

CHECKERS ATHLETIC CLUB

FOR ALL ABILITIES

CHATTER

JULY 2009

CHECKERS PRESENTS THE MUELLER MILE

The Checkers Mile, this year officially titled "Checkers Athletic Club presents the Mueller Mile," is slated for Saturday, August 29 at approximately 9:00 a.m. in the City of Tonawanda. Checkers member John Noe is president of Mueller Services, and has agreed to be the corporate sponsor of this year's mile race. The race course will start and finish near his company's headquarters in the City of Tonawanda near the intersection of Main St. and Broad St.

With the continual support and involvement of the Checkers Board, Wendy Guyker is this year's race director. Wendy has been a Checkers member since 2005 and is thrilled at this opportunity to contribute to the club in this way. She describes the new, certified course as flat and potentially the fastest the club has had. It begins with a long straightaway on Williams St, a right turn onto Minerva, and then a right turn on Main St. for a long, straightaway to the finish. The post-race party is tentatively slated to take place steps away from the finish line at the Griffin Restaurant & Pub on Main St.

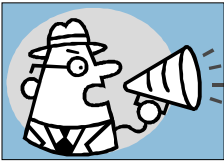
Race organizers hope to not only preserve the unique opportunities that a one-mile race provides, such as showcasing and awarding some of the area's fastest runners, but also encourage everyday runners to show up and give the race a try. They plan on holding elite male and female heats and also a primary, "citizens" race of one heat. The objective is to try doing away with the multiple number of small, specific, non-elite heats that might intimidate or discourage an everyday runner from taking part in a one-mile race. To this end, race organizers seek to preserve the kind of feel of area races that epitomize and attract runners of all kinds by holding one, primary race for runners of all sorts, even first-timers. As these runners celebrate and cool down at the finish line, they can congregate to watch two exciting elite races (male and female) and be steps away from the post-race festivities. A portion of the race proceeds goes to support services at the Kevin Guest House.

Two additional perks of this year's one-mile race? It is a Buffalo News Runner of the Year race, and it's also being held the same weekend (and in same neighborhood!) as the Checkers picnic. Why not make it a Checkers weekend? With the new race date of late summer rather than early June as it's been in years past, your 1 mile PR is surely in the making!

Details will continue to be updated on the Checkers website.

-Tom Donnelly and Wendy Guyker





ANNOUNCEMENTS

8th Annual Ronald McDonald House 5K Run

July 29th at 6:30PM Member-Rich Meyers , Race Director

Buffalo Runner of the Year Race & part of "The Fabulous Five Series"

A Plaque for the LARGEST GROUP in attendance.

YEARLY GROUP CHECKERS PHOTO will be taken at this race

I need your cans or bottles.

I am raising money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Societies Team in Training program. I will be running the marathon in Disney again. The marathon is in January 2010 but I want to get a head start on raising money for blood cancer research. Please help me raise my goal for LLS/TNT which is \$3800. You can bring them to track practice or call me at 649-8624 to arrange for pickup or drop off (at my house).

Here is my link to donate too. Thank you.
pages.teamintraining.org/wny/wdw10/lmcgorry
Laurie McGorry

2009 Western New York's Fabulous 5k Race Schedule

The Great Race	Friday June 19th 7:00 PM
Loughran's Alumni Cup 5K	Monday July 13th 7:00 PM
Ronald McDonald House 5K Run and Walk	Wednesday, July 29th 6:30 PM
Mississippi Mudds 5K River Run	Saturday August 15th 6:30 PM
Moonlight Run 5KRun and Walk	Wednesday August 19th 8:00 PM

Top runners in Three out of Five races win

Awards will be presented at The Glen Park Tavern in September

I just wanted to say thank you so much to the employees at Runners Roost. I live in Clarence and it is a drive to Orchard Park but well worth it because of the excellent customer care they give you. John was the employee that spent about 45 minutes with me trying 5 or 6 different pairs of shoes until I found one.

It turns out that I have been using the wrong kind of shoes for my feet (cushioned instead of stability). I am 215-220 lbs and run about 400-500 miles a year so I am pretty worried that I did some bad things to my feet for the past 4 or 5 years.

Hopefully wearing the correct shoes from now on will help with some of the foot pain I've had. So thanks again to Runners Roost! I will always come back and buy gear from you plus I will spread the word to other runners that I know!

John Kennedy



Summer Picnic Rain or Shine



The 2009 Checkers Picnic will be on Sunday August 30th at Veterans Park in the City of Tonawanda. The event starts at noon and ends at 7pm. Please bring a lawn chair and dish to pass or \$5 per person or \$20 per family of 4 or more. We provide pop, water and Gatorade. If you prefer something else you're welcome to bring it. There will be volleyball, horseshoes, shuffleboard, bocce ball, ladder golf, and lots more fun games. We will be at shelter #1 and parking limited, so please try to car pool.

More details to follow.

Below is a link for a nice free online log that I use. You can enter your workouts and training plans manually which I do or if you have a GPS can upload the info using sportstracks software. One of the things I like about it is the reports that it generates. I thought this may be of interest to Checkers members. Dave Lawrence

<http://www.buckeyeoutdoors.com/cgi-bin/login>

WANTED!

Home made recipe for Energy Bars.

Email dianesardes@roadrunner.com and I will include it next months newsletter!

SOCIAL/EVENTS CALENDAR

JULY

Sat.	7/18	9:00 am	Mini-Mussel Spring Triathlon	Geneva, N. Y.
Sun.	7/19	7:30 am	Presque Isle Half Marathon	Erie, PA
Sun.	7/19	7:00 am	Musselman Half-Iron Triathlon	Geneva, N. Y.
Wed.	7/22	7:00 pm	Runnin' with Jesus	Grace Lutheran Church, Hamburg
Thur.	7/23	6:30 pm	St. John Vianney 5k	St. John Vianney R.C. Church, Orchard Park
Thur.	7/23	7:00 pm	Canal Fest 4 Miles	Elk's Club, North Tonawanda
Fri.	7/24	6:30 pm	Mental Health 5k	Delaware Park, Buffalo
Sat.	7/25	9:00 am	Splash 'N Dash 2.5 Miles	Frontier Middle School, Hamburg
Sat.	7/25	9:00 am	Crabapple Run 5k	Stiglmeier Park, Cheektowaga
Sat.	7/25	9:30 am	Byron Heritage Festival 5k	Byron Community Park
Sat.	7/25	5:30 pm	East Aurora Rerun 5k	Firemen's Field
Sat.	7/25	7:30 pm	St. John Baptist 2.3 Mile Run	St. John Baptist School, Tonawanda
Sun.	7/26	11:00 am	Make Haste to the Taste	Jamestown Comm. College, Olean
Wed.	7/29	6:30 pm	Ronald McDonald 5k (ROY)	Ronald McDonald House, Buffalo

AUGUST

Sat.	8/1	9:00 am	Wet & Wild	Tuscarora State Park, Wilson, N. Y.
Sat.	8/1	5:30 pm	Firefighters for Food 5K Run/Walk	Central Ave. , Lancaster
Sun.	8/2	10:00 am	Italian Festival	Columbus Park, Niagara Falls
Sun.	8/2	9:30 am	Pennies from Heaven	Holy Cross Cemetery, South Park
Sat.	8/2	6:15 pm	St Christopher's	Niagara Falls Blvd.
Mon.	8/3	6:30 pm	The Mud Run	Feddick Rd. , Boston, N. Y.
Fri.	8/7	7:00 pm	Take Back The Path	Clarence Center Fire Hall
Sat.	8/8	9:00 am	Brian Rybarczyk Memorial	4401 Transit Rd., Williamsville
Sun.	8/9	10:00 am	Ultra 10 Mile Trial Run	Holiday Valley Mountain Sports Center, Ellicottville
Wed.	8/12	7:00 pm	Engineering Scholarship 5K Run	NFTA Small Boat Harbor, Fuhrmann Blvd.
Sat.	8/15	6:00 pm	Strides for Stewart 5K	Veteran's Park, Bedell Rd., Grand Island
Sat.	8/15	6:30 pm	Mississippi Mudd's 5K River	Niagara Street, Tonawanda
Mon.	8/17	7:00 pm	Rut Race 3.5 miles	Bond Lake Park Between Routes #104 & #429

Saturday, August 29th 9:00 am Checkers presents The Mueller Mile (ROY) Tonawanda

Sunday, August 30th 12:00-7:00 CHECKERS FAMILY PICNIC-Veteran's Park, Tonawanda

PLEASE check dates and times. Additional races are listed on the Checkers Calendar!

Dear fellow Checkers AC member,

As many of you knew, I curtailed my workout at track practice one Tuesday night because I wasn't "feeling quite right". It turned out that this was one of the many symptoms I was experiencing that something wasn't right. My times were not as good, I was increasing fatigued after a run and I couldn't finish my workouts. The next morning, I suffered a mild heart attack. It turned out to be that my right rear artery was completely blocked. Surgery was done right away and two stents were inserted. The long term prognosis is a complete recovery with an eventual return to running.



As I added in the recent email that went out requesting medical information, I want to iterate the importance of listening to your doctor, to the Coaches and anyone who expresses concern. As fast as we want to be and as good as we want to look, the one thing we tend to overlook yet is right 99.9% of the time...**LISTEN TO YOUR BODY!**

From Stephanie and I, our heartfelt thanks go out to all of you for the tremendous outpour of thoughts and prayers. We are forever indebted for the love that we share among us Checkers brothers and sisters. God bless you all!

From the bottom of my repaired heart,
Sam

Checkers members making their way down a wider road.....of racing.



**Guelph Lake Sprint
Triathlon Guelph, ON
June 20, 2009**
Patrick Dalton Jr. 1:22:59

**Guelph Lake Duathlon Guelph, ON
June 21, 2009**

John Moore 2:42:19 2/M60

**Quakerman Triathlon Orchard Park, NY
June 28, 2009**

David Welby	1:44:19	Amy Bryan	2:05:02
Darlene Schweikert	1:50:15	Kathleen Moore	2:14:57
Chuck Schweikert	1:51:17	Suzanne Fenger	2:30:20
Carolyn Corgel	2:04:43		

Tupperlake Half Ironman - June 27th

Catherine Haight 5:49:58
6th of 23 in F/45-49



**Quakerman Duathlon Orchard
Park, NY
June 28, 2009**

Warren Elvers	1:38:53	1/M50-54
John Moore	1:55:17	1/M65-69
John Bell	2:04:40	1/M60-64
Eva Basehart	2:06:55	1/F40-44

Triathlons/Duathlons coming soon:

Musselman– Half Ironman, & Mini Musselman, July 18th & 19th. Geneva, NY. July 19th

Lake Placid Ironman- July 26th

Wilson Triathlon - August 1st

Muscoka - Half Ironman 70.3
Canada September 13th.



Niagara Ultra 50K

Ask 5 different people why they run and you're likely to get five different reasons. To loose weight and get fit, my doctor says I need to lower my blood pressure and cholesterol, because I'm competitive and I like to race and I'm good at it, I enjoy the social aspect of running, or simply, I like to run.

Ask the 134 runners why they did the 50km Niagara Ultra this year, and you're likely to hear mostly one reason. I *really* like to run! Far! Ask anyone else and they'll tell you these people are nuts!

June 20, 7 am, low sixties, overcast and threatening. The starter says go and Tom Appenheimer, Mike Schiavone, and myself are off and running with the rest of this happy bunch. Running a marathon is tough, it's a race for time; you want to break 3 hours or 3:30, you want to PR, or qualify for Boston, or compete in your age group. Running from Niagara-on-the-Lake to Niagara Falls and back on the Niagara Parkway bike path is pure pleasure on one of the prettiest courses around. Oh yeah, it hurt, and the weather was lousy, raining (heavily at times) most of the day.

But you meet interesting people, from all walks of life and you know these are your brothers and sisters, because they're digging this is much as you are. And when you finish, they're cheering for you, and you can tell who the runners are because they all walk funny for a while afterward. But you eat and have a beer, share your story and listen to others and recover.

Then you head home knowing you accomplished something special, and you take great pleasure in that. You were that happy kid for the day, the one that runs and runs just because he can, smiling, laughing and sharing jokes and stories with his friends. And you smile again, because you'll be back next year!

For the record, **Tom** ran a 4:59:45 (9:40 pace), **Mike** ran a 5:35:48 (10:50 pace) and **I** ran a 5:37:34 (10:53 pace). This was Tom's first, Mike's seventeenth, and my fourth.

Ray Ernst



Happy Birthday!



Ed Harkey	8/2	Donna Maziarz	8/16
Christa Maier	8/2	Bonnie Blatner	8/17
Mark Mahoney	8/3	Jacquelyn Wolniewicz	8/17
Wendy Adkins	8/4	Jake Symoniak	8/18
John Feroletto	8/4	Dave Ward	8/18
Sandy Bunn	8/5	Joan Crouse	8/19
William Moore	8/5	Adam Niziol	8/19
Maureen Lachiusa	8/7	Haley Keeley	8/21
Sean Sanders	8/7	Ron Lemmon	8/21
Tim Flynn	8/8	Dan Symoniak	8/21
Melissa Melnik	8/8	Elizabeth Rutowski	8/22
Karen Berger	8/9	Tim Geiger	8/23
Kate Braisted	8/11	Bob Kaminski	8/23
Wendy Mohrman	8/11	Kate Weisser	8/23
Sam Neal	8/11	Marissa Pieri	8/24
Sarah Neal	8/11	Don Seitz	8/24
Gretchen Carney	8/14	Bach Weslow	8/24
Ed Kamela	8/14	Catherine Rowan	8/26
Eric Eggert	8/15	Dawn Bingeman	8/27
Maria Pieri	8/15	Jenna Wallace	8/27
Michael Thielman	8/15	John Dudziak	8/28
Monika Buffamonti	8/16	Mark Sardes	8/29
Pat Dalton Jr.	8/16	Mark Forell	8/30
Maureen Knutsen	8/16		

PERSONAL RECORDS!



St Mary's Of The Lake 5K

21:42 John Teuscher Course

APT Spring Into Summer 5K

20:07 Rick Queeno Course

Jog For The Jake 5K

19:59 Susan Ballard Course

27:05 Linda Gerbec Course

Trooper Brinkerhoff 5K

24:58 Laurie McGorry Age-Group

St. Gregory The Great Race 5K

18:07 Jim Figler Life

20:08 David Melohusky Life

22:36 Chuck Schweikert Life

Best of Eggertsville 5K

23:15 Kathy Reynolds Life

Susan G. Komen Race For The Cure 5K

19:26 John Ende Life

Jamie LaBarbera 5K Run for Education

18:09 Jim Figler Life

Alden 5K Race For Scholarships

24:56 Laurie McGorry Course

32:53 Michael Karpie Course

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



Michelle Adams
Kristin Bijak
Jane Gabalski
Linda Gowans
Lynn Hart
Sean Harvey
Sallie McGuire
Paulette Nowak
Elizabeth Randell

Staci Sass
Thomas Sass
Emily Sieracki
Kate Weisser
Alexander Wukovits
Jacob Wukovits
Joseph Wukovits
Roseanne Wukovits
Mohamed Zeid

Congratulations to Warren Elvers who has qualified for the World Duathlon Championships, which will be held in Concord (Charlotte), NC September.



This will be the 14th World Championship that Warren has qualified for!!! This intermediate distance race (10k/40k/5k) will be held at Lowe's Motor Speedway. The transition area will be located on the track infield, and each of the two laps of the bike course will include a lap of the 1.5 mile banked track.

Age Grading

We have been seeing age graded results showing up on the SCORE-THIS!!! results, ever since the Greater Buffalo Track Club Half Marathon this year.

What is age grading?

Age grading is a way to adjust an athlete's performance according to age and gender. The age-grading tables were developed by the World Association of Veteran Athletes, the world governing body for track and field, long distance running and race walking for veteran athletes. The tables work by recording the world record performance for each age at each distance, for men and women.

Age-grading can produce two numbers:

- The first is called age-graded performance factor, and the second is age-graded time.
- The age-graded performance factor compares an individual's performance to the World Record for a person of the same age and over the same distance.
- After calculating an age-graded performance factor, an age-graded time may be calculated based on the World Record for the same distance.

Checker's own **Helen Botti** had a great St. Gregory's 5k race recently, and we will take a look at her results. The world record for a 72 year old woman running a 5k is 23:19. Helen finished St Greg's in 27:13, and her **age-graded performance factor** was 23:19/27:13 or .8567. The World Record for the 5k for females is 14:48, so Helen's **age-graded time** is 14:48/.8567 or 17:17.



The wide availability of age-grading tables has allowed older runners to compete on even terms with younger generations. In many running clubs today, the age-graded champion earns as much, if not more, recognition as the outright (non-age adjusted) winner of the event.

What is age-grading used for?

Age grading can be used to compare performances across different ages and sexes; track your own performance over time; identify your best events; set goals for current and future years; and identify your best ever performance. You can also [use age-grading to predict your race performance](#), at different distances.

The following table has, further defined age-grading performance levels.

- 100% = Approximate World-Record Level
- Over 90% = World Class
- Over 80% = National Class
- Over 70% = Regional Class
- Over 60% = Local Class

In the recent St Greg's race there were 25 National Class (80% or better) Performance levels. There were some great performances by Checker's members, most notably by **Helen Botti** and **Ted Paget**. The table below shows the top two Age Graded Performances plus Checker's member's who were National Class. Note that Helen, who finished 508th overall, had the third best age-graded performance level. **Well done Helen, and all those who are National Class!**

Place In Race	Name		Age	Gender	Time	Age Graded Percent	Age Graded Time	Age Graded Place
47	Richards	Brian	63	M	0:18:44	87.90%	0:14:40	1
18	Lantinen	Gary	53	M	0:17:21	87.13%	0:14:49	2
508	Botti	Helen	72	F	0:27:13	85.67%	0:17:17	3
39	Paget	Ted	58	M	0:18:28	85.38%	0:15:07	4
111	Corgel	Carolyn	51	F	0:20:55	81.91%	0:18:04	10
214	Sardes	Diane	57	F	0:22:45	81.47%	0:18:10	13
4	Gillis	Michael	21	M	0:15:57	81.19%	0:15:53	14
71	Ballard	Susan	45	F	0:19:40	81.19%	0:18:13	15
34	George	Guy	50	M	0:18:21	80.38%	0:16:03	21
89	Harrison	Michael	61	M	0:20:10	80.25%	0:16:05	22
7	Heron	Brad	23	M	0:16:06	80.12%	0:16:06	24

Thanks to John Moore for his contribution to our newsletter!

The Big Lie

By Bill Donnelly



As you read this article, the thoughts of snow and the cold of winter cannot be far behind you, nor is the vision of the coming winter not so distant. That's because we live in Buffalo, and let's face it, winter is one very long season here.

Have you ever heard Buffalonians declare they would hate to live in a city like Los Angeles because the weather is too predictable, and that such a climate would become boring? Yeah, right! Like who could possibly handle 85 degrees and sunshine almost every day of the year. I'm always hearing denizens of our fair city (and I plead guilty to doing this) say that they enjoy all the different seasons, and would never want to live elsewhere, and besides, we do not have to deal with all the natural and unnatural disasters other locales have to put up with.

First off, let's examine the part about natural disasters we do not have to deal with. This is true, and I will now list the typical events we read about and explain why we in Buffalo do not suffer from them. Let's start with some that hit around the vicinity of Los Angeles. Foremost are the wild fires, and we do not have these because all the snow we have almost year round helps suffocate them before they can start. And how about those pesky mudslides? Why, mud can't slide if it's frozen. No threat of tsunamis because Lake Erie is usually frozen, thus no tidal waves. The earthquakes that cause tsunamis and other destruction can't happen because the ground is too frozen to crack. And finally, what of Paris Hilton? Why, she would never visit here because, and I have this on good authority, because she would never be caught dead wearing long-johns, let alone underwear, so she is one of those unnatural disasters we never have to fear.

Other natural disasters we do not get include floods (if we get six feet of water covering our city, it slowly melts causing little damage), hurricanes (we actually do get these, we just call them blizzards), and tornados (like Paris Hilton, ever hear of a tornado wearing long johns?). So fine, we do not suffer these natural disasters, but we are way too cold to care.

Now to the big lie, which is that we all enjoy the different seasons we get in Buffalo. Oh really now! What about spring, which is almost non-existent here, and what we do get is cold and rainy. Summer, especially for runners, is usually too hot and humid. Fall is nice, except when those beautiful colored leaves come down still attached to the tree branches under two feet of snow. And as for winter, let's face it; winter is just too darned long around these parts. The old joke that Buffalo has only two seasons, winter and July 4th, is just not that far from the truth. After all, how many months of the twelve can we get snow around here?

I know, I'll go through the month's one at a time to figure this out. We'll start at the beginning with January. I feel safe to say we would all agree that we can expect cold and snow during this frigid month. I remember running in January Back in the Day when I was training for my first Boston in 1974. In those days I ran my 16 miles a day no matter what. Neither snow, freezing rain, blizzards, my girl friend, Eleanor, nor time of day could stop me from getting my oh so many miles in. At that time in my life I made my living as a substitute teacher. Not much of a living in that, so in 1974 I also worked picking up and delivering tax forms for 24 offices of a tax preparing firm that shall remain nameless, but whose initials are H&R B. This endeavor would take me four hours, so on days I also taught (or at least survived the kids) I would not get home till eight at night. Yet running I would go.

I would spend no time stretching in those days, but by the time I put on seven layers of cotton shirts and sweats, and four layers of long johns and sweatpants, usually with some old socks pinned inside the front of the pants to prevent frost-bite to certain delicate body parts (THANK GOODNESS for modern protective running wear), it would be 8:30 before I was out the door heading for eight laps around the Delaware Park Meadow (which we call Ring Road now). I remember that January night I first did this clearly, for it was bitter cold, with no wind or clouds. Heading around the park with the snow crunching beneath my Tiger Bostons, I was totally alone with only my daydreams of winning the Boston Marathon to keep me going.

Just as I was passing by the zoo near Colvin, the nearby howl of a wolf shook me to my soul, for even as a boy growing up on the prairies of Minnesota, I had never heard such a terrifying sound, for wolves were long gone there. What a noise it was, and what feelings it leaves one with when one is not expecting it. My next lap was probably the fastest I ever ran. Yes, there is nothing like those cold dark nights of January.

Next we look at February. It doesn't snow a whole lot in this month because even snow knows not to come out when it's so cold. The Seneca Indian words for February are "scajacquada ana keemosabe", which when literally translated means "the moon when even a horse's pitoot knows to stay in the wigwam or casino to stay warm."

March is just the most depressing month of them all. The temperature finally starts to get above freezing, but this is usually accompanied by freezing rain. Then you get a real glimmer of hope when you have a warm breezy day of 65 degrees, only to be followed by a day with a howling snow storm, which is nature's way of reminding you winter is long from over.

April showers are often in the form of snow, and the only really warm day a Buffalonian will see is if he or she is running the Boston Marathon, and then you have a 50% chance of roasting in the heat of a sunny hot day. And here comes May, and one hopes for no more snow. But wait, I seem to remember coming to Buffalo the first weekend of May back in 1989 in order to watch my brother Tom run in the Buffalo Marathon.

Tom was in particularly good shape for this marathon, having trained under the direct guidance of Jeff Galloway back before Jeff dumbed down his training advice to reach a wider, more lucrative audience. Tom and the others he trained with were doing up to 13 one-mile repeats at a 5:30 pace, and they had as long as 30 mile runs, hitting the 26 mile mark at 2 hours and fifty-six minutes. Tom was truly ready to try and conquer what to him was the most sought after trophy, the coveted Donnelly Cup, which goes to the Donnelly with the fastest marathon time. Tom hated that I held it, and even though Tom's PR of 2:35:13 was a full half-second per mile slower than mine, he had unrealistic dreams of glory for that marathon in 1989. Unfortunately for Tom, Buffalo's own Mother Nature has a sick sense of humor, and had other plans for Tom.

The Big Lie continued.....

Tom awoke that May morning to find close to six inches of wet, sloppy snow on the marathon course. No one ran well that day, and Tom was no exception, for his legs tightened right up from the snow he had been kicking onto his tights, and he dropped out after the half-way point, having realized his dream of ever owning the Donnelly Cup was forever dashed. His six year old son Paul looked at the anguish and disappointment on his dad's face, and even at such a young age, he understood and vowed then and there to some day try to wrest away the cup from his Uncle Bill, and he started on the quest when he ran his first marathon a couple years ago in a time of 2:49. He has hit the low 2:40s since then, and yes, he has a long way to go, but he may be able to overcome some great obstacles, such as having inherited his dad's running ability. You see, he is related to me too, and he just may have gotten some of my superior, more talented running genes passed on to him if he was lucky enough.

So much for May. June can be a fair month, and so far as I can remember, there is no snow during it. July and August just get too hot and miserable, and we start looking fondly towards the cooler months of winter, when we to take a vacation to Florida to escape the cold. These months are tough to run in, and you start to hear runners talking fondly of running in the cold because it is easier to dress for cold running than it is for hot and humid training. September can have some hot days, however it is usually quite pleasant, but we have in the back of our minds that October is just around the corner.

And we all have a different feeling for October now, especially after our "Ach du lieber Surprise" a couple years ago when we woke up on Friday the 13th to two feet of snow, which looked like double that since it was on top of two feet of downed tree pieces parts. So we can all agree that we can see snow in October. November is a lot like March, in that we do get snow, but more often than not, we get freezing rain, which makes us runners wish for snow. It's just easier and more comfortable to run in snow.

Finally we get December, and everyone starts dreaming of a white Christmas. Bah, humbug I say! By then I've already had enough of the white stuff, and we still have months more of it to go. I would take a green Christmas any day, and I bet Santa would too. Notice he doesn't live in Buffalo. I hear he thinks it is too cold and snowy. He'll take the good old North Pole, thank you very much.

So let's recount. Hmmm, let's see, oh, **THAT WOULD BE EIGHT MONTHS OUT OF THE TWELVE WE CAN GET SNOW!!! It's just too long!!** Maybe one week of snow would be enough, no, let's make that two days. The rest of the days could be sunny, dry and 85 degrees for all I care. Gee, maybe I should move to Los Angeles. Oh, but what about those natural disasters?

I hate to break it to you Buffalonians, but we are not totally safe from them. The History Channel has been running a series along the lines of what if a certain type of disaster hit specific cities or areas. I've seen the one about if a category 5 hurricane were to hit New York City. Then there's the about what it would be like if a huge tsunami were to hit the west coast and Los Angeles. Well, I hear the have a show in the works to be shown next December entitled: "Disaster: What if Paris Hilton moved to Buffalo!"
NOOOOOOO!!!

New faces in Checkers!

Thank you for wearing your Checkers singlets!



Winner By Default - Tom Proctor



You hear that expression often. This person was chosen by default. Well...five years ago, July 3rd, 2004, I had that expression happen right before my eyes. Almost as if I were the single person on the ballot at an area election? Actually, this particular race was one out of my element and one that I have had a few close calls in.

The Dick Bessel 2.3 Mile Road Race is conducted before the July 4th weekend parade in Grand Island. Hundreds and hundreds of people line the street with coolers in hand, flags waving and they are there to welcome the start, along with the finish with loud cheers.

I had several top 3 finishes there, but wasn't really close to having that feeling of what it's like to win this event. I really enjoyed racing the 2.3 miler just because it was very difficult for me, not being wired to run extremely hard for a shorter distance. Jim Dunlop, a person that I was very fortunate to have trained with, had won this race several times for his native town.

Another product of Grand Island was racing that day. Alex Winstel, a 3:51 1500 meter runner from the University of Houston. His brother, Justin, was a teammate of my brother, Pat, on the two time NJCAA Championship Track team at Erie Community College in 1998-1999. Needless to say, I was in for it.

When the gun sounded, Alex took off on the inside of Grand Island Boulevard. Then...a few hundred meters later, a quick left turn awaited everyone. I had to stay with Alex, who was burning it up early and I was just getting burned. Everything hurt, and it wasn't probably even a half mile into the race. I then realized that Alex had settled in a bit, so I had to get right up on his shoulder.

When I did, he seemed that he was trying to recover from his early surge. So I didn't think twice and put a move on him, surging and taking the lead. I couldn't afford to give Alex any breathing room, because if I did and if it came down to a kick, I would be the guy who would be in second. We both wanted to win this race.

Approaching the first mile, Alex put yet another move on me and a few seconds later, I decided that I had to return the favor. Knowing that I had to make something happen soon, I surged as hard as I could and turned left onto a residential road toward the first mile mark. I was burning in my legs and in my lungs. The weather was extremely hot that day, and there were no trees to hide us all.

When I turned onto Grand Island Boulevard for the super-long stretch toward the finish line...it became very quiet. I had no idea to what was going on. All that I recalled was that I was alone in the lead. I also could see the finish line from just under a half mile away. Also, I realized that it was July and the heat was definitely being felt.

As the line was getting closer, I was pretty happy, because this was a race that I have wanted to win for several years. When I crossed the line, I felt enormous relief and above all, I was pumped over it. About Alex. He dropped out just past the mile mark, explaining the winning by default thing. Also, some guys named, Bohan, Glynn, Bob Carroll and a some guy with the last name Lombardo weren't in the race. Yes. Winner by default indeed



How do you choose which race to run? Well, if your Martha Nuchereno, and it also includes a Chinese Auction, that's a big plus. (Elephant run, Mt . Mercy run, Lindsey's Legacy etc). And she usually wins - not the race or her age bracket but a basket - and it doesn't matter *what* she wins - could be 2 rusted horse shoes tied to a defective wok - as long as it comes in a basket and is covered with cellophane.

AND SHE IS NOT, NOT A HUMBLE WINNER! See photo!

NY TIMES, May 28, 2009. Personal Best, The Road to Success, Paved With Bad Advice

By GINA KOLATA

THE talk, at the Expo Center at the Boston Marathon this year, had an intriguing title: Using Biomechanics to Predict Running Injuries. And the lecturer, Dr. Thomas W. Vorderer, a podiatrist at the division of sports medicine at Children's Hospital, one of the Harvard hospitals, spoke with great conviction. You can prevent injuries, Dr. Vorderer said, or, if you get them, can make them heal if you learn the right way to stretch and if you stretch regularly. And you should also learn the right way to run; in general, he said, runners should strike the ground with their heels first. If they strike with their midfoot or forefoot, he said, they are just asking for injuries.

Dr. Vorderer speaks from experience: he was a competitive runner for years and said he trained with fantastic coaches. And he says he has helped countless runners rid themselves of chronic injuries by figuring out why they were getting injured and teaching them, for example, the right way to stretch. He has e-mail messages from grateful patients, thanking him for solving problems that threatened to end their running altogether. But exercise physiologists say none of what he espouses has been established by rigorous studies. Stretching evidence is so inconclusive that two large studies are now under way that randomize people to stretch or not and ask whether it prevents injuries, does nothing or increases injury rates. No one knows what the answer will be.

As for running styles, a credible study in 2007 showed that running form often depended on running speed. The slower people run, the study found, the more likely they are to strike the ground with their heel first. The same runners, going more slowly, run differently from when they run fast.

There is no right or wrong way to run, said Peter R. Cavanagh, a professor in the department of orthopedics and sports medicine at the University of Washington. And even if there is, he said, it is not clear that people can permanently change their natural stride.

Dr. Vorderer says that he knows experts often disagree but that the art of sports medicine is to understand individuals.

"It's hard," he said. "Anyone can put out a shingle and say, 'I'm a sports medicine doctor.' You basically want to go where you have to wait an hour in the office. Then you know it's a busy office." And, he adds, while it is easy to diagnose a problem like an Achilles tendon injury, what you really want to know is, "Why do I have this? What mechanical or structural or shoe problem gave it to me?"

So how are athletes supposed to know whom or what to believe? It's a huge problem, researchers say. They have some tips, but their overall message is: Be wary and be careful. Look for credentials and rigorous science. And check the Web sites of reputable organizations, like the American College of Sports Medicine, which publishes position papers on exercise science. The papers are compiled by committees of experts and provide references and evidence to support their statements.

Yet bad advice is so ubiquitous that almost everyone, even experts themselves, has been foiled.

That happened, for example, to Dr. Paul Thompson of Hartford Hospital, a heart researcher and marathon runner. He warns that people should "be careful of advice that has a price tag." The best example, he said, are orthotics, those shoe inserts that are supposed to prevent injuries.

"Podiatrists make money making them, and more power to them," Dr. Thompson said. "But some podiatrists think they cure everything."

"I once needed orthotics," he continued. "The podiatrist wanted me to run with them. It completely changed my foot plant and produced lateral knee pain, which resolved when I used them only with my walking shoes."

Something similar happened to me. After I got a stress fracture in a small bone in my foot last year, my orthopedist prescribed orthotics. For weeks I tried to run with them but felt slow, like I was running through sand. Then I pulled my hamstring. My coach watched me run with and without the orthotics and said he could see why I was having problems: the orthotics changed my foot plant so I was braking with every step. Now, like Dr. Thompson, I wear them only when I walk around.

Those of us who are not experts can be especially vulnerable to bad advice. After my stress fracture, I had a biomechanical analysis by an exercise physiologist at a commercial studio in New York. Among other things, I was told to change the way I run. My heels never hit the ground; I had to learn to run so my heels struck first.

I knew I couldn't do that, so I ignored the advice and never returned to those experts. But my friend Birgit Unfried tried to listen to a sports medicine doctor in New Jersey who analyzed her running stride. She had a painful iliotibial band, which stabilizes the knee, and was plagued with shin splints.

The reason, she was told, was that her stride was wrong. She was a heel striker; she needed to learn to strike first with her midfoot.

BIRGIT tried and did so well that her doctor put before and after videos of her running on his Web site. But she never felt comfortable running that new way. As for her injuries, the new gait was no panacea. At first, Birgit said, her problems seemed to go away. But soon she pulled her quadriceps muscle and, despite her changed gait, her shin splints came back worse than ever.

"I haven't been running at all," Birgit said. "At times I think I'm getting better but then I touch my shin in certain areas, like down near the ankle, and it hurts like a bruise."

Orthotics and running styles are the easier cases. All too often, there are no studies or scientific evidence to guide anyone, even the experts. When studies are done, they tend to be inadequate.

"Good experiments need tight experimental design, and they need control groups," Dr. Cavanagh said. Without them, results are pretty much useless. And many exercise studies lack one or both of those crucial elements.

That may not matter to many who dispense advice. Often, they rely on a hunch or personal experience or on what they think makes a great athlete great.

Take pedal speed in cycling, said Michael J. Berry, a serious road cyclist and chairman of the department of health and exercise science at Wake Forest University. The studies, such as they are, say the best pedal speed is 60 to 80 revolutions a minute. But that is based on experiments with untrained subjects riding stationary bikes in an exercise lab. Those results may have no relevance for experienced cyclists riding on roads.

So, ignoring those lab studies, many experts counsel cyclists to pedal much faster. Their evidence? It's Lance Armstrong, who pedals extraordinarily fast — 95, 100, 110 r.p.m.'s.

In the 2003 Tour de France, Armstrong consistently beat his rival, Jan Ullrich, and commentators, Dr. Berry noted, said it was in part because he could pedal so fast. Ullrich pedals slower but uses bigger gears. "What if Lance had never been there and Jan had won?" Dr. Berry said. "Would people say that the reason he is so good is that he pushes a big gear?"

The Truth About Hydration in the Heat

By Matt Fitzgerald (For Active.com)

Most articles about exercising in the heat are all about hydration. But did you know that drink fluids during exercise in hot weather actually does very little to prevent the body's core temperature from rising? It's true, and the studies prove it.

For example, a 2007 study from the University of Exeter, England, found that fluid consumption did not prevent a rise in body temperature or improve performance in a half-marathon running event. This was the first study to monitor internal body temperature continuously throughout a real race, using high-tech sensors that runners actually ingested the night before the race, which took place in hot and humid conditions.

Runners consumed as much or as little fluid as they wished during the race, and there was a high degree of variability in drinking rates. Runners replaced between 6 and 73 percent of body fluid losses over the course of the run. Researchers found no correlation between the amount of fluid runners consumed and their body temperature or performance. Thus, they concluded that drinking fluid had no effect on body temperature or performance in this context.

However, there is another way to interpret these results. Evidence from other recent studies suggests that the nervous system regulates body temperature and performance during exercise in the heat through a mechanism called regulatory anticipation. Essentially, the brain allows the body to work hard enough--and only hard enough--to reach his highest safe core body temperature, which is more or less the same in all humans.

Therefore, as long as they are working at maximum capacity--as one does during a race--runners competing in the heat will reach the same core body temperature whether drinking has a cooling effect or not, because inasmuch as it does have a cooling effect, the runner's brain will simply allow him to run a little harder so that he still reaches the same body temperature.

But, if this is so, wouldn't the authors of this study at least have observed a performance benefit to hydration? The answer is that they probably would have observed a performance benefit if they had looked for one within individual runners (by having each of them run the race twice--once without fluid consumption and once at the runner's natural rate of fluid consumption), but instead they looked for a general correlation between drinking rate and performance in the general study population. Presumably, however, each runner instinctively consumed fluid at the proper rate to maximize his individual performance.

This speculation is borne out by a more recent study performed by researchers at the University of Cape Town South Africa. In this study, cyclists performed a time trial in a hot environment on several occasions, consuming fluid at a different rate in each. The authors of the study found that the rate of fluid intake had no effect on core body temperature, but it did affect performance. The cyclists performed best when they drank at an "ad libitum" (freely chosen rate).

So while drinking while running in the heat will not cool you down, it will speed you up. Specifically, drinking during hot-weather runs will keep your blood volume at close to normal levels, which in turn keeps your sweat rate high. And since oxygen is delivered to the muscles through the blood, maintaining your blood volume through drinking also enables your heart to deliver more oxygen per contraction, so you perform better than you can if you allow your body to become too dehydrated.

How much should you drink? Studies such as the one above suggest that you should simply drink according to your thirst. Drinking more will neither keep you cooler nor improve your performance; but it will increase your chances of suffering from GI distress.

By far the most effective way to prevent your body from overheating while running in the heat is not to drink a ton of fluid but simply to slow down. But your brain, through its anticipatory regulation mechanism, will strongly encourage you to do this anyway, at first by making you feel uncomfortable at your normal pace and then, if necessary, by simply refusing to allow your muscles to work as hard as you want them to.

This mechanism is no failsafe, however. During exercise in the heat, it is possible for the brain itself to overheat, causing this protective mechanism to fail and opening the door to heat illness. So, to avoid this dangerous situation, take all the usual precautions such as avoiding exercise during the hottest part of the day, wearing appropriate technical apparel, and heeding warning signs such as dizziness, lightheadedness and cessation of sweating.

Each year around this time, I hear many similar safety precautions related to handling fireworks. While all the warnings and tips make a lot of sense, unfortunately accidents occur every year.

This year, safety is on the top of my mind for a number of reasons. Not so much in regard to fireworks; I don't go near them. Safety is on my mind as a runner, and all the things I do that could be considered careless. I don't know about you, but after running for so many years without any incidents or accidents, I worry I might be getting just a little complacent. I do follow precaution by rote, and I've developed many good habits. But there's always time to review what I do, and maybe adjust things just a bit. It's a good practice for all of us.

Here's a quick list of some of the more significant practices we all should follow to avoid trouble:

- Before you run, try to recruit a running partner. If you can't, leave word with someone or write down where you plan to run and when you will return. Carry some form of identification, whether it's having your name and contact number in your pocket, or even a Road I.D. with medical information attached.
- Do not wear a radio, headset, earphones, or anything that causes you to be less aware of your environment.
- Avoid unpopular areas such as deserted streets, isolated trails, and especially avoid unlighted routes at night.
- Vary routes and the time of day that you run. Always stay alert, as the more aware you are, the less vulnerable you are.
- If you're jogging alone at night wear a headlamp and reflective clothing (no, the strips on your shoes aren't enough).
- Run against traffic so that you can observe the approach of automobiles. Doing this can keep you from being hit by a car or accosted. Think like a driver. Remember not all drivers are paying attention; they could be eating, impaired, changing their CDs, or talking on their cell phones.

Others may just be sadists and think it's funny to swerve at you. Stay out of the streets if possible. If not, make yourself visible to drivers. Make eye contact with them at street crossings before you cross even if you have right of way. Others may just be sadists and think it's funny to swerve at you. Stay out of the streets if possible. If not, make yourself visible to drivers.

Paying attention to your surroundings may be the most important of all of these tips; it can save you from becoming a victim or missing that step off the curb.

Finally, listen to your body. This relates more to how you feel, and not what you wear or how you run. As athletes, we tend to push through a lot of discomfort. Some of the signals we receive tell us that it might feel better lying on that couch at home rather than pushing through our workouts. That's only natural, as our subconscious has other ideas about what feels good. As runners, we tend to dismiss these thoughts.

Last week, we had a serious medical problem occur hours after the Tuesday track workout. Sam Spritzer was running with difficulty during his intervals and sensed something definitely wasn't right. He brought it to the attention of Coach Mitchell and she advised him to cut his workout short. Early the next morning, he suffered a mild heart attack. Thankfully, he received immediate attention and proper care. I'm happy to tell you he's recovering extremely well, with a positive prognosis.

Sam paid attention to some serious warning signals. This is difficult to do as it's easy to feel like it's not your night while doing a really hard effort. My advice is, if your gut tells you you're not right, listen to it. Being a fit and strong athlete doesn't make us invincible. Err on the side of caution and let's all get through this summer safe and healthy.



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