

STARTING LINE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE



Letter from the Editor

This can't be good; it is early summer and already this hot. Not exactly made for running. Makes you wonder what August might be like. If you can run well in this, I take my sweat-soaked hat off to you. Years ago, the heat never seemed to bother me all that much. I just got on with it, knowing I would suffer, slow down some and lose about five pounds of water weight. It never phased me a bit-different story today.

Enough of that, let's talk of better things. And the best two things I can think of happen to be JTC Running events. Of course, I am referring to our annual gala known as the Awards Banquet. It is a great moment in our year. We get to thank all of those people behind the scenes, many of whom do the lion's share of the work. And we need to thank them because without them we would have nothing.

We also get to say thanks to the movers and shakers, our race directors and members of our board of directors. Then there are the outstanding athletes, young and not so young. High school athletes, Open runners and Masters.

You'll be able to rub shoulders with local elite athletes and ask them thought-provoking questions like, "Running 5k in under 15-minutes, how do you do it?" And get innocent, naïve answers like: "I don't know, I just try and run fast."

Therefore, the Awards Banquet is a not-to-be-missed, once-a-year delight that all members should attend. Oh, I almost forgot the fine food served at our host restaurant, Maggiano's Little Italy, in the Town Center Mall. The food is great and because you are there with us it is at a cut price.

Then there is our stylish MC, Doug Tillett. What can I say about this guy other than that he is the warmest, funniest, most captivating public speaker that ever walked the earth. No brag, just fact.

The Awards Banquet takes place on Thursday night, June 23, beginning at 6 P.M. You can sign up online right now at JTCRunning.com. Don't wait! Places are limited and demand is high.

Our 40th anniversary year occurred in 2015. We did a great job of celebrating it and in addition we had a very successful membership drive. President Larry Roberts did a particularly good job of enlisting new members. Sure would be nice to see some of these new people at our glorious gala, the Awards Banquet. Let's hope so and give them a warm welcome.

The other great thing right now? Why, our track meets, of course. Organized by coach David Frank, these meets are free to everyone who registers in advance online at JTCRunning.com. Then you can freely run as many classic

track events as you care to, in fact, you can turn it into your personal mini Olympics.

Our great friend, Jay Birmingham, has written another masterpiece. I don't know how he does it; he spins them out as though there was nothing to it. He is the Shakespeare of running writers. You will see what I mean inside.

The most important thing in a runner's life are his running shoes. When your favorite model dies, your life understandably falls apart. Before you throw yourself off the Hart Bridge, read Gene Ulishney's column: 'Why Did They Change My Shoe?'

Runners are great people and I have picked another fine one, Bill Krause, for my next installment of 'Returning The Favor.' A humble man, young Bill, he is giving back and giving all he can. Why? Because he loves running.

Julie Stackhouse has written some excellent advice about preparing for race day. Her story is called, 'Five Tips To A PR.' Her words of wisdom are inside.

I wonder if it wouldn't be a good idea for us to do a PR reset every ten years. After all, when you hit the age of 50 it is virtually impossible to break a PR set when you were 25. You could gauge your new athleticism from say, ages 50 to 60, and then resign your old records to your personal history book.

We all know that the differences between elite runners and ourselves are physical attributes and training. Anything else? Well, could be the way we run. JU's Jeff Wight offers insight into this intriguing subject. You'll enjoy his article inside.

Sometimes an editor gets lucky. Somebody out of the blue sends in some words that move you, simple words that seem to make everything we do and everything we are make sense. A letter titled, 'This Is The Start,' from Renee Pharis, says it all.

Our next race is Florida's oldest one – the Summer Beach Run. Once again, it is generously sponsored by Tijuana Flats restaurants. Proceeds from the event are donated to the Tijuana Flats' Just in Queso foundation that has raised \$3.5 million for the less fortunate in the U.S. The SBR is set for Saturday, August 20. The classic 5-miler starts at 6 P.M. and the 1-mile fun run at 6:05 P.M. Entries are online at JTCRunning.com and 1stplacesports.com. The club member entry code is jtc2; don't forget to use it to get your members' discount.

The Starting Line

President's Letter

Greetings!

Springtime means track time in Northeast Florida. In May the Hodges track, at the University of North Florida, hosted several events starting with a Twilight Meet May 4. That was followed by the Atlantic Sun Conference Championships the weekend of May 13

WINTER BEACH POLI

and 14. Most important of all was the NCAA East Preliminary Track and Field Meet, May 26 through 29, in which athletes from all colleges east of the Mississippi River competed for berths in the NCAA Track and Field Championships the next week in Eugene, Ore. I hope you had the opportunity to come out and

watch some of the great competition. The excellence of the Hodges facility at UNF has enabled hosting quality events that in former years would have gone to other cities.

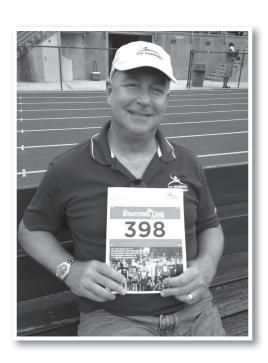
Track and field is also important to JTC Running in the spring. Each year the Club presents a series of meets free to everyone in the community. This year's series started at Creekside High School with a

Distance Carnival April 16 and a full track and field meet May 21. The venue shifts to The Bolles School for a meet June 4 and finishes at Bolles with meets July 2 and 30. Come out and participate -- entrants range in age from 5 to 75. Again, advance registration is free at JTCRunning.com.

The month of June brings another JTC Running tradition, the annual Awards Banquet. The Maggiano's Restaurant in Town Center has proven to be a popular venue and it will again host the banquet on June 23. The Club will recognize outstanding runners, coaches, volunteers, and sponsors as well as the winners of the Jacksonville Grand Prix. Seats are limited, so register online now

for \$19.95 at JTCRunning.com. The price at the door, if seats are still available, is \$30.

As the summer progresses with more sunshine for running, biking, walking, golf, fishing, or just relaxing at the beach or by the pool, please remember to use sunscreen liberally. Skin cancer is a major threat to those of us who enjoy the outdoors!



The Starting Line JTC Running Board Members

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New & Returning Members

New and Renewing Members

Darin Bickle Diane Buckner Bruce Edwards Carol Fitzsimmons Jim French Mark Knowles Julie Macedo Deb Magahey Kate Overby Ali Timmins

CONGRATULATIONS!

JTC Running Team takes 2nd place at the Corporate Run May 19th, 2016



Upcoming Events

JTC Running Track Meets

(All at Bolles High School)
June 4th 3 PM
July 2th 10 AM
July 30th 10 AM
FREE at JTCRunning.com

Florida's Oldest Race – A True Classic JTC Running's 5 & 1-Mile Races **Tijuana Flats Summer Beach Run** Saturday, August 20, 6 P.M. **Enter at JTCRunning.com**

Time Is Running Out – Sign Up Now!

JTC Running's Annual Awards Banquet

Thursday, June 23, 6 P.M.

Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant

Reservations at JTCRunning.com

5 Tips to a PR

So things are really starting to heat up outside. You've probably come off of a nice half-marathon/marathon season and Gate River Run and may be ready to dive into 5k and triathlon season as the pavement begins to sizzle and the famous Publix "Pies" are baking in the oven. Below are my "Five Tips to a PR" — Plan, Recover/Rest, Pace, Relax and Prepare. I hope that you may find a tidbit or two to incorporate into your routine and pre-race planning to help you reach your own personal best come race day. Personally for me and my racing, these tips have been time-tested and proven to deliver the results you train so hard to achieve when it counts.

TIP #1: PLAN

- Includes studying the course (especially the start/finish), your opponents, nutrition/hydration strategy, mapping out water/fuel stations (and knowing the products), sticking with your plan no matter what other runners are doing.
- Fuel with the pre-race meal (2-3 hours prior) you know works for you. Don't experiment with anything new on race day.
- Plan out each and every detail leave nothing to chance!

TIP #2: RECOVER/REST

- All week long, rest your body and mind, making sure that easy runs are easy, get plenty of sleep (essential), especially two nights prior to the race.
 Visualize yourself racing relaxed and feeling good.
- Hydrate! In hot/humid conditions, hydrate early and often!
- Don't try to "cram" in missed training opportunities right before a goal race.

TIP #3: PACE

- Appropriate pace/strategy is the most important race-day tactic for a PR performance. Knowing what you are capable of based on your workouts going into the race is key.
- Set realistic goals/expectations to allow yourself to race smart and feel great doing so.
- Set pacing strategy relative to the course/conditions.

TIP #4: RELAX

- There will always be events outside your control (weather, competitors, potential delays, etc.). Take a few deep breaths on the start line during the national anthem and relax, harness nervous energy, have faith in your training, running ability, family/ friends or wherever your inner strength comes from.
- Smile! Be positive!
- Focus on good form in the later stages of the race.

TIP #5: PREPARE

- Lay out everything the night before (race bib, weather-appropriate uniform, racing flats, warm-up attire, energy bars, gels, water bottles, etc.).
- Set alarms to allow for ample time (pre-race meal, travel, parking, warm-up routine, etc.) so you are not rushed.
- Confidence comes from sound preparation. Race with confidence!

About the Author:

Julie Stackhouse, Owner of Stackhouse Fitness (getstackednow.com) and recent winner of the St. Jude Nashville Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon, has run PRs in 2016 in the mile, 5k, 10k (within a half-marathon), 15k, half marathon and marathon events. She won the Donna Marathon and the Gate River Run Florida/Duval Cup. She believes that you can be your fittest and best at any age and provides coaching plans, individual and group workouts to help runners stay healthy and achieve their full potential.

UPCOMING PR OPPORTUNITIES:

- 5/30 Florida Striders' Memorial Day 5k
- 6/4 JTC Running Track Meet
- 6/11 1st Place Sports' Run for the Pies 5k
- 7/2 JTC Running Track Meet
- 7/4 1st Place Sports' Celebration Run 5k
- 7/30 JTC Running Track Meet

Are the Olympics (Still) Worth It?

Every four years an event as famous for trauma as drama occurs -- the Olympics. This summer's designated site for sports' most glamorous, and expensive, event is Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. At the time Rio was awarded the Games everything in Brazil was groovy. Along with India and China, Brazil was called an emerging world market, everything was on the up. Previously it was considered a Third World nation with a sad economic forecast. Things looked good for Brazil but in the year 2016 it, once again, looks pretty grim and the Olympics, a heavy financial burden for any host country, are not helping.

The Brazilian economy has collapsed, crime has risen and the country's president will very likely be removed by impeachment. There is also another unexpected, unwanted nuisance -- the Zika Virus. Discovered in Uganda's Zika Forest in 1947, Zika showed its ugly self just last year and right on time to spread panic to the Rio Games. Brazil is doing all it can to wipe out the mosquitoes that spread the virus that causes awful birth defects. How successful are they? We don't really know.

The Rio organizing committee is planning to offer protective mosquito netting for the athletes' rooms at \$100 a clip. Dr. Manny Alvarez of Hackensack University Medical Center wrote: "By going forward and supporting the Rio 2016 Olympics, we are not considering that we might be putting dollars in front of global safety."

Will the Olympic sites be ready? The velodrome's cycling track recently caved in. Back to the old drawing board, better do it right this time. Where is that checkbook? Is there anything left in it?

The waters of Rio's famous beaches are a polluted mess and they are scrambling to clean them. The beaches are a far cry from when the Girl from Ipanema went walking. The song's writer, Antonio Carlos Jobim, smiled at her but she never looked at him. Today, never mind the girl, he would bawl like a baby if he looked at the beach and the sickening, murky water.

But it is not just Rio, it is wherever the Olympics land. It has gotten more and more expensive and agonizing to host an Olympic Games. So much so that I do not understand why any city or country

would ever want to do it.

Why do they? It is a controversial subject with opinions flying like javelins. Let's take a look at some of the pros and cons of mounting this epic production.

Pro: "It gives a country, a city, pride to host the Olympics, it makes us feel good about ourselves. It shows the world how great we are."

Con: "It is an expensive mistake. Spend your money on the right things. Why not feel good about your schools, hospitals, or your social services instead of this jingoistic flag wave? Once the Olympics are gone, little is left for the residents to feel proud about and the unpaid bills are left for the average Joe to cover. It took Montreal 30 years to pay off its mountain of debt."

Pro: "Everyone loves going to the Olympics and the competition is the best you will ever see."

Con: "Most people can't get in; ticket prices are out of reach. The competition may or may not be the best. Every sport has its own world championships and the athletes don't really need the Olympics anymore. A marathoner would rather win the London Marathon than the Olympic Marathon. An Ethiopian and his family could spend the rest of their lives in luxury by winning London or any other major marathon. And if your interest is track & field you'd be better off at the World Champs without all that distracting synchronized swimming and over-sexed sand volleyball."

Pro: "Those athletes have gone through so much to get there, they represent our country and deserve our unwavering support."

Con: "Yes, absolutely, of the thousands of athletes competing at the Olympics there are no losers, just winners without medals. But there are other track meets and nationalism and politics have hurt the Games ever since the Nazis. Then there are the drugs. Drugs have ruined all sports including the Olympics. These days, when you see a champion you wonder what drug he took. Sad, but true."

The biggest drawback to the modern Olympics has to be the cost. For the 2012 Summer Games London spent \$758 million just to build the stadium. The

Are the Olympics (Still) Worth It?

total expenditure was \$10 billion. What city can afford that sort of expense nowadays? For its losing bid to host the 2016 Olympics Chicago spent \$100 million. That's a flush down an Olympic-sized toilet.

Expenses are always a lot more than anticipated, Rio's are up 25%. Security to thwart terrorism has added exponentially to the total costs. Any terrorist worth his suicide vest would love to make a splash during the world's biggest extravaganza. Sometimes the fear is enough to keep people at home, as the Greeks found out while the 2004 Athens Games were losing money (they are still saddled with that debt and it is a contributing factor to the country's economic woes).

Is there any solution? Some say build a permanent site and have the Olympics there every time. A one-time expenditure, but critics say that would be unfair.

Why not let a city host the Olympics two consecutive times? So, if say, Jacksonville were to get the Games, the city would nearly bankrupt itself in order to prepare for all those sports and events the first time around, but when the Olympics returned to Jacksonville four years later it would be virtually all

profit, a financial bonanza. In between we would have time to tweak and perfect all the things that might have gone wrong or to make improvements. (You know, finish building the Skyway Express so visitors could get somewhere and increase the number of Waffle Houses for even more haute cuisine.)

Surely "awarding" the Olympics to a beleaguered Third World city is wrong, the burden is too great. If that city can scrape the funds together for something like the Olympics, how about investing it in something more meaningful and enduring? Why sprint down the one-shot-for-glory road?

Perhaps Jacksonville, and cities like it, should just bag the Olympic dream and admit that Florida State University professor Tim Chapin got it right when he said: "The Olympics are a luxury that is best left to places with more dollars than sense."

Never mind, let's everyone just enjoy the Olympics and make the most of it. I know I will, and after all, at these prices, they may not be around for much longer.

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(All at Bolles High School)
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July 30th 10 AM

FREE at JTCRunning.com

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This is the Start

No matter where you are in life, the early twenties are significant for everyone. Think back to that first time you realized your parents were no longer setting your curfew or when you finally recognized the necessity in their warnings to keep your gas tank at least a quarter full. Maybe you were in college, trade school or working your first adult job. These are the years you ate cheap pasta, drank boxed wine and (thought you) never needed sleep. They felt like the greatest years of your life because you were finally discovering yourself.

I am one week past graduating from Jacksonville University and many of these experiences framing my future were shared with the running community of Jacksonville. Although I have been on the women's rowing team at JU all four years, I looked forward to Wednesday night track workouts with JTC the most. You cannot parallel the camaraderie and support that comes from a group like that. I have enjoyed the opportunity to run with people half my age as well as twice my age. Inspiration and enthusiasm seep from every smile and I constantly feel motivated to push myself further.

I started running the 400-meter dash in sixth grade. The sport had won my heart before I even completed that first lap. I chose a pair of shiny black and red track spikes with yellow laces. Although tattered and torn, they still sit in my childhood closet in their original cardboard box, now flattened from travel and wear. These shoes were my most prized possession and I cared for them as if Lolo Jones had worn them. After every practice I would vacuum out each grain of sand and chunk of turf. Watching my dad shine his dress shoes, I would do the same with my spikes and carefully place them back into their box. Somehow I wore these same shoes for the next five years of my track career until they had holes in the toes. As I continued to run, I started winning fewer and fewer medals while my teammates were still getting faster. Passion no longer drove me to success and the shoes no longer held their glisten. It seemed that my running career was going to see its final finish line along with my beloved shoes. It embarrassed me to say that I had ever called myself a "runner" because I no longer felt fast. The shoes found their home in the disorganization of my closet's back corner and I quit running.

The greatest thing that JTC Running has taught me is that the title of "runner" does not discriminate. It is not about being the fastest or the fittest out there. It isn't about having the newest or most expensive gear. Running does not care how old or out of breath you are. It doesn't worry about the number of holes in your shoes. It is simply about loving what your body can do. It is about feeling the wind with each step you take and challenging yourself to go a little bit further. Running is not a sport with a short shelf life. It is something that we can do together or alone, at home or on vacation, in the heat of summer or the chill of winter. With my four years in college, I have finally reclaimed my title of "runner" thanks to the many members of the JTC Running club. You have all taught me that if you love to run, you will always be a runner.

As I reflect on my graduation from JU and prepare to leave this city, its people that I've come to love and mostly JTC Running, I realize that I am not at the finish line this time. It is only the start.

Thank you to each of you who have touched my life over these past four years and encouraged me to shoot for my goals, running or otherwise. Most of all, thank you for restoring my love of running. You will always fill a huge part of my heart. This is not a farewell letter; it is simply to say "See you soon"!



Why Did They Change my Shoe?

It happens every season as running shoe companies come out with their latest and greatest product updates. With all the advertising hype on how much better the new one is and anticipating a better fit and feel for their favorite shoes, a number of runners are always disappointed after trying them on. "They don't feel the same!", "they don't fit the same!" are among the wide array of complaints. Then, the rush begins to find enough pairs of the "old" shoe to carry them over until the yet newer update arrives in another year. By not trying on the surrounding sizes and widths, you could personally be sacrificing a tried-and-true, safer, more appropriate, better-performing and more advanced product.

Change is necessary. It's a fact that most running shoes' sales decline proportionally to length of time they are on the market, some more than others. In addition, we Americans are always looking for the "latest and greatest" -- a more attractive and better product for our particular needs -- a product that will enable us to perform better and achieve our goals with less perceived effort ... and look great in the process. Running shoe companies understand this, especially if their most recent model did not sell so well. They must change or get left behind.

A new update seems to level the competitive playing field, at least for a while. Most everyone wants to try on "the latest and greatest." Some runners, even though they are happy with their current shoe, will switch just because they "wanted to try something new," regrettably

in many cases. A tweak here, a tweak there, an alteration in materials, an adjustment in dimensions or application can all affect the way an updated shoe finally fits and feels. Feet also continually evolve, leading to the fact that a new shoe should be tried on before every purchase, even if the same style has been worn for years.

Sometimes an updated model will change in function, which is not always good. But, more often than not, it may merely be a sizing difference. It is interesting how many runners are hooked on size as a number, at the expense of how a shoe actually fits. From "I have always worn a size 8," "I have never worn a size 9," to "the new update doesn't fit any longer," the excuse to stay in a particular size in unending. Trust your local running store to help you with the proper fit, not necessarily your expected size. Products change and your feet change. Don't get hooked on the number. Your body will thank you as many running pains are solely due to ill-fitting shoes.

Finally, know that there is no consistency in sizing. Every company's particular sizing will be different. That's what helps keep everyone in business. Note also that your running shoe size should be a half to a full size larger than your dress or casual shoe size. If your feet are measured, also expect to go up a half to a full size as most measuring devices are made closer to fitting dress shoes. A good running store's employees know these facts and also have the experience to help fit you properly and keep you running pain-free.

Upcoming Events

JTC Running's 2016 Track Meet Series

June 4th	Track & Field	3PM	Bolles High School
July 2nd	Track & Field	10AM	Bolles High School
July 30th	Track & Field	10AM	Bolles High School

FREE to ALL online pre-registered athletes, learn more and enter @ JTCRunning.com

The Starting Line / Written by Bob Fernee

Returning the Favor



This is the second installment of my new series in which I attempt to thank and draw attention to the people who are giving back to local running and making our running lives better.

Bill Krause is a member of JTC Running and the

Florida Striders Track Club. He has been very active in the local running scene and since his retirement a year ago he has become even more so. He is a member of the Striders' board of directors and now he has taken up race directing, an important job to say the least. His most recent venture was the successful Run To The Sun. But as far as Bill is concerned, he is just returning the favor.

Bob Fernee: How did you first get involved in running? **Bill Krause:** My wife, Annie, started a couple of years earlier, and I thought she was nuts, so I joined her.

BF: How long has this running habit been going on? **BK:** Almost 20 years now.

BF: What is your favorite thing about running? **BK:** The friends I have made.

BF: Has running changed much since you began running, in general and for you personally?

BK: When we started running, we lived in Michigan. There were only a few races a year, so it really wasn't a commitment, and only a few of our friends ran. Since we moved to Florida 10 years ago, it has become our lifestyle. Almost all of our friends are involved in one way other another. I am still amazed that people clap as much for me as they do for Annie, even though she is 5 times faster! Runners are cool.

BF: Now you are involved in the, some say, thankless job of race directing. How did that happen?

BK: It is my turn to give back. The running community is full of good people that look out for each other. It's good to be part of that. I retired last year, and being a race director feeds my need to boss people around: It doesn't pay squat, but I sure do feel good.

BF: Do you enjoy race directing?

BK: Yes, I really do. Wasn't sure at first, but it is rewarding when it all comes together on race day.

BF: In regards to race directing, do you get adequate help from your club, the Florida Striders TC?

BK: Yes! We really have a great group of people to work with. It is great to see everyone come together to give their time for a great cause.

BF: Will you continue race directing?

BK: Yes

BF: What are your favorite race distances (to run, yourself)?

BK: I like half marathons because I don't have to run fast.

BF: What are your favorite races? (Local and otherwise) BK: All the Strider races of course! Plus, the Subaru ½, Jax Bank ½ and marathon, Reindeer Run Half Marathon, Savannah ½, Marine Corps ½, and the Ortega River Run.

BF: Looking into your crystal ball, what changes do you see coming for running and/or racing?

BK: I think local events will continue to grow, as long as they are for a good cause.

BF: Do you think that racing has become too commercial, or should I say, too for-profit?

BK: Yes, there is that. We stay away from those type of events.

BF: What do you think of today's race entry fees? BK: The Striders are still the best and lowest-priced races in town. I think it is ridiculous to pay \$65 to do a mud run.

BF: Would you prefer lower fees and less goodies? **BK:** Yes, if the race is for a good cause. I don't need the bling. I would rather feel good knowing my money was going towards a good cause.

BF: Do you think that the goodies are essential these days to draw a crowd?

BK: People want that medal. I had a long talk with a runner the other day and it helped me understand it better. She said that she is not fast enough to get an award, but if she knows she will get a finishers medal, then it makes her feel like she has accomplished something.

BF: Are track clubs still pertinent today? If not, what do you think will replace them, if anything?

BK: I think running clubs are pertinent, but not track clubs. A track club sounds like only fast runners are allowed. A running club is full of people with several different levels of ability. Clubs will continue to be viable as long as they have a good cause. The Striders and JTC support Marathon High, Sulzbacher, Children's Running programs, etc. They give back to the community.

BF: In future, will track clubs be able to maintain themselves and rely on unpaid volunteers or will they have to employ paid workers?

The Starting Line / Written by Bob Fernee

Returning the Favor

BK: I really hope that more and more young people will see the need to do good and volunteer their time to help a worthwhile club. We have to lead by example and get the word out about what we do. If we have to start paying people to do nonprofit work, then I think we are in the wrong business.

BF: Why should a person join a track club?

BK: To give back, or pay it forward, however you want to look at it.

BF: What is it that you love about your track club? **BK:** We have so many great volunteers, and a long history of doing things for the community.

BF: How can we get more people, especially younger people, to come forward, volunteer, help out and get involved in their local running club?

BK: Lead by example. Our Children's Running programs at the local schools have made a big impact. The kids see the volunteer coaches giving up their time to help them, and several come back when they are older to lend a hand.

BF: What is the worst thing about running?

BK: Getting hurt!

BF: OK, now it is your turn: Say anything else you'd like. **BK:** As you previously mentioned, races are getting too commercial. Too many for-profit organizations out there. What happened to running for the sake of running, enjoying your friends, and coming together for a good cause? Running should be about striving for good health, not about goodies you get if you just participate.

The Starting Line / Written by Bob Fernee

Wow, It's "Virtually" The Gate River Run

Nothing could be better than this. Here is the scenario: It is the second Saturday of March, yep, you guessed it, Gate River Run 15k day. But you don't have to get out of bed. Well, not yet anyway. You hit the snooze button on your alarm clock, fluff up your pillow and stay between the sheets for another couple of hours, maybe more. When you do eventually get out of bed, you take your time, no need to rush to your car and fight the traffic, or pay the parking fee, just to reach the starting line of another crowded GRR. Nope, not this time.

You casually put on your expensive, technical, wick-dry running clothes; man, you're starting to look like a young Todd Williams. Your running shoes you leisurely lace up while sipping your second latte. Then you go to the "race" which is now the treadmill in your private gym inside your house. Is that an "I'm Caitlin" rerun on the TV facing you? Gosh, it sure is; you're living the dream. Bruce Jenner, he used to be an athlete, too; it seems like genders ago.

You program your high-tech treadmill for a 15k workout. Set it for a nice, slow, even pace and remember ... there's no Hart Bridge to worry about this time. Still, you can "visit" some of the nicer things on the course. Imagine pretty San Marco, have the doughnut, the mimosa and the strip of bacon at the ready. All that's missing are the gorgeous mansions and the mighty St. Johns River. But you have beer in the fridge and some favorite songs in the iPod; ah, shades of enjoyable GRR post-race festivities. The "good old days," you'll never see them again, but you

don't care. Heck, it was all so inconvenient, wasn't it?

There won't be an awards ceremony, unless you make that up, too. Sure, go ahead: "First place overall, and our new champion, is (your name here)." Rod Serling steps forward to hand you a massive award and paycheck. Yep, you're in the twilight zone, boy. Enjoy. That's what virtual can do for you.

Once you "finish the race" your commemorative T-shirt will be mailed to you, along with your "finishers" medallion. Your personal results for your separate virtual race will be posted online with results of all the others. The "others" meaning the tech deprived Neanderthals who worked up a rolling sweat on the streets, slipped on paper cups at aid stations, saw their pace fluctuate due to Mother Nature's obstacles, elements and whims, then grunted and groaned trying to beat the Hart Bridge. But you came out on top.

"Ha! Idiots," you said to yourself, "why don't they just do it virtually, like me?"

Yes, why don't they? It's almost the real thing, isn't it? Well, isn't it?

Soon, they say, we won't be driving our cars; our cars will be driving us. Robots and other mechanical devices will perform daily tasks. You will choose your next child from a test tube in a scientific laboratory.

Wow, It's "Virtually" The Gate River Run

"This concoction will give him this DNA and these attributes; he'll be a money-making mogul with a big orange head, just like Donald Trump. Congratulations!" the baby maker says.

Then the big one – you won't have to race (in public) anymore. You can do it virtually in your home, gym or workplace (as long as your virtual boss doesn't mind.)

It's a sign of the times and as Bob Dylan said many years ago, "the times they are a changin'." Should the Gate River Run move with the times and get on board, or should it miss the boat? This could be a boat full of money, folks.

What if 20,000 lazy slugs want to "do" the Gate River Run and each is willing to fork over 40 bucks for the virtual privilege to do so? That is not virtual money it's the real thing! Can we have the in-

testinal fortitude to say "no" to that kind of dough. What if Mo Gefiltefish can't be at our race but says he'll do it someplace else, virtually? Are we going to turn him down? What race wouldn't want to say, "We've got Gefiltefish!" No race would want to make that mistake.

With virtual sign-ups the Gate River Run could jump from a piddly 20,000 runners to 40,000 and be the biggest 15k by far. This is the obvious answer to increasing race attendance as well as race revenue. And we could do it the modern way, the high tech way, the next gen way. Yes, folks, this is the answer.

Looking down the road, it is not hard to visualize robots in the River Run, a mechanical race director, an adjustable Hart Bridge, and a Lamar Strother clone, complete with hat and everything. Wonderful things are on the way.

Upcoming Events

JTC Running Track Meets

(All at Bolles High School)

June 4th 3 PM

July 2nd 10 AM

July 30th 10 AM

FREE at JTCRunning.com

Florida's Oldest Race – A True Classic JTC Running's 5 & 1-Mile Races **Tijuana Flats Summer Beach Run** Saturday, August 20, 6 P.M. **Enter at JTCRunning.com**

Time Is Running Out – Sign Up Now!

JTC Running's Annual Awards Banquet

Thursday, June 23, 6 P.M.

Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant

Reservations at JTCRunning.com

The Starting Line / Written by Jay Birmingham

Wide World of Running

ABSOLUTE vs. RELATIVE SPORT The Purity of Running

I've reacquainted myself with Major League Baseball. I bought some tickets to a Boston Red Sox game, so when my wife and I visit Fenway Park on the final day of our New England vacation, I'll have some knowledge of the players. Otherwise, it might be less interesting than dropping in on a Wolfson vs. Terry Parker baseball game where I know no one.

I've watched hundreds of baseball and football games over the years, and I enjoy the skill, effort and excitement of completion. But reading pre-game articles, and post-game reports — listening, too, to the excitable announcers — has lost all appeal. The joy lies in the actual competition.

Hyperbole, a figure of speech rife with exaggeration, pervades sports journalism. I have read far too many "Confrontation of the Century" headlines, heard "once in a lifetime," and "Truly one for the ages." At least once a week someone reports, "It is a game that will live forever ..." — give me a break!

But that is the nature of Relative Sport. A contest between soccer clubs, lacrosse teams or basketball teams can be great fun, but the result is often a matter of a superior group having their way against another of lesser talent. Watching a soccer player with superior skills fake an opponent out of his jock strap (does anyone wear jocks anymore??), is simply strong versus weak. A hockey puck hits the cage and bounces out — or bounces in. "He SCORES!!!!" I don't appreciate the luck involved.

We cheer sometimes for the underdog, but the pup with less ability rarely prevails. It's fun when the underdog wins, but that doesn't make it "A victory that will live in the annals of sports history."

Individuals who dominate a weaker opponent are doing simply what is expected. Even a contest between evenly matched adversaries oft goes to the one who gets favorable judgments from the ubiquitous officials — who fouled whom, who touched the ball last, did it go out of bounds — and similar subjective decisions. Adding objectivity through video replays does little for me. It is all Relative Sport — competitor A is better than competitor B, today.

Having just completed my 58th track season (as either

an athlete or a coach), I realize why I love track and field, swimming, weight lifting and other Absolute Sports: The better-performing athlete is the winner. You run 5,000 meters on an accurate track and the faster guy wins. You throw the discus 156 feet and no one else throws as far, and you win. Your relay team carries the baton to the finish line first, and you win. A kid leaps across 16'4" of sand in the long jump, better than ever before, and her day is a success!

Absolute performance. No judgment calls. No whistles stopping the action. No time-outs.

Absolute Sport has the appeal of precise measurement. The stopwatch does not lie. A minute is 60 seconds. A time of 2:56 over 800 meters is something to record. The standards are distance and time, not just putting a ball in a net.

The glory of sport, for me, is the confluence of physical fitness, competition and absolute performance. That is the nature of track and field. You see no out-of-breath giant scoring by dropping a basketball into a hoop as he elbows his opponents; no 15-foot putt to win a four-day golf tournament; no scoring the winning run on a throwing error by the right fielder.

To all my friends who lace up their Sketchers, Asics or Wal-Mart Joggers each day, and run around your neighborhood course — rejoice in the knowledge that your efforts deliver the rewards of improved health and a measurable performance. Running (jumping, throwing) is not a one or a zero; not yes or no; not win or lose. It is an absolute performance, every time.

Whether you run River Run in 49 minutes or 1:49, your result is pure and real. It matters not what someone else did. You covered the distance and posted that time all by yourself. Whether your opponent was "on his game" had no bearing on your accomplishment.

So although I am scanning the Major League standings and reading the box scores for a few weeks this summer, I know that the Red Sox cannot compare to the hundreds of fit runners who stride past that same stadium and complete the 26 miles, 385 yards on Patriots Day.

Run on, you pursuers of true endurance and personal athleticism. You cannot lose.

The Starting Line / Written by Jeff T. Wight, PhD

Overview of Elite Running Biomechanics That You Can Incorporate When granning forward

Jeff T. Wight, PhD

Assistant Professor of Kinesiology, Jacksonville University

Director, JU Running Laboratory

Member, First Place Sports Racing Team

In April, at JU, we invited the local running community to our exciting evening of Exercise is Medicine. Well over 100 local runners attended. There were two big events. First, was a "standing ovation" lecture by the distinguished MD, Dr. Robert Sallis, the inspired leader who initiated the American College of Sports Medicine Exercise is Medicine initiative (in 2007). The talk was titled, "A Drug Called Exercise: Why You Need to Take It!". If you missed it, please view the lecture on YouTube. This lecture provides critical guidance for individuals and society so please share the link with friends, family and individuals who can help the cause.

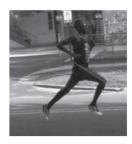
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www.youtube.com

The second event was our JU Running Conference which included awesome presentations from top local experts Paul McRae, Julie Stackhouse and Mark Baughman. For my presentation, I shared preliminary data from the JU Running Laboratory and presented "Tips for Efficient Running Biomechanics." For this article, I will provide an overview for some of those tips. Next time, I will provide more detailed examples (and I should be ready to share the link to access information from our JU Running Laboratory website).

EFFICIENT RUNNING BIOMECHANICS

(THEN RELAX LEG)



(DO NOT EXTEND KNEE)



When stepping forward, elite runners focus much attention on lifting their knee high. Then, the elite runner relaxes the leg and "takes a break." Notice how relaxed the elite runner, "Heldy," looks during "flight time." Once the knee is lifted, Heldy simply "floats" through the air — there is no work being done. He simply lets the leg fall back to the ground. This approach provides a subtle, but critical break for the leg muscles.

Most recreational runners have much room for improvement in this area. This takes practice. Here is what you can focus on. First, when you begin to pull your leg forward, focus on using your big and powerful "core" (pull your leg forward by rotating your pelvis). Then, focus on finishing your knee lift using your "hip flexors." Try to avoid using your quadriceps. Specifically, try to avoid "kicking" your foot forward (by contracting their quadriceps to straighten their knee). Instead, "lift at the hip" and "save" your quadriceps (for the landing).

ACCEPT WEIGHT WITH "STRONG" LEG POSITION (BELOW BODY)



Here is footage of one of our top local runners, Michelle Krueger. In the third photo, her shoe is "squishing," and she is fully absorbing her weight. Notice her leg position in that photo: Her leg is in a very "strong" position and directly below her body. This is ideal. Every elite runner I have examined uses this technique.

In contrast, many recreational runners "kick" their foot out front and then absorb their weight with their leg out in front of their body (not directly below their body). The next set of photos will reveal why it is critical to absorb your weight with your leg below your body.

Overview of Elite Running Biomechanics That You Can Incorporate

In the first photo, Heldy is just beginning to extend (straighten) his knee. Notice that his knee extension occurs "behind" his body. Notice the direction of his "force vector" (approximately 45°) in the third photo — it is pushing him up AND forward. This is VERY efficient.

Most recreational runners are not able to use this "late knee extension" technique. Most recreational runners absorb their weight out in front of their body (not below) and then extend their knee too "early."

The key is to absorb your weight with your leg below your body. Then, you can practice "late knee extension to optimally "push" yourself forward. Your "running posture" will also greatly impact your ability to practice late knee extension. Notice how the elite runners run with their pelvis tilted back slightly (posterior). This geometry makes it easy for their legs to extend back behind their body.

In contrast, most recreational runners keep their pelvis pointing "down," not "back.". It is very difficult to extend your legs back behind your body with your pelvis pointing down. So when you run, focus on "sticking your bottom out," and notice how it promotes late knee extension.

Expect this posture to be a bit "challenging" or "uncomfortable" for your lower back muscles at first. Therefore, you will likely need to ease into it. But after a few sessions it should become comfortable and

LATE KNEE EXTENSION (Posterior)



STICK BOTTOM OUT!





Upcoming Events

JTC Running's 2016 Track Meet Series

June 4th	Track & Field	3PM	Bolles High School
July 2nd	Track & Field	10AM	Bolles High School
July 30th	Track & Field	10AM	Bolles High School

FREE to ALL online pre-registered athletes, learn more and enter @ **JTCRunning.com**

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P.O. Box 24667, Jacksonville, FL 32241 OR bobfernee@aol.com

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Weekly Training Runs

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

Sunday 6:30 am, Atlantic Beach: Atlantic Bl. & 1st Street. 5-10 miles. Contact: Linda White (H) 246-2137 (C) 662-4928

Sunday 6:30 am, Orange Park: IHOP, Blanding Bl., 6-20 miles. Contact: John 264-8024 john powers@floridapowertrain.com

Sunday 7:00 am, Tapestry Park: (Off Southside Bl.) 3-10 miles.

Contact: Melissa@JacksonvilleRunningCompany.com 379-7170 or 268-0608

Sunday 8:00 am, Jax Trails Group Run: visit Jax Group Trail Running on Facebook

Monday 5:00 pm, Bridges Run: River City Brewing Co. 2-6 miles. Acosta & Main St. Bridges. Contact: Bill Krause bjk615@yahoo.com 904-860-9189

Tuesday 5:45 am, San Marco: Southside Methodist Church 5-6 miles. 7-8:30 pace, Contact: JC Pinto 655-1044

Tuesday 6:00 pm, Baymeadows: 1st Place Sports, Baymeadows Rd. 3-6 miles. All abilities, 731-3676

Tuesday 6:30 pm, Your Pie (Southside): 3.1 Mile Loop Contact: Melissa@JacksonvilleRunningCompany.com

Wednesday 5:30 am, Bolles School: Track Interval Training, (JTC Running Members) Contact: JC Pinto, 655-1044

Wednesday 5:30 pm, Bolles School: Track Interval Training (JTC Running Members)
Contact: Paul Smith, smithfccj@hotmail.com, 982-3730

Wednesday 6:30 pm, Jax Beach: 1st Place Sports various runs designed to improve your running. Contact: Simon 270-2221

Wednesday 6:30 pm, San Marco: 1st Place Sports/ Aardwolf Brewery, 4 miles, includes bridges. Contact: 399-8880

Wednesday 6:30 pm, Baymeadows: Native Sun, 2 to 4 miles.

Contact: Melissa@JacksonvilleRunningCompany.com 379-7170

Thursday 6:00 pm, Town Center Mall: 1st Place Sports, 3-6 miles. Contact: 620-9991

Thursday 6:15 pm, Orange Park: 1st Place Sports 3-6 miles. Contact: Denise 264-3767

Thursday 6:30 pm, San Marco:

1964 Largo Rd. Contact: Doug Tillett 728-3711

Thursday 6:30 pm, Bartram Park: Tijuana Flats, 3-6 miles. Melissa@JacksonvilleRunningCompany.com 268-0608

Friday 5:40 am, Mandarin: Beauclerc, Forest Circle, 7.5 miles. Contact: Stef at stefgriff@aol.com or 268-1503

Disclaimer on Weekly Workout Sessions

The Wednesday morning and afternoon sessions at the Bolles School are sanctioned by JTC Running and open only to registered members. Information on all other sessions is provided as a courtesy only. JTC Running does not sanction, manage, or insure these workouts.