mile loop through downtown and across two bridges. The start/finish line this year was at the west end of The Jacksonville Landing by Chicago Pizza. We proceeded along the river, went past the Maxwell House Coffee plant, made a u-turn, crossed the Main Street Bridge and took a left on Riverplace Blvd. Then we took a right on Prudential Drive, to and over the Acosta Bridge to Riverside, back to the river and then back to the Landing. We did this 11 times. Phew!

The 55-mile run kicked off at midnight, Friday night, January 27th and let me tell you it was a 'Happening' (as we used to say in the '60's). There were nine ultra runners; each had friends and relatives who would run part of the way. With several volunteers and spectators present there were over 100 people gathered at the start.

I was lucky; I had six friends starting off with me, all women (yes, sometimes it pays to be a bachelor). Some ran three loops and a couple of others four. Then they were gone and I was pretty much alone until daybreak when others joined me (more women, I was feeling like George Clooney).

The thing I enjoyed most about this run was the way the city changed on every loop (sorry, girls).

The first couple of times past the Landing there were two or three bands playing at different bars. It was kind of like a battle of the bands. At the start of the third loop, around 2:00 AM, the bars were closing and the patrons were coming out and greeting us, loudly. Many had been imbibing and were giving us a hard time, in a good way I might add. By the time I started the fourth loop things were pretty quiet downtown.

Just east of the landing, in front of the Hyatt, the large yacht of Shahid Khan, the new owner of the Jaguars, was tied up. I ran by this amazing yacht 22 times, so I got to know it pretty well. Someone asked me how long I thought it was and I figured about 110 feet. I found out later it is 223 feet long, boy was I wrong.

Just west of the Landing and just before we would hit the start/finish line there was a mini tent city with about a half dozen tents set up with supporters cheering on the runners. Every time we passed these people each runner would get a loud ovation, complete with noisemakers, which was a lot of fun, especially at 4:00 AM.

Laps five through seven were very quiet and I hardly saw anyone. I did get passed by a couple of the faster ultra runners, but that was about it. I could always count on the people in tent city to come to life as I approached The Landing. In fact, I got to really look forward to seeing those folks. By the end of my seventh loop, as daylight was approaching, I started seeing many early morning runners out there looking fresh and ready to go.

As I started my eighth loop I could see, in the east, the sky lightening. Daybreak was imminent and I needed it, I was getting tired. By the time I hit the Acosta Bridge for the eighth time, it was actually becoming light, my energy started to return.

As I started my ninth loop, my friend Linda, a circuit court judge at city hall, joined me and she really picked me up. It was now daylight and I could feel the heat of the sun and it felt great. I never mentioned the weather earlier, but it was a great night (and day) to run. It was clear the whole time and the low temperature that night



Ultra Update

only got down to 62 degrees, so with three shirts and gloves I was comfy all night. It was now a little after 8:00 AM and downtown was coming back to life.

Prior to starting the tenth loop, I took off two layers of clothing and was down to only a singlet and running shorts, it was nice and warm, about 70 degrees. Linda had to leave after this loop and as I started out for the last time. I heard Paul Wilson behind me say, "Hey Mark, you can't run the last lap alone so I will join you".

I said, "That's fine Paul, but I'm going pretty slowly now."

He replied, "That's okay I have on jeans".

Paul ran this 55-mile Ultra the two previous years. He had to pull out this year due to injury, but he was there the whole time. During that last loop we talked quite a bit about the growth of the event and how much it meant to him.

When we turned the final corner, heading to the finish he said, "I'm leaving you now, you're on your own, enjoy". The tent people went wild as I approached the finish line. Not only that, but another 50 people or so had gathered

and I got a hero's welcome.

It was fun, but the real heroes are the kids and the doctors and staff of Wolfson's.

I finished just after 11:00 AM and by then the other events that are part of the whole fundraiser were in full swing. The Landing was totally packed with people and activities. A large ten-foot tall birthday cake was in the center of The Landing and everywhere you looked there were adults and lots and lots of kids. There was a stage set up and celebrities from Channel Four television were announcing activities and reading off the names of 55 kids who were honored this year as part of the event. I must say it was quite a night and day.

The event is already scheduled for next year, Saturday, January 26th. For further information log onto <http://www.wolfson55.org/>. You can also email Paul at: pwilsonsales@gmail.com

Thanks To All Gate River Run Volunteers!
Because Of You Our Club Had Its Most Successful
Gate River Run Of All Time
We All Thank You So Much!



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WEEKLY TRAINING RUNS

Sunday, 6:30 a.m., **Atlantic Beach:** Atlantic Blvd. & 1st Street, 5-10 miles. Contact: Dot or Bill at 241-0331.

Sunday, 6:30 a.m., **Mandarin:** Various locations and distance. Contact: Stef at stefgriff@aol.com or 268-1503.

Sunday, 6:30 a.m., **Orange Park:** Sun Tire, 346, Blanding Blvd., 6-20 miles. Contact: Dave at 545-4538.

Sunday, 10 a.m., **Guana Reserve** (trail runs): Seasonal (Oct-Mar), 3-8 miles. Call for update. Contact: Craig at 424-9690.

Monday, 6:30 p.m., **Tapestry Park Location:** 9823 Tapestry Park Circle. Contact: Jacksonville Running Company at 379-7170.

Monday, 5:30 p.m., **South Bank Downtown:** River City Brewing Co., 2-6 miles (includes bridges). Contact: Danny at 287-5496.

Monday, 6:30 p.m., **Brooks YMCA:** All abilities welcome, mileage based on ability. Contact Jacksonville Running Company at 379-7170.

Tuesday, 5:45 a.m., **San Marco:** Southside Methodist Church, 5-6 Miles, 7-8:30pace. Contact: JC at 803-8758.

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., **Ponte Vedra:** Sawgrass Village south lot, 3-6 miles (very social). Contact: Craig at 424-9690.

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., **Lulu Lemon (Town Center):** All abilities welcome, mileage based on ability. Contact Jacksonville Running Company at 379-7170.

Wednesday, 5:30 a.m., **San Jose:** The Bolles School (JTC Running members) track intervals (all abilities). Contact JC at 803-8758.

Wednesday, 5:30 p.m., **San Jose:** The Bolles School (JTC Running members) track intervals (all abilities). Contact: Danny at 287-5496.

Wednesday, 6:15 p.m., **UNF Track:** All abilities welcome, mileage based on ability. Contact Jacksonville Running Company at 379-7170.

Wednesday, 7 p.m., **Jacksonville Beach:** 20234 Av. South, 5+ miles (all abilities/social). Contact: Anita or Franz at 241-7199.

Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., **Jacksonville Running Company:** 13760 Old St. Augustine Road. Contact: Jacksonville Running Company at 268-0608

Thursday, 6:15 p.m., **Orange Park:** 1st Place Sports, 2186 Park Av., 3-6 miles, runners/walkers. Contact: Denise Metzgar at 264-3767.

Thursday, 6:30 p.m., **San Marco:** Corner of Largo/Naldo (JTC Running members), 4-7 miles. Contact: Doug at 728-3711.

Friday, 5:40 a.m., **Beauclerc, Mandarin:** Forest Cir., 7.5 miles. Contact: Stef at stefgriff@aol.com or 268-1503.

Visit JTCRunning.com for more information.