

RUNNING ON EMPTY

The Newsletter of the Bendigo University Athletics Club

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Training tips	2
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Who's hot.....	
----------------	--

and who's not	3
---------------	---

Injury tips	3
-------------	---

Future events	3
---------------	---

Media watch	4/5
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Most of the changes a more active lifestyle brings are invisible. Sure, in time you may find that your clothes fit a little differently, but these changes are not the ones that are the most important. The changes that matter are the ones going on inside, where you can't see them.

There are the obvious improvements in your health, but the real changes will be in the strength of your resolve and your spirit. Each day that you invest in yourself, you are becoming more of what you want to be. Instead of looking backwards to the good old days, you are assuring yourself that the best is yet to come. Discover your limitations and then overcoming them makes you your own hero.

Training Tips - ice baths

With the last of the junior sprinters pulling in 65-second 400s, a gruelling interval workout grinds to a close at Saint Andrew's School in Boca Raton, Florida. Coach Eddie Ernest Jones, a 1:05 half-marathoner, glances over his gasping crew and intuitively exactly what their burnt-out bodies require. "Ice baths!" he barks, and the tumultuous cacophony of outrage and joy that issues from the students expresses perfectly the mysterious, Gothic aura surrounding this frigid recovery tool.

Mythic as it may sound, ice bathing has caught on among the elite. A photo on Paula Radcliffe's site shows the marathon world record holder relaxing her legs in a chilly stream. Meb Keflezighi's preparation for the 2004 Olympic marathon included similar daily soakings. Saint Andrew's athletic trainer Craig Ashley, who holds a Master of Science degree in Exercise and Sports Sciences, says that hydrotherapy's benefits span the anatomical spectrum: "Ice immersion is a very effective modality in the treatment of subacute injuries or inflammation, muscular strains, and overall muscular soreness."

From lacrosse to football, athletes of all seasons consult Ashley with their pains, often to be pointed to the infamous "wet room" where the galvanized tubs reside. Why not simple ice packs? "When an individual removes an ice pack after the typical 20-minute application, temperatures within the muscles increase instantly," Ashley explains. Packs may suffice for surface-level pain, but for deep, lasting treatment, baths can't be beat. "Even after the conclusion of the treatment," Ashley says, "the muscles will continue to cool."

For runners in particular, ice baths offer two distinct improvements over traditional techniques. First, immersion allows controlled, even constriction around all muscles, effectively closing microscopic damage that cannot be felt and numbing the pain that can. You may step into the tub to relieve sore calves, but your quads, hams, and connective tissues from hips to toes will gain the same benefits, making hydrotherapy an attractive preventive regimen. Saint Andrew's cross-country coach John O'Connell, a 2:48 masters marathoner, will hit the ice baths before the ibuprofen. "Pain relievers can disguise injury," he warns. "Ice baths treat both injury and soreness."

The second advantage involves a physiological reaction provoked by the large amount of muscle submerged. Assuming you have overcome the mind's initial flight response in those first torturous minutes, the body fights back by invoking a "blood rush." This rapid transmission circulation flushes the damage-inflicting waste from your system, while the cold water on the outside preserves contraction. Like an oil change or a fluid dump, the blood rush revitalizes the very areas that demand fresh nutrients.

Even if you don't have access to a \$5,000 hydrotherapy pool, you can set up the same ice bath at home. Modern research points to 12–15° C or 54–60° F as the ideal ice bath temperature range; remember that the temperature will rise steadily with your body heat. Significantly colder baths offer no additional perks and can actually perpetrate cold-induced muscle damage or spontaneous fainting—a good reason to have a friend watch your back while sharing in the misery.

Once you feel the blood rush around the six-minute mark, stay in for a couple more minutes, but don't overdo it. Muscles and tissues can tense up with too much cold, and to avoid tightness you should take a warm shower 30 to 60 minutes later.

Though ice immersion may seem fantastic from afar, the superior recovery from your toughest days will find you burning a path back to your bath sooner than you think.

Injury tips - surviving ankle sprains

Most sprains happen with the toes on the ground and the heel up. This position puts the ligaments of the ankle under tension. A sudden force, like changing direction quickly, can turn the ankle farther than the muscles can support.

The American Orthopedic Foot and Ankle Society says ankle sprains are the most common running injury and one of the hardest to properly recover from. Every year physicians log 1.6 million visits for patients with ankle sprains in the United States, and half of those visitors will resprain their ankle. That's probably because a mild sprain can be rested for a couple days and then ignored. But orthopaedic surgeon and runner, Garry McKay will tell you that's the wrong attitude.

"I've ignored sprains before, and that's probably why this current one is taking so long to heal," he says. "I'm rehabbing this one properly."

Proper rehab means different things for different people, says Dr. Allan Abelson, a rehab therapist, marathoner, and author of *Release Your Stride*, a guide to improved running performance and injury avoidance. "If I had six people with identical inversion sprains, my treatment might be different for each one, depending on their needs and strengths," he says. "With any injury, including the ankle, I would look at the whole body, the whole kinetic system—flexibility, strength and proprioceptors. We don't want to look just where it hurts. We want to look at the whole picture."

Sometimes, he says, the sprain is partially the result of a weakness elsewhere in the body, and if that weakness isn't found and corrected, recovery will never be complete. After a thorough examination, Abelson will lay out a plan to get the runner back to trail running form.

As long as the sprain doesn't require surgery, the first step is to go running, but not on the ground. Deep water running can be done even in the acute pain stage.

"A mistake a lot of people make is to not move the ankle for the first few days. A non-impact activity, like deep water running, improves blood flow to the injury and displaces waste products," Abelson explains.

As the ankle starts to heal enough to carry weight, it's time to work on strength and flexibility. Most of the strength work will be done on wobble boards to gain muscle support and exercise the body's proprioceptors at the same time.

Proprioceptors are found throughout the body's muscular system. Similar to little nerves, they react to stretching or pulling by telling the brain where a body part is, and what position it's in. The proprioceptors fire far faster than the eye can relay a message to the brain and the brain to the body, adjusting the body's positioning almost instantly. Simply put, properly trained proprioceptors can realign the body in the split second before a sprain. Wobble boards safely exercise them to fire faster.

Continued page 3

Injury tips continued

No matter how fast one's proprioceptors, flexibility and strength recover, it's important to move slowly. Healing should be gradual and continuous. "You don't want to see peaks and valleys," says Abelson. "You always want to see the rehab going progressively forward."

If the body isn't healed properly the first time, it will always be weak and susceptible to future injuries and chronic problems. Proper strengthening lays down different kinds of tissue than the weak scar tissue left behind by an untreated injury. "Tissues laid down without strength training are more susceptible to future injuries," Abelson says. The more someone works out, the more muscle tissue is laid down. Abelson adds, "If you rehab everything properly it shouldn't happen the same way again."

Proper strengthening and flexibility around the joint can help prevent injuries as well, yet there's always the accident factor. Abelson sprained an ankle stepping off a curb when he wasn't paying attention.

McKay knows his injury was no fluke, and he's doing all he can to keep it from happening again. "I would say to any runner: Get your body in shape to reduce the chance of things like sprained ankles. And if you get one, take care of it properly, because there's nothing worse than not being able to run because you ran when you shouldn't have."

Types of ankle sprains:

- 1) Mild tear or pull of ligament. Painful but can bear weight. These sprains can usually be self-treated.
- 2) Larger but incomplete tear of ligament. Pain is more severe and the ankle won't support much weight. It's a good idea to see a doctor.
- 3) Complete tear of ligament or ligaments. Very painful. Can't touch or move ankle without pain. See a doctor, it may require surgery.

Who's 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, including Gary Crouch who won the 60 plus section in the half marathon.

- well done to all the BUAC members who ran in the 2008 Bendigo Lakeside Fun Run. Lee McCullagh and Nic Moloney won the 5km and 1.6km runs, while Andy Buchanan, Gary Crouch, David Meade, Maria Slater and John Rose did well in their respective age categories.

- Tracey Wilson has been running super hot in the summer athletics season.

Who's not.....

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:

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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.

Facebook: join "Bendigo University Athletics Club - Uni Pride!"

Media watch

BUAC members spotted in the local press included:



Lee McCullagh comfortably leading out the 2008 Keith Huddle Memorial with Michael Bieleny loitering with intent in the background.



Michael Hogan seen in the "Bendigo" magazine, "hey sexy lady, do you have sore feet, because you've been running through my mind all day."



Wayne Forbes with a few City of Greater Bendigo powerbrokers. "Does anyone second Wayne's motion to rename Strathdale "Wayneville"?"

Media watch continued



Russell Tremayne hobnobbing at a recent Bendigo Bank social function.

Something to consider

