

RUNNING ON EMPTY

The Newsletter of the Bendigo University Athletics Club

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The world's fittest man

One day in December, 2001, Joe Decker decided to become the best in the world. So, he bicycled 100 miles, he hiked 10 miles, he power walked 5 miles, he kayaked 6 miles, he skied on a "Nordic Track" 10 miles, he rowed 10 miles, he swam 2 miles, he did 3,000 abdominal crunches, he did 1,100 star jumps, he did 1,000 leg lifts, he did 1,100 push ups and he weight lifted, cumulatively, 278,540 pounds.

He accomplished all this in 24 hours, in front of duly sanctioned counters and witnesses. For all of his effort and pain, he earned a place in the Guinness Book of Records as "the fittest man alive". "It was fun", said Decker, "I enjoyed the whole thing".

The world's fittest man does not look the part. He's lean and in shape, and when he pulls up his shirt, he has a flat stomach that verges on washboard. At 5' 9" and 195 pounds, he's on the stocky side. At the age of 31, he has the look of a pleasantly softening collegiate jock. If you were to stand next to him at the starting line of an ultramarathon, you'd write him off. This is fine with Decker, "I can run, row and paddle millions of miles and my body doesn't change. I like being built like this. People underestimate me".

Most of what the trained fitness trainer does would kill most people. For Decker, a marathon is a training run. "I don't mean to sound crazy, but once you get to a certain point, it's just nothing. I run a marathon a month". It's not unusual for Decker to run a marathon on a Saturday, and be out doing intervals on Sunday. On a typical Saturday, he'll rise at 4.30am and run 40-50 miles, or cycle 50-100 miles, or kayak 20-30 miles. That way he's back early afternoon and can spend some time with his girlfriend.

The year 2000 was momentous for Decker. He completed the Grand Slam of Ultrarunning, (four 100 mile ultramarathons), and completed the Raid Gauloises, a 520 mile race from Tibet to northern India via Nepal and the Himalayas.

Decker calls himself a "country boy at heart". In some ways, his boyhood in central Illinois was more 1870s than 1970s. Until he was 13, he used an outhouse. Come winter, when the artic wind would roar across the prairie, plunging the temperature to twenty below, the whole family would sleep in the living room, laying mattresses on the floor, huddling around the wood burning stove, the only source of heat. At 5.00am, Decker would rise, bundle up and venture into the blast to feed the pigs and milk the cows. "You had to do it for the family to survive," says Decker.

As a child he was chubby. In Grade Six, he took part in a weight lifting contest. Bench pressing sixty pounds, Decker was able to do the most reps. "I had found something I was actually good at". In high school, he power lifted, ran track and played football. After graduation, with no money for college, he joined the army. He followed that up with a stint at Western Illinois University in the prelaw honours program. By the end of his second year, he was having second thoughts about becoming a lawyer. He dropped out and travelled the country, ending up in New Orleans where temptations were plentiful. "I lost myself for two years," he says.

One day, he took the old "long, hard look in the mirror" and resolved to change. He began running again and returned to college, where he earned a degree in corporate fitness. "Fitness saved my life," Decker says. Suggest he may be a genetic freak, and Decker's face clouds. "Hang out with me when I work out and see how much is hard work and how much is genetics," he says, his voice uncharacteristically edgy. "So many times people sell themselves short, but if you set your mind to it, you can do it".

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Training tips - where to run

Much of the beauty and appeal of running lie with the simple fact that you can do it anywhere and anytime. No matter whether you're a city dweller or a veritable hermit hundreds of kilometres from civilization, your exercise space is only as far away as the nearest doorway.

Particularly as a beginner, though, you should seek out a place where you can relax and be at ease, where the scenery will hold your attention and take your mind away from what your body is up to. When it is convenient, go for pastoral; the calmer the better. Even the busiest cities have parks and waterways that make for carefree running.

Do your best to stay off the footpath, or you may find your legs punishing you with shin splints. This also helps avoiding dogs, rapidly reversing cars and pedestrian traffic. Try to stick with asphalt instead of concrete; it's softer and more forgiving. Trouble is, this may often mean running along the shoulder of a road. If that's the case, be very careful and run defensively. Try to run against the flow of traffic, so that you are able to see who or what is coming your way. Always assume that drivers cannot see you.

Be aware if running at dawn or at dusk as the sun's glare may block a driver's view of you. If running at night, wear reflective and bright clothing.

Dirt paths or grass, though, are ideal surfaces firm enough to give you sure footing but soft enough to offer some shock absorption. A special bonus is that dirt paths often come packaged with forests, countryside and other assorted natural scenery. The aesthetics, as well as the terrain, are in your favour.

Less aesthetically interesting is the track. Many new runners seem to think that that big oval behind the local high school is the defacto place to run. In fact, you really never have to go there at all -- at least not until you begin doing speedwork, and you don't have to worry about that for a while yet. It can be monotonous going in a single short loop over and over and over again. Find somewhere more interesting and more relaxing, and make it your own.

Running the roads and paths of your neighbourhood can be a wonderful way to see your community from a new vantage point.

Training tips - carbohydrates

Carbohydrates on the move: are they of a benefit during a race?

Running for over 90-120 minutes at race pace can totally deplete glycogen stores, even if you have well loaded beforehand. This means that your muscles will have to resort to fats and protein for energy. As fat requires oxygen to burn, you will have to slow down, so that sufficient oxygen can move to the muscles for the process. This is commonly referred to as "hitting the wall," quite a common phenomena for those who run marathons (check out the number of runners who walk at the 35-38 kilometer mark). Low muscle glycogen levels result in local muscle fatigue, resulting in cramping and/or inability to go faster.

Carbohydrates taken during exercise can overcome the above problem. Trained muscles will take up the glucose for extra energy, helping to maintain your pace at the end of a race, improving your overall time. Carbohydrate also offsets hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar levels) that occur during high intensity racing. Since glucose is brain food, you will ultimately feel better.

What are the best carbohydrates to consume? Sports drinks are considered the best as they supply fluid and carbohydrate, and are absorbed quickly. Solid food may cause gastric upset or sit in your stomach, leaving you feeling heavy.

Sports gels may also be tolerated, especially if a boost of carbohydrate is needed towards the end of a race. A word of warning about gels, make sure you drink two cups of water for every gel you consume to avoid dehydration. Fluid should always be your first priority as dehydration can have dangerous, long term results. Avoid fruit juice or eating too much fruit during a race as these contain fructose which can cause osmotic diarrhea and gastric upset, the results of which are not pleasant!

It is essential to start consumption of fluid and carbohydrate before fatigue commences. If you wait until you're already fatigued, it is too late. It will be a few kilometers before you notice the effect of sports drink, but the difference can be huge. The benefit of carbohydrate consumed during exercise has been shown consistently in research conducted over the last decade. In addition, the combination of fluid and carbohydrate has been shown to have an additive effect on performance enhancement even in events less than ninety minutes.

So for those who thought it wasn't possible, you can improve your ten kilometre time!

Injury tips - shin splints

Shin Splints (Periostitis)

Shin splints is the general name given to pain at the front of the lower leg. Shin splints is not a diagnosis in itself, but a description of symptoms of which there could be a number of causes. The most common cause is inflammation of the periosteum of the tibia (sheath surrounding the bone). Traction forces occur from the muscles of the lower leg on the periosteum to cause pain and aggravation.

Symptoms of shin splints include:

1. Tenderness over the inside of the shin
2. Lower leg pain
3. Some swelling
4. Lumps and bumps over the front of the tibia
5. Pain when the toes/foot are flexed downwards
6. Redness over the inside of the shin.

To ease the pain of shin splints, the athlete should:

1. Rest
2. Apply ice or cold therapy when it is painful. The cold therapy reduces the initial pain and inflammation
3. Wear shock absorbing insoles
4. Maintain your fitness and strength with non-weight bearing exercise
5. Apply heat and compression to the injured site after the initial acute stage of injury. This can provide support and compression to the lower leg to reduce the strain of the muscles, particularly when training. This will also help to retain the body's heat, causing blood vessels to dilate and increase blood flow to the tissues
6. See a physiotherapist to analyse your running style for biomechanical problems, and for sports massage
7. Tape the ankle for support, to relieve pressure off muscular attachments
8. Anti-inflammation medication
9. Surgery

Continued page four.

Who's running hot, and who's not

Who's hot.....

- congratulations to the many club members who participated in the Melbourne marathon and half marathon. Several BUAC members did well, with Jenny Buchanan finishing second, and Maria Slater fourth, in their age group for the marathon. In the half marathon, Greg McBain finished third, and Hannah Blair finished fifteenth in their respective age groups.

- a great effort by Tim McCullagh, who finished third in the under seventeen age group for the eight hundred metres at the Victorian Secondary Schools Sport Association event in late 2007. He covered the distance in 2.04 minutes. Phew!

- the WA Ironman was also held in late 2007, and BUAC club members David Meade, Frank Scarce, Ben McDermid, and Jackie and Russell Tremayne participated and completed the grueling event. Reward for countless hours of training.

- Caitlan Hamond did very well in her VCE, getting 99.05.

- two new arrivals with Alison Yum and Troy Cartner announcing the birth of Abbie Grace late in 2007, and Lisa and Ben McDermid announcing the birth of Avery Joesph in March, 2008. Two future triathletes?

- Tracey Wilson has been running super hot in the summer athletics season, breaking many long standing sprint records for his age group.

Future events

Events in Victoria

April to September - Athletics Victoria Winter Series. Race series in Melbourne, open to all levels of runner.
(www.athsvic.org.au)

May to December - Sri Chinmoy Races 10-42km
(www.srichinmoyraces.org.au)

October - Melbourne Marathon 10/21/42km
(www.melbournemarathon.com.au)

January to December - Victorian Road Runners 5 - 21km
(www.home.vicnet.net.au/roadrun)

Cool Running Website

(www.coolrunning.com.au/calender/vic)

Local Events

April 12 - College Classic, Edwards Rd near LaTrobe Uni (500m, 1,2,5km).

April 19 - Apollo Hill Attack, near junction of Simpsons and Neilborough Rd (500m, 1,3, 7km).

April 26 - Athletics Bendigo Relays. Get you teams organized now.

May 3 - Cedar Drive Dash, Cedar drive near the Bendigo golf club (500m, 1, 3, 7km).

May 10 - YMCA Invitation, Houston St, Quarry Hill (2, 4, 6km).

Bendigo University Athletics Club

Race Day Contacts:

Club President - Justin Lee

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Feel free to make suggestions for our newsletter. Ideas, news and the little bit of idle gossip help to fill these pages. Contact Pat Kenny on 5442 3431, or email mpken1@bigpond.com with any ideas or information. The more you contribute, the better this newsletter can be.

Newsletter Classifieds

Wanted: Bulla yoghurt containers for drinking cups (those types supplied with the water, after our races). Must be Bulla types as they are plastic and can be washed repeatedly. See Gavin Fiedler.

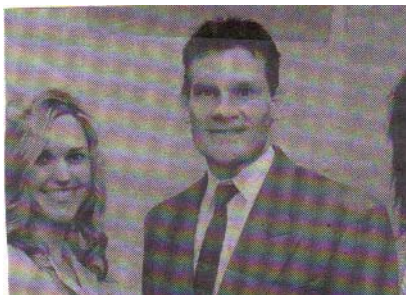
Remember: Wayne Forbe's training group on a Wednesday evening. A must for those looking to improve their running. See Wayne for details.

Injury tips continued

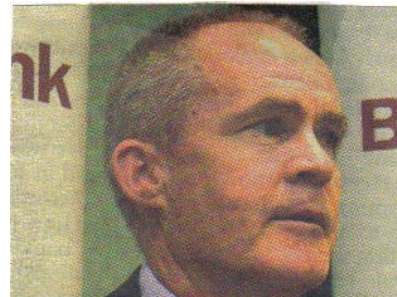
Anti-inflammatory drugs along with rest and ice can help reduce inflammation and pain. However, if the underlying causes such as tight muscles are not treated through stretching and sports massage, then the likelihood of the injury returning is higher. One common cause of recurring shin splint pain is failure to get the muscles of the lower limb in a good condition before returning to training. Tight calf muscles will increase the strain on the muscle attachments of the lower limb. Gradual strengthening, stretching and sports massage can help to make the muscle supple and more effective at absorbing the stresses placed on them.

Media watch

BUAC members spotted in the local press this month included:



Advertiser regular Tracey Wilson. This photo was his 171nd appearance in the paper for the 2007 calendar year, second only to Jacinta Allan.



Fellow Bendigo Bank employee, Owen Davies has also been in the Advertiser. Here, he is announcing a reduction in Tracey's photo opportunities for the 2008 year.

Running jokes

- Two gas servicemen were checking meters in a neighbourhood. They parked their truck at the end of the street and slowly worked their way to the other end. At the last house, the female occupant of the house waved as she viewed them from the kitchen window. Finishing the last meter, the older of the two servicemen challenged his younger co-worker to a footrace down the street, back to the truck. As they came running up to the trunk, they realized the lady from the last house was running and puffing just behind them. The two servicemen stopped and asked her what was wrong. Gasping for breath, she replied "when I saw two gas men running as hard as you two were, I figured I'd better run too!"
- Jo Blow decided to buy a new pair of running shoes. He went to the sports store and was confused by the large amounts on display, all of which seemed so technologically advanced. Jo approach a young salesman and asked, "which running shoe do you suggest for long distance running?" The salesman grabbed a sample off the shelf and said, "these are the best sir, they can predict the weather." Jo was amazed, "how do they predict the weather?" "Well sir," replied the salesman, "leave your shoes on the window sill for a little while: if they are wet it's raining, if they are dry it's sunny and if you cannot see them it's foggy."

Separated at birth



Vultures and hyenas fight over the remains of a carcass on the African savannah. The feeding frenzy in these packs can be so violent that feeding animals can lose parts of their body when mistaken for part of the kill.



BUAC afternoon tea.

Media watch continued

Due to an overwhelming amount of press given to the BUAC over the summer, here are more club members doing what they do best.

1.



How good are your eyes? You'll have to trust us on this one as the quality of the above picture has been slightly compromised due to scanning, zooming and printing using equipment from 1993. Greg McBain, behind the barrier like a caged tiger, (arms crossed, sneering) waits impatiently at the start of the 2007 Melbourne Marathon as the "elites" are led into their starting area. "Be afraid Monighetti, be very afraid!", a fired up McBain was heard to yell as the elites took their positions, "I eat guys like you for lunch!"

2. Speaking of lunch. Harleigh and Tedrah Thorpe greedily scoff down sausages and bread in front of some hungry looking kids.



3. The results from the Bendigo Lakeside Fun Run, as published in the January, 2008 edition of "Run For Your Life" magazine. A few familiar names in the results including our own Hannah Blair, Jenny Buchanan and Madeline Evelyn, and a few Harriers and Southies too. Great efforts by all involved, and it sounds like the event was very successful.

Surprise, surprise, Tracey Wilson gets a mention, albeit in the wrong gender's results. Stacey Fiske, who is in sixth place in the female results, also happens to be male and quite a handy Golden Square footballer. The fifth place getter in the 4km male race, Paris Craig, also sounds a bit dodgy.

It seems that the folks at R4YL do even less fact checking than the hard working staff at "Running on Empty".

| 4TH NOVEMBER BENDIGO BANK LAKESIDE FUN RUN, VIC | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 10KM | | |
| MEN | | |
| 1. Richard Gleisner | | 33.35 |
| 2. Leon Keely | | 34.59 |
| 3. Ricky Emel | | 36.19 |
| 4. Evan Barr | | 36.23 |
| 5. Ross Evans | | 37.10 |
| 6. Peter Ford | | 39.02 |
| 7. Mark Wardrop | | 39.17 |
| 8. Corey Warne | | 39.23 |
| 9. Ryan Marsden-Smith | | 39.52 |
| 10. Peter Haywood | | 39.54 |
| WOMEN | | |
| 1. Jo-Anne Keely | | 39.22 |
| 2. Tracy Wilson | | 40.32 |
| 3. Katherine Sessions | | 41.19 |
| 4. Helen Campbell | | 41.20 |
| 5. Kirby Jefferies | | 42.17 |
| 6. Stacy Fiske | | 42.53 |
| 7. Theresa Marthin | | 42.57 |
| 8. Hannah Blair | | 43.06 |
| 8. Jenny Buchanan | | 43.06 |
| 10. Rebecca Thomson | | 43.29 |
| 4KM | | |
| MEN | | |
| 1. Malcolm Norwood | | 14.22 |
| 2. Nick Crome | | 14.32 |
| 3. Craig Green | | 14.58 |
| 4. Kyall Britten | | 15.09 |
| 5. Paris Craig | | 15.37 |
| 6. Shane Keely | | 15.41 |
| 7. Zaus Wade | | 15.54 |
| 8. Russell Harris | | 15.58 |
| 8. Ashton Windridge | | 15.58 |
| 10. Joshua Williams | | 16.04 |
| WOMEN | | |
| 1. Madeleine Evelyn | | 17.13 |
| 2. Becky Grenfell | | 17.49 |
| 3. Yvette Tuohey | | 18.09 |
| 4. Tanya Higgs | | 18.49 |
| 5. Whensday Shearman | | 18.51 |
| 6. Sarah Schroeder | | 19.02 |
| 7. Tarryn Fisher | | 19.03 |
| 8. Shelley Tuohey | | 19.18 |
| 9. Sharon Brown | | 19.21 |
| 10. Jessica Pethubridge | | 19.22 |