



EUGENE RUNNING COMPANY NEWS

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EUGENE RUNNING COMPANY

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HOURS

Mon-Sat 10 am - 7 pm
Sunday 11 am - 5 pm

How about an email newsletter?

Eugene Running Company is trying to go green by saving paper and asking clients who receive our paper newsletter and announcements to allow us to have their email addresses so they may receive our newsletter and announcements online. If interested, please submit your email at the store, email us at info@eugenerunningcompany.com or at our website at eugenerunningcompany.com.

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Tell a friend... running works!

**Runner's World
People's Choice Award!
– Oregon's Best –**


“Spirit of the Marathon” presented Jan. 24

Cinemark Theatres in Gateway Mall, Springfield, is among the 460 theatres that will present the “Spirit of the Marathon” on January 24 at 7:30 p.m.

A “Behind-the-Scenes” featurette produced just for – and shown only at – this one-night event includes interviews with the director and producers as well as marathon veterans reminiscing about their first marathon experiences. The featurette

highlights deleted scenes, dramatic race footage and previews the upcoming 2008 Olympics with a Q&A session with Olympians Deena Kastor and Ryan Hall.

“It was a thrill to be part of ‘Spirit of the Marathon’ and even more exciting to see the essence of this great sport captured so beautifully,” said Deena Kastor, 2004 Beijing Olympic Bronze medalist and featured runner. “It is my greatest hope that millions will relate to ‘Spirit of the Marathon’ and that many more be inspired by it.”

Tickets are available at Cinemark Theater and at FathomEvents.com, Active.com or Cinemark.com. For more information and to view the film’s online trailer, visit Marathonmovie.com. 



SPRIT OF THE MARATHON


Eugene Marathon Team invites you to join

The Eugene Running Company Marathon Team, coached by Laura Coll and Jil Mestler, meets every Saturday morning at 7 am. You are invited to join the fun as we prepare for the 2008 Eugene Marathon on May 4. Half marathon programs are also available.

The cost is \$100 and every runner receives a team uniform shirt, coaching, education and encouragement in the science and art of marathon running. The team camaraderie at prior marathons has proven to be a significant motivating factor. Long training

runs can be a lot of fun with the support of others sharing the same dream.

Jil Mestler is a busy mother with three beautiful children but still has the time and energy to run a sub-three-hour marathon. Laura Coll is a former international caliber runner who has represented the United States in the World Championships. She’s an owner of the Eugene Running Company.


You can do it! We can help. Join today at the Eugene Running Company or join us for a trial run and see if it’s right for you! 

Triathlon Team to form in the new year

The Eugene Running Company will partner with Collins Bike Shop to support Triathlon in our community!

The challenge of swim-bike-run is one of the fastest growing endurance sports in the world. Coming in 2008, you’ll see more Triathlon specific shoes and apparel at the

shop. We invite you to join the team, race in our new special edition triathlon team uniforms and build your total fitness.

For more information on upcoming triathlon clinics and events, check in at the Eugene Running Company or Collins Bike Shop. 

Join this month to train for the Eugene Marathon!

Marathon Walking Team welcomes new members

You are invited to join the Eugene Running Company's Marathon Walking Team (The Spirited Walkers) as we prepare for the 2nd Annual Eugene Marathon/Half Marathon on May 4, and the Portland Marathon, October 5.


Training for Eugene begins on Sunday, January 20, at 9 am at the store. Register now at the Eugene Running Company to reserve your spot on the walking team or contact Kay Porter at kayporter1@comcast.net or call her at 541-342-6875.

Kay Porter, Ph.D. will coach our new walking groups for this event. Full marathon and half marathon programs are offered for beginning and intermediate walkers of every pace. We will meet on Sunday mornings at 9 am at the store to walk together.

The cost is \$150 for eight months of training: four in preparation for the Eugene marathon/half marathon and four additional months with the group to continue walking and training in general or train for the Portland

marathon. Each walker receives a mileage training program monthly, guidance and advice from Kay, a monthly team meeting and a training walk every weekend on Sunday mornings, a team uniform shirt and team discounts at the Eugene Running Company. As we get closer to the marathon, we will meet earlier on Sundays.

Dr. Kay Porter is a long-time Eugene runner and walker and has coached marathon walking teams in Eugene/Springfield since 2000. She has completed 11 marathons, having run seven and walked four. She is also the author of an applied sport psychology book, *The Mental Athlete* (Human Kinetics, 2003) and has had a counseling/coaching practice in Eugene since 1984.

You can visit her website at www.thementalathlete.com. 

**The Spirited Walkers name is used by permission from Carolyn Kortge, author of The Spirited Walker.*

Winter a great time for runners on Joe's Marathon Team

Winter used to be the hardest season to run through in Eugene.

We now know that the holiday time isn't an excuse to stop running but a time when we need even more to push away from the table and get out of the house. We now know that there's no bad running weather, only the wrong clothes.

Now we also have better reasons and better ways to train through the winter wetness. The big future attraction is the



Training for a marathon is more fun with company. Above, Joe's Team on a training run.

Eugene Marathon. Yes, it's a springtime race, but the commitment to train is made in the depths of winter, and the early months of building mileage come then.

Training becomes more exciting, or at least more tolerable, when you can team up with other runners. This was one reason the Eugene Running Company enlisted Joe Henderson to start a Marathon Team in 2005. The JHMT is now into its eighth edition.


"The winter program has become our largest," says Joe. "This is partly because the Eugene Marathon is so attractive, but also because running alone this time of

year is so unattractive."

More than 40 runners began the four-month training program in January. However, most of them couldn't wait, with about 25 beginning a month earlier in a mini-program for the Cascade Half-Marathon on January 13.

"We train the runners to finish," says the coach, "and they're quite successful at that. Of the 133 runners from all our Teams who have reached the marathon starting

line, 133 have finished at least once."

He adds, "The program is simple. We meet only for the weekly long run, which advances by an average of a mile a week from a start at seven miles to a peak of 21. The reason for our success rate isn't the program itself, but in the support the runners give to and receive from each other." 

Please note: The JHMT is full for the Eugene Marathon and accepting no new runners. For information about the next round, for Portland beginning in June, contact Joe at runjoe@comcast.net.

Hudson speaks about coaching, athletes, training

Brad Hudson, a former professional runner, is now Elite Coach of the Performance Training Group based in Eugene, Ore., and Boulder, Colo., MarathonPerformance.com. You will also find Brad as one of the team at Eugene Running Company. In November, Brad had three of his athletes place in the top 15 at the U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials held in New York City's Central Park. New Eugene resident Dathan Ritzenhein placed second, securing one of the three spots for the Olympic Marathon in Beijing.

ERC: Brad, first I'd like to congratulate you on helping prepare Dathan to earn a spot on the U.S. Olympic team in the Marathon. How did you transition from national class athlete to coaching top runners?

BH: I was an OK runner but really tried hard on the talent I had. Near the end of my career I was beat up and falling apart so I tried to see what I did wrong and how I could help athletes do it better. I talked to all the best coaches and studied their training and looked at all the great athletes that have had long successful careers. I starting coaching just a few athletes in Boulder but after Shayne Culpepper had a breakout year I started to hear from many others.

ERC: Talk about Boulder Performance and about your new book on training.

BH: I starting a training group to help American athletes reach higher levels. We started off in Boulder so it was originally called the Boulder Performance Training Group. Now that we have moved our base to Eugene we have changed the name to the Performance Training Group. We have also changed our website to MarathonPerformance.com. Right now I am coaching seven elite runners and I also have a handful of Triathletes and Masters runners that I coach online. I will have my first book out next July. It will be a book on training with Matt Fitzgerald. The book is geared toward putting the core elements of the training we use for our elite runners in the hands of anyone trying to run a faster 5K, road race or train for a marathon. I think we are in a great time for running in this country. Participation in road races and marathons around the U.S. is growing. The big city marathons are seeing huge jumps in registration. At the professional level, American athletes no longer want to be spectators on the world scene. They want to be on the podium. I think overall the running community is doing a great job with the sport.

ERC: How does it feel to be back in your old stomping grounds and how are your athletes enjoying the move to Eugene?

BH: It feels great to be back in Eugene. My athletes are enjoying the move immensely. We had been here training in the past for sea-level camps and loved it. We love Pre's, Amazon and the Rexius trails. We can't wait for the Olympic Trials at Hayward. I chose to move my group to sea-level for the home base because although altitude helps quite a bit with athlete development there is still some mystery when training for a marathons. At altitude marathon specific workouts are taxing on the body and only work well for a super acclimated altitude runner. It is much better to be at



Dathan Ritzenhein, left, receives a congratulatory poster to celebrate his qualifying for the 2008 Olympic Marathon from Eugene Running Company co-owner Shivaun Black, right. At center, Dathan's coach, Brad Hudson.

sea-level so that we can develop specific endurance without the risk of injury and over training.

ERC: You and Dathan must be ecstatic about him making the team. Most people recognize the hard work and importance of proper training methods that go into such an accomplishment. What would you say was the most significant factor that led to his success?

BH: I think we both got it right with training and diet and he executed a great race. The most important thing was consistent training and long hard runs near Marathon pace. We are happy that Dathan will have options for the Olympics. Now that he has made the marathon team, he can compete in the 10,000 meters and be part of the excitement of the trials in Eugene without the pressure of having to make the team.

ERC: Being a former national class runner yourself, you understand the motivation it takes to excel in distance running. How would you advise someone who is just starting to run or who is running now to keep motivated?

BH: The success required for distance running is no different than the success required for many things that are hard: hard work, consistency, paying attention to details to overcome injuries and problems. This goes for beginners and professionals. They all go through the same things.

ERC: What are some general mistakes people make in their routine that could have an impact on their training?

BH: Pushing too hard and too often. You have to work hard but the biggest mistake people make is training too hard everyday and not having energy for the hard days to train properly. Every run should have a very distinct purpose. At the end of the day you can talk about all sorts of different training methods but it comes down to stress and adaptation.

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A Brief Chat with Everett Meadows

Everett Meadows, 26, who sells paint professionally, has been a regular participant in our group runs for several years and a member of our Joe Henderson Marathon Team. We've had the pleasure of witnessing his transformation into a competitive marathon runner. In the process, he's lost weight, developed impressive endurance and demonstrated a mental toughness that allowed him to finish the 2007 Portland Marathon in a personal record time of 3:32:59.

ERC: When did you start running and what was your motivation?

EM: I've "sorta-run" my whole adult life, but I made my major commitment in August of '06. I am a fairly competitive guy, and that provides a great deal of my motivation. Starting out though, I wanted to run mostly for health, but I was having trouble being consistent. I found that committing to run every day forced me to get out there even if it's just going to be a baby run. So, many days my motivation is simply just not missing a day in my streak.

ERC: How did you find Eugene Running Company?

EM: I wandered in sometime back in the early days of the store. I just popped in one day while shopping. Mike Long actually talked me into coming to a group run. I ran fairly inconsistently on Monday nights for a while before I started to come more regularly in the summer of '06

ERC: What is your normal weekly running routine?

EM: I run every day, so I try really hard to listen to my body. Some days I run just over a mile if I feel like my legs need a break. Mondays and Sundays are usually my long days: 5-7, and 7 to as much as 20 respectively. I try to do intervals once a week at least. As far as mileage, I usually run about 25-30 miles a week, but that number goes up to 50 or so miles before a marathon.

ERC: Do you engage in any supplemental exercise or cross training?

EM: Yes, I lift weights three times a week. I also bowl on Sundays where I do about 40-100 reps with those 12 oz weights.

ERC: Why do you run?

EM: It makes me feel healthy, also I love the look on people's faces when you tell them that you just did a short seven miler that morning.

ERC: Do you have any runners you look up to or who inspire you?

EM: Jerry Stromme, who runs at the store, never ceases to amaze me when I think about where he has come from, and how he turned his life around. Also having the opportunity to take coaching and advice from folks like Laura, who made her indelible mark on the International running scene, and Joe Henderson,

who quite literally wrote the book on marathon running, has been an awesome experience.

ERC: What model of running shoe do you currently use?

EM: Brooks Adrenaline GTS

ERC: What is your favorite running shoe ever?

EM: I'd say the Adrenaline is up there.

ERC: Do you run races and/or marathons?

EM: Both, when I can.

ERC: What has been your most memorable race or marathon?

EM: Finishing Portland this last year has got to be my proudest moment. It made me feel like a real runner.

ERC: Do you have any favorite running partners?

EM: My good friend John Brewer is up there, Johan Brouns got me through the Portland Marathon training, and my wife Kim because she does it mostly for me, I think.

ERC: Do you prefer running in the morning or the evening? (or other)

EM: I'm a fan of 11 pm runs on cool, dry evenings.

ERC: What do you think about when you're running?

EM: Mostly I try to concentrate on my breathing. As many breaths per inhale and exhale as possible. If I'm having a particularly bad day I try to invoke a daydream, usually something ridiculously unrealistic like winning Boston or something.

ERC: What is your favorite meal the night before a marathon? What is your favorite food after a marathon?

EM: This is a good one... The night before a marathon I eat as much of a box of Nutter-Butters as I can... I can eat a lot of them. Afterwards I'll eat whatever is in front of me, even if it's not mine.

ERC: What do you consider perfect running weather?

EM: Cool, 50 degrees or so, and dry. I like disgustingly hot days, too, though.


ERC: Where is your favorite place in Eugene to run?

EM: The East and West bank river trails up north are my favorites.

ERC: What one piece of advice would you give a new runner?

EM: Run with other people as much as possible.

ERC: What's the best running advice you've ever received?

EM: Probably that I don't need to always run hard to get faster. 

Ancient Footprints: A Marathon in Rome

"It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly..."

– Theodore Roosevelt

I HEARD BOB DYLAN'S LINES "The streets of Rome/ are filled with rubble/ ancient footprints everywhere..." when I was a young man, maybe seventeen. Even so, I thought I knew what he meant. I have loved that line ever since, its implication that things past are here with us in the present. That we are informed by, driven by, the daily creation of our own lives, our own art.

I was fourteen when I saw my first marathon. I watched it on an old black and white Dumont TV, in the dining room of the house where I grew up. I was idly watching the 1960 Olympics in Rome, wasting time, chillin' you might say, when I came upon the marathon. The race was run at 5:30 in the evening to lessen the effects of the heat of the day during the Roman summer. The organizers lit the route with hundreds of torches. Abebe Bikila, an Ethiopian policeman, a palace guard in the service of the Emperor Haile Selassie, won while running in his bare feet. I remember the black and white screen, the light of torchbearers beside the road, the barefoot African running past the ruins of the Coliseum, arms low by his side, running easily, relentlessly. He seemed in my youthful imagination, to be like the sirocco wind I had read about, bringing the smell of the desert into the dimly lit dining room, cleansing the earth and sky, leaving a hint of stories past, of dreams and glory, escape, of the seductive mystery of some other place.

I also remember that in my confused teenage night (weren't we all confused in those years?) I began to dream that I would go to Rome. Maybe I would get there for the marathon as an event, or maybe it was just an idea, an attitude I was after. I imagined me cruising past the Coliseum, free and running easy, everything that troubled me in the rear view mirror.

It seems this early morning that it will come to pass, that with Dylan's lines in my head, his song on the iPod, I will line up after sunrise, to run a marathon through the streets of Rome.

BIKILA'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARE LEGENDARY. He won 12 out of the 14 marathons he ran. He was the first African to win gold at a modern Olympics, the first to repeat a marathon victory in consecutive Olympics when he won in Tokyo. Even this morning, as I read the marathon magazine for tomorrow's race, his name is included, not only as the winner of the marathon all those years ago, but as a symbol of what the miles can come to represent for any of us, for all of us who put in the miles and show up on the day. He is a hero to this day in Ethiopia and wherever runners gather. For me this early



Michael Lebowitz, the author, in Rome – after the marathon.

morning he is still present, graceful, outlined in courage, glorious, unfathomable, a freeze frame carried forward from that long ago night.

IT IS A FEW HOURS BEFORE THE RACE and I am slowly going into the place where I go before an event. It is a quiet place, sometimes sad, often melancholic, visited by the memories of what it has cost in miles, in obstacles overcome, in absent friends, in the time gone by to get here. There is a slow building of clarity of purpose, respect for the journey and a sense of connection to the people I have met along the way.

Eventually, as it must if one is to do this uncommon thing, it seems like everything that has come before is gone. That there is only now. I like what James Shapiro says in *Meditations in the Breakdown Lane*, his story of running across America, "Past life is gone, future life will never come, so there is only the doing."

"I could talk for ten thousand years, but it wouldn't carry me one inch closer," he wrote. For me that would be something about reading ten thousand running books or training programs (are there that many?). But, as with Shapiro, it brings me not one inch closer.

I open the patio doors in the hotel room and watch night sky slowly fade. There is mist in the trees, the seven hills are stark in the distance, the streets oddly quiet for a city that rarely sleeps. There is the smell of bread baking and the far off sounds of barking dogs. So many hours to go before the run. I've laid out my clothes, checked all the pockets in my Race Readies for goo and the requisite ibuprofen. I've done it 10 times tonight, 20. It is way too early to call my friends who will be running the race with me, or more accurately, at the same time. I can't figure out the time difference from Rome to Ottawa where my daughter is, so I can't call her nor can I call my son who is playing poker in Vegas. So, now it is time to put on my headphones, dial up Bob Marley, Bob Dylan and Eric Clapton, drink some espresso prepared by the

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Running Form and Longevity: The ChiRunning Approach

If you are like most runners, you probably would like to be able to run for the rest of your life. That is certainly a goal for me – but is it realistic or even possible? Aren't injuries, ongoing wear and tear and, ultimately, physical limitations and break down just a natural process for runners? In light of existing data regarding the percentage of runners who are injured during a given year (more than 60%), it would seem inevitable that physical problems will make the lifelong running dream just a dream. But does it have to be that way? I think not.

In my view, running itself is not the problem in terms of so many people getting running injuries – it's how people run. Considering the widely held belief that running is an activity that almost all people can do reasonably well just because they are humans, it is not surprising that running form varies so much and is so problematic in its effect on the well being of runners. Unlike most sports and fitness activities where taking lessons is quite common, it is a rare runner who seeks any input on running, let alone on the form or technique of running. Running classes that do exist, and running coaches for the most part, tend to focus on training regimens, distance, speed, technical details and the like; they spend little time on running form and the consequences of poor form. Fortunately, the times, they are a changin' – running form (technique) is gaining more and more attention in the running community, and the implications are profound.


ChiRunning® is a new, holistic and natural approach to running that has quickly moved to center stage in the discussion of running injuries and running longevity and the possible role that running form plays in the equation. ChiRunning® was developed by Danny Dreyer, a successful ultra marathoner who used his own running experience (including multiple injuries) and his experience and understanding of Tai Chi ("chi" meaning energy or life force) to articulate and implement the principles that have evolved. By paying attention to such basic elements as posture, gravity, relaxation and the importance of working with nature, he created a powerful, straight forward approach to running. With its emphasis on energy efficiency, ease and injury prevention, ChiRunning® is dramatically altering the landscape of running.

I'll describe a couple of the elements of the ChiRunning® model to give the reader an idea of how it works and how it differs from more traditional approaches (for more information, see *ChiRunning®* by Danny & Katherine Dreyer, Simon & Schuster, 2004). At the foundation of ChiRunning® is its emphasis on posture – poor posture makes it impossible to have efficient running form, whereas good posture opens the door to running with relaxed muscles while using a natural lean of the body for propulsion rather than relying on the legs to make forward motion happen (an approach common to most traditional



running styles). Good posture and good form rely heavily on alignment and balance in all directions of the body so that there is no unnecessary motion be it up/down, side/side or front/back. What results is a running style that has the body aligned in motion, like a column, from shoulders to hips to ankles. The runner's feet are never in front of the body while the legs, and the running stride, move effortlessly behind the runner. Posture, form, alignment, core strength and relaxed peripheral muscles – all of these elements help create the desired conditions for the runner's energy to flow with the greatest of ease. In terms of training approaches, in the ChiRunning® model, the focus is always on form no matter what goals may exist in such areas as distance and speed.

So, back to "longevity" and running form, let me briefly share how my own running experience relates to this topic. Although I have always tried to run with awareness, I was not always successful in avoiding running injuries. After completing a dozen marathons in the late '70s and early '80s, I pulled back from distance running – I just didn't need the aches and pains that seemed to come with that level of running. After 22 years of no marathons, however, I came upon the ChiRunning® approach and found that new possibilities had opened up for me. This led to my becoming a Certified ChiRunning® Instructor and led to my running a few more marathons to see what difference my new running form would make – and to see if I could meet my (previously discarded) lifelong goal of qualifying for, and running in, the Boston Marathon.

Long story short, I qualified for Boston on my third attempt and ran it in 2006 – not quite as fast as my last few marathons in 1982 but quite respectable for my age group. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of my re-entry to marathons at this stage of my life and my adoption of the ChiRunning® form was the short recovery time that was now required after a marathon. With better form and a more "ease-ful" running style, I found that I recovered in very little time – a welcome consequence of running with good form and minimal use of leg muscles. Most certainly, my experience has been a validation that running form is directly related to longevity of running – and for me, and for many others, the specific model of ChiRunning® was the path to this realization and to this kind of exciting outcome. Run for life? Go for it! 

*Keith McConnell is a ChiRunning® and ChiWalking® Instructor who lives in Eugene and conducts workshops and provides individual coaching in the Northwest. He teaches running and walking classes at the University of Oregon and serves on the Board of The Oregon Track Club Masters (OTCM). He will be making a presentation on ChiRunning® and on ChiWalking® this winter at ERC and is conducting a **WORKSHOP IN EUGENE ON SUNDAY, FEB. 17**. Keith can be contacted at drkeithcoach@msn.com. See www.chirunning.com for details.*

Hudson

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You need to figure out what you want to do in a race first and then train accordingly to get your self adapted for the proper stresses for your race goals.

ERC: *What precautions do you take to keep the athletes that you coach healthy and motivated?*

BH: We keep an open channel of communication between us on how they feel and how their workouts go. Their training is individualized and it is constantly adapted based on feedback they give me. Also all my athletes do core work and they all do short hill sprints for specific strength.

ERC: *Are there any kinds of "rules of thumb" you believe will keep someone improving his or her performance?*

BH: The most important thing I see as a coach is that most athletes either keep trying to train exactly the way they did in the past or else their coach trains them under one sort of system. I constantly study training methodology and the work of coaches around the world because you can always do things better. It is the same reason why shoe companies are always updating running shoes. We are learning all the time. The biggest mistake is to not look back and see what has worked and not worked in training. That goes for volume and intensity. I will give you an example, when I start to work with a new athlete I usually ask for their old training logs. This way we can talk about what they have done and develop a program that takes into account their strengths and their weaknesses. Everybody can find ways to train smarter. It just takes some detective work.

ERC: *Many people are intrigued by doing their first marathon. What advice would you give a person who is starting out, so he or she is successful and happy with the experience?*

BH: First and foremost, train accordingly. We are seeing a tremendous increase in participation in the marathon because word is spreading that it can be a greatly rewarding experience. It is, when training is done right. There are several great marathon training plans for beginners out there as well as many groups around the country that have coaches who provide guidance. Follow a plan. Training in a group also helps greatly with motivation. The most important thing is to train for the demands of the event.

If the race is hilly, do your long runs on hills – simulate the course. This goes for your goal pace too during specific workouts. When it comes to the race itself a lot of people start out too fast. Their goals may be too lofty. Get advice to figure out a reasonable finish time. Work backwards from there. The best marathons are usually run when the athlete negative splits – runs the second half faster than the first. Also, there are so many great nutrition products out now. Practice training with them. Find out the drinks and gels that will be available on race day and use them during workouts or use the ones like gels. You may carry yourself. Be prepared.


ERC: *Many people have jobs and families that can make training difficult. How would you advise these folks so they can continue their routine without losing interest?*

BH: Join a group or find a few great training partners. I think that some of the greatest training benefits can come from training with a group or club. Other benefits include feeling part of a team and developing some great friendships. Running and racing can and should be fun. Enlist support. Let your families know your goal. Identify some cross training alternatives when travel or work demands cut into your regimen.

ERC: *Here in Eugene we have many soft surface trails such as Pre's Trail and Amazon/Rexius Trail. How important is it for people to do at least some of their training on the soft surfaces?*

BH: It is important to run on many different types of surfaces to prevent repetitive use injuries. The trails in Eugene are perfect for this.

ERC: *You have had many athletes perform to their highest level in their respective careers. How would you describe what it is like for individuals to break through to a new levels of performance?*

BH: As a coach, it is incredibly rewarding to watch athletes make jumps in their performances. This is why I coach. For the athlete it feels great and they often find a renewed sense of motivation after breakthrough performances. Both the coach and the athlete are learning all the time, so when breakthroughs occur, we both get excited about planning the next step. 

The Classic: Nike Oregon Waffle Premium Vintage available


A running icon, the Nike Oregon Waffle was introduced at retail in 1973. Now available, this Premium remake is a limited edition and uses original material and color specifications. The Vintage appearance is crafted by the Nike design team to celebrate the 35 year heritage of the shoe.

It was the first shoe model to have the distinctive waffle outsole. This shoe was designed by Bill Bowerman from an idea he developed after pouring liquid rubber into his wife Barbara's waffle iron. The waffle pattern provided the UO Cross Country runners with superior traction on



soft surfaces and the deflection of waffles on hard surfaces provided lightweight cushioning. This ingenious innovation revolutionized athletic footwear design and helped launch Nike to the forefront of the athletic footwear industry from their

humble origin here in Eugene. More importantly, it helped our Oregon Ducks forge a distance running legacy that we still celebrate today.

The Nike Oregon Waffle Premium Vintage is a lifestyle shoe that reflects the heritage of Eugene as Tracktown, USA. 

Footsteps

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gracious night porter and get inside what's coming. Bob and Eric and I are getting it together, "...knockin' on heaven's door." I have never figured out why that song, or the ritual, but I guess I don't have to.

THE RACE BEGINS AT 9 AM, which is normally too late in the day for me to start a long run. My habit is to be out before daylight and run into the sunrise. I go down to the hotel lobby after several hours of sky watching, and begin to pace. I talk with Jeremy and Julie who are still up with Erin's brother Anthony, who will run the race in a time of four hours. Together we watch as the support crew begins to filter in. John and Ginger, Kristi and Erin, the various Susans, Tom and Louise who are parents to several of the group, all here for the trip to Rome – their first to Europe – here for the sights and sounds and later for the food and wine of Tuscany, but before all that, here for the marathon-support thing.

Mark and Erin, with whom I shared the Avenue of the Giants and so much more, Aura and Judith, Team in Training alumni, Anthony and I take a couple of cabs to the start. The city is deserted, the streets empty, resonant. The locals say that it is the only time, the best time, to see Rome; on marathon day when the center is closed for the race. It is still dark when we arrive at the starting area at the Coliseum. Unbelievable, the Coliseum, the Forum in the distance, runners slowly gathering, the sun rising fiery over the ancient walls and of course, the blue port-a-potties. This being Europe, there is also a low level wall where apparently it is required that all men pee in some nod to tradition or, more likely, the fact that there are not very many port-a-potties.

The organization seemed quirky, the staging area separated from the course in a serpentine gate system, the buses for the bags parked in a long line, men to the front, women way to the back, protected from the crowd by a long fence. It all works out, runners figuring out, as they always do, what they need, but it is very different from the sometimes obsessional organization of US events. The race began with hand waving and shouting, cheering sections from the roadway above; 10,000 runners, we are off to circle the Coliseum and into the town. I knew almost immediately that this wasn't my day. The foot pain that has become a neuroma, and which normally holds off until 20+ miles, started in by the end of mile one. Between the cobblestones, the heat and the extra weight, I am doomed, it seems, to forever carry (sigh) the pain becomes a constant companion.

I SWORE TO MYSELF after the run at Avenue of the Giants last May, that I would not run a city marathon ever again. Something about the trees going all the way to heaven and the silence that surrounds every footfall in the deep forest. But here I am in the ancient/modern streets of Rome, where there are buildings are as old as the

redwoods I ran through and the silence is in cobblestone roadways underfoot. The sightlines, some unchanged since Caesar's armies marched through the hills to the city, are riveting, breathtaking. For centuries the soldiers came, bearing news of victories in far off lands, telling tales of great valor and lost heroes, of comrades left in foreign soil, Pax Romana, Rome the eternal. After the conquering heroes came the vanquished armies running from the Goths and the Mongolian Khans, the decadent centuries, Constantine and the burgeoning church, the marauding crusaders, the Knights Templar, the relentless pursuit of art and commerce, DaVinci, Caravaggio, the Borgias, and later, Mussolini, the Sixth Army, pizza and eventually, Abebe Bikila. Everywhere along the route are the remnants of that astonishing parade of days.

Brass bands in traditional Italian costume announce our passage as we circle the Coliseum. We head out past Michelangelo's Campidoglio, an enormous plaza. Once the seat of government and religion in Rome, it is "one of the most significant contributions ever made in the history of urban planning. The hill's importance as a sacred site in antiquity had been largely forgotten..." says one writer of the Campidoglio. Not so, I think. The sacred feeling of it remains, palpable in the rising heat of the morning, backlit by the sun. On to the Circo Massimo, Circus Maximus, built in the time of the Etruscan kings, enlarged by the Romans, restored by Constantine and now a public garden, misted, glowing on this morning; peaceful now, where there were once 200,000 spectators watching the chariots race.

PAST THE GARDENS, then a turn up along the Tiber and past the Sinagoga. It was built in 1897-1904 by architects Asvaldo Armanni and Vincenzo Costa or so I am told by one the runners passing me. Of more interest to me is that on the wall facing the Tiber the big memorial tablets remind one of the martyrdom of Roman Jews in Nazi concentration camps. So much blood in this city, not all of it ancient, but so much of it remembered, honored, part of the eternal struggle that has been waged here for the souls of men. My own struggle seems inconsequential. Quixotic, but even so, the continuing on is a part of the fabric of this city, a tiny part of the seeking out of what is best in me under the knowing gaze of those who came before.

We cross the river and wind our way past St Peter's Basilica, past the Sistine Chapel, not yet filled with worshippers, empty, waiting, poignant with an ineffable sense of grace.

Down the streets and along the river, we run past the Foro Italico, a grand, imperial complex that survived Mussolini and became part of the Olympic Stadium Village. It is hotter now and the cobblestones have done their work. My foot which was uncomfortable in mile one is now very painful and my run-walk strategy is not any longer a matter of choice.

At one of the water stops I feel a hand in my back,

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Footsteps

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shoving me out of the way. I get furious in an instant and turn on the culprit, who it turns out is older than I am, speaks no English and has a delightful smile in the face of my unconscionable rage. This has never happened to me in a race before and it leaves me very uncomfortable. A little while later a couple of guys come up to me and by means of gesture and much effort at speaking English, tell me that it is nothing. That the old man didn't mean anything by it, that he stumbled, that he is from Germany like they are and is running in Rome to get ready to run in America. In New York, they say. I apologize for my attitude, telling them I am from New York which causes much laughing especially when they tell the old man. All's well and we run together for several miles.


BY THE HALF, I HAVE DECIDED TO QUIT, but I keep running anyway. Just to the next kilometer sign I say to myself. I'll quit then. After a couple more "next kilometer" promises, I begin to realize that I love the kilometer signs because they come more quickly than the mile signs and it seems so much more impressive to have run 20 something rather than 12 something. This has become a long day.

The course heads back to the city center and we pass the Belle Arti, the Piazza Navona, and eventually we get to the Piazza di Spagna, home to Lord Byron and Keats. The Spanish Steps are crowded with tourists but no less inspiring for that. I remember going there the night before, the stairs awash in the moonlight, the crowds gone, the words beneath the stones for all time, there for the lovers and the dreamers of any time, of any age. The Sunday morning streets are overflowing with pedestrians who quite rightfully believe that Sunday is for espresso and fresh bread at the cafes, and then some sightseeing, some shopping. We, however, are still running. It is an odd feeling, somehow consistent, that in this most complex of places, life and sport are interwoven, not as metaphor but as "get out of my way, I'm running heah, can't you see this is killing me". The Trevi fountains are sparkling in the noon sun, mocking me with their tranquility, their ease. The crowds are lively and sometimes they even get out of the way. This is less of a problem if you are a front runner but if you are me, a back-of-the-pack runner, it has its moments to be sure.

Past the Campidoglio again and there we are a 35K. The road widens out and heads away from the Coliseum, a tease if ever there was one. Down the road, past the water stop when suddenly there are Kristi and Erin, water in hand, looking great, falling in step, saying all the right things. Across the way Mark is still running, his son Jeremy running alongside, taking pictures, being there. I don't see Erin, Mark's wife, but I am told that she is still moving, still running, still getting it done. Mark hurt his ankle before we got to Rome and this has been a hellacious day. I can see it from across the roadway. It is in his face, in his stride. He keeps going, the finish line just out of sight, the day belongs to those who stay in the arena, who contend, who do what they can with what they have.

For reasons that are obvious to me if no one else, I can't help but put Erin and Kristi into Leonard Cohen's song, Sisters of Mercy, which begins with "The sisters of mercy are not departed or gone/ they were waiting for me/ when I thought that I just can't go on..." and so it was at 35K and 36 and so on. I always thought that Cohen was saying that these strangers knew him, saw him clearly, that he was revealed to them, that he was set free by their knowledge of him, all his artifice gone. So it was for me, nothing left to hide, no ability to hide it, speaking things out loud better left unsaid, seeking absolution, a necessary part of the leaving behind, of the cleansing and clarity that all such effort brings. We are all of us revealed in the last miles of a marathon. Ask anyone who has stood at the finish and watched the faces of the finishers.

Down to the turn around and back to the Coliseum ever closer, 39K, 40, 41, and over the last rise and down the hill to home. Much of the crowd has dispersed but no matter. There are John and Ginger, soon to be married, hands full of drinks and food, smiles and something like admiration mixed with a sense of "what is wrong with you people" in their eyes. Tom and Louise are there, Tom's white hair a compliment to a smile that gladdens my heart. The run is done, the finishers' medal around my neck, the pain and soreness to come. But for now, briefly, there are private tears... it has been a long, long journey from the old black and white in the dining room, down so many wrong roads, past all the empty mornings, the desperate broken midnights. A life lived in addiction, despairing of hope, lost somewhere under a jagged rainbow, my own personal metaphor for the promise and the failure inside the journey to the marathon. All that is long gone. The boy inside the man has lived to run his far off dream.

THE ROME MARATHON was for me the culmination of a lifetime of dreaming of both a way out and, ultimately, of a way in. I knew again that day that in the running there is something that lives on levels well beyond my ability to articulate. It feels like connection. In the pain and beauty of the miles, both on race day and in the preparation, the continuity/community/solitude of the journey dissolves the barriers between us as people. We look at the other runners and see everyone we ever knew, and beyond our imagining, on levels we rarely touch, we love them, we forgive them their sins, as we begin to forgive our own. We, each us, knows something of value about the other, something of what we have been through, possibly even what we dream of being. The run is solitary, the victory entirely personal, but the community exists in the effort put out, in the inhale of the moment, in the exhale of a million breaths, woven together in the light of the day. Our day. We have shared life itself in some intangible form as we endure. We overcome our worst fears as we embrace our greatest aspirations, the best parts of who we are. We are reassured of our place in the world and of our connection to the forces of the spirit that make us holy, that make us altogether human. 

By Michael Lebowitz. Reprinted with permission of Marathon+Beyond Magazine.



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Eugene Marathon plans to go green in 2008

The Eugene Marathon, in only its second year, is attempting to become a "Green Event" in 2008. Here are just a few of the initiatives the marathon will attempt to implement:

- Partnering with EWEB and the Eugene Hilton to use Sustainable Power during the three days of the events at the Hilton, including the Health and Fitness Expo
- Use of the Solar Sun Rover as the power source at the finish line at the University of Oregon's Autzen Stadium
- Utilize the City of Eugene's "Recycling Toolkit"
- Employ "master recyclers" as volunteers, that sort recyclables to the proper receptacles
- Have all runners, workers and volunteers informed of the Eugene Marathon mission to be green so that all can participate!

"The Eugene Marathon staff has been working hard to make the 2008 marathon a green event" says Richard Maher, Eugene Marathon Event Director, "It is an issue that we feel strongly about and are committed to."

The second annual Eugene Marathon and Expo will



take place May 2-4. The 2007 inaugural event, which was aptly described as "Running in the Footsteps of Legends," attracted more than 4,200 runners and walkers from 44 states and eight countries.

In the tradition of great distance running, participants included both male and female elite athletes aiming for a qualifying time for the 2008 U.S. Olympic Marathon Trials. In fact, four athletes qualified for the trials and the marathon was one of 10 in the country with more than 4% of its finishers under three hours. The Eugene Marathon truly turned into the country's fastest growing destination marathon, with 30% of all registrants from out of state.

Event sponsors will include Krusteaz, Nike, Wells Fargo, Gleukos, Aquafina, Healing Spirit, Foot Solutions, Eugene Running Company, Gorilla Capital, KVAL, Mazzi's, and the Lane County Visitor's Bureau. Proceeds from this event will benefit Committed Partners for Youth, Food for Lane County, Eugene Education Fund, and Pre's Trail.

Racers can register at eugenemarathon.com. 