



We're not in Kansas anymore A Tale of Two Debs

The day of the Heartland race starts out with double checking everything: drop bag and crew bag stocked and ready, fingernails painted black (for booty kicking attitude), and breakfast devoured. My friend Deb and I drive down to the starting line around 5:30AM on this chilly morning. Other than the 5 light posts in town the rest of the world is pitch black.

Kevin Hatfield told me of his time out here a few years back and provided a description of the beautiful night with the numerous stars but wasn't truly able to do it justice. The stars are visible from the horizon to the left all the way to the horizon to the right. I feel so small under the sky. I feel even more insignificant facing the task before me ... 50 miles.

Team Pain of Discipline (POD) running coach, Sam Martinez, has a few rules for races. Rule #1. Pray for your fellow runners. Done.

The race starts and our journey begins. Our plan is to eat food and GU at the aid stations which are about 4-4.5 miles apart. We miss our first stop because it is so dark we don't see the first unmanned aid station as we run by it. We are prepared runners and pull out a PBJ and nibble along the way.

The sun finally starts peeking up above the prairie and we are treated to one of the most beautiful sunrises I have ever witnessed. Sadly a few minutes later the wind picks up and clouds fill the skies for many more hours to come. The temperature drops and with the wind chill it is 28 degrees.

We arrive at the first manned aid station around mile 8.6. As usual, the aid station workers are friendly and supportive. I notice they have 2 tents up. The volunteers share that they camped outside to ensure they had their station up in time for the runners. Wow! That is some serious dedication for someone NOT running the race.

The race course from here turns into something I was not planning on seeing ... hills. Big ones. Lots of them. Non-stop hills. Post race I read a blog accurately describing the Heartland race, "*Don't let the*

high finisher rates and incredibly nice people fool you – [the race] is as grueling a course and brutal a race as you'll find anywhere outside the mountain states. The hills might make you think 'We're not in Kansas anymore,' but you are".

We finally make it to our crew at the second manned aid station approx mile 16.8. Deb tells me she needs to tape her feet. What was not mentioned in the previous 16.8 miles was the fact that Deb's new shoes were chewing up her feet. The woman never griped once. She just duct tapes her feet and we take off with pockets full of pretzels, fig newtons, and PB&J sandwiches.

The next eight miles are more of the same. Dirt road, barbed wire, cows on both sides, and of course hills. Every now and again we are treated by a splash of color from the occasional wild flower growing on the side of the road. It's odd how something so small can be so powerfully motivating.



Steve and Debbie Rogers, Deb B. and Magi Blodgett

Team POD Rule #2: Encourage fellow runners. This is an out and back course so we now see folks returning to the finish line. We get to see all of our fellow runners at some point in time. Some folks still look fresh after 25-30+ miles under their belt. Other runners do not look so good and are in need of some encouragement.

(Continued on page 5)

Running Club News

by President Sam Martinez

"Hey Mister, Can I Run with You?"

I've been running through this same low income neighborhood for several years. I do so because it's relatively flat and there is little traffic. It also makes a perfect 800M loop for my speed workouts. The neighbors don't seem to mind me running there as they usually sit on their tiny porches and just watch that crazy man run by in the heat of the day. A few weeks ago a couple of the teenagers that had been watching me run 800's yelled out at me and asked if they could run with me. I was surprised. So they joined me for one 800M interval. I think their friends dared them to show that old man how fast they really were. The two boys took off with me as their friends laughed and challenged them to beat me. I must admit they were very fast for the 1st 100 meters but after that not so much :). Well, when I finished the interval the two boys were nowhere to be seen. After a while they came around the corner and had to endure way too much hazing from their buddies and a few grandmas sitting on the porch. I told them they were great sprinters and they just needed to practice a little more in order to beat me on longer distances. I wanted to tell them about 20 -minute Tempo Runs and VO2max workouts but I figured I'd save that for another day.

It struck me suddenly that day that I had experienced a breakthrough. These people that have watched this stranger run in and out of their neighborhood for years had broken the ice. They spoke to me and a couple of us ran together. We bonded. That's the nice thing about running. It's so inherently simple. It doesn't take complex instructions, special equipment or a specific location in order to do it. One only need take off in any direction and go as far as you want. I was glad my sport allowed me to meet some people I would otherwise overlook as I would not likely have any reason to go by their neighborhood. Now every day when I go by there I wave at my new friends and occasionally have one or two run alongside me. So be on the lookout for opportunities to share your sport with someone else. You never know who may be itching to take you on in a race :).

Run Strong Friends,

Sam

LET'S WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Kathy 'Kat' Wilkins, Cheryl 'Cherry' Coody, and Chuck Whitaker are like one big running family. Kat is responsible for making them participate in races but her mom, Cherry, is the one who has the longest running experience.

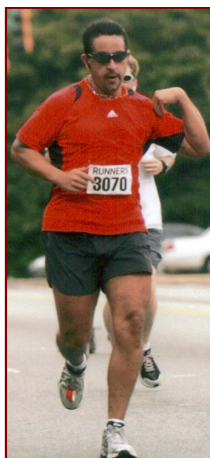


Cherry started running 3-milers 28 years ago together with her husband.

Kat didn't catch the running bug from her parents until about six years ago. She just had her daughter and needed some kind of exercise to get in shape and stay sane. She talked Cherry into doing their first race - Komen Race for Cure '03.



Chuck took up running about two years ago mainly to lose weight. He met Kat, now his girlfriend, and Cheryl and they teamed up, striving to run more and faster. Labor Day 5K '08 was Chuck's first race.



The Coody-Wilkins-Whitaker team started to increase distance and race more. They ran their first half marathon in Jacksonville last month and are getting ready for the Museum of Aviation half marathon. A full distance marathon is in the not-that-distant future plans, but they have not decided yet. Recently Kat joined Team POD and shares her new running expertise with Cheryl and Chuck.

Nobuko Fogarty started running in 2003. Actually, it was more walking than running, but since her husband is a runner and she desperately wanted to lose weight and add some exercise to her sedentary job, the decision to start running was quite serious. She ran the Peachtree 10K in 2005 as her first race and since then increased the racing distance to 12K. She likes to cross-train a lot; swimming, biking, and lifting weights shifted her interests towards triathlon and she finished her first sprint at Macon Coliseum's Rock 'N Roll last summer. Her favorite leg is swimming.



RUNNER'S PROFILE

Runner's Name: Kerry Oedel

Age: 45

Years of running experience: 10

Average Miles Run per week: 30-35

Favorite Races: Local - Macon Labor Day Road Race, Run4Missions, & Museum of Aviation.

Non-local – Siege on Fort Yargo Adventure Race

Favorite Running Memory: Winning the 2006 Labor Day Road Race 5K, especially because I didn't know I'd won until the awards ceremony!

Worst Running Memory: taking a wrong turn at the Twisted Ankle Half-marathon and realizing I'd lost 20 minutes off my time.

Typical Training:

Sunday – run the loop with fellow Tracksters

Monday – run Leslie Tuck's hill route if I'm feeling recovered from Sunday, swim with Coach Justin at Swim Macon

Tuesday – swim in the morning, then go to the Tuesday night track workout

Wednesday – easy trail run at the Children's Home with Leslie S., Claudia, & Andi

Thursday – run the loop with friends or go mountain biking if there's an adventure race coming up

Friday – yoga with Lisa Seneker at the Wellness Center. Rest if I'm racing the next day.

Saturday – race day or rest day

'Before I became a runner, I used to see people running beside the road and wonder how they could run a whole mile without stopping. When I met Dave during a period when I was making a lot of changes in my life, I decided to try running myself thinking it would be something he and I could do together. I intuited early on that if I didn't run, I was going to be sitting home alone an awful lot. Dave was very supportive, keeping me company on 3-mile runs where I thought I would die while he was barely breaking a sweat. It made me feel so good afterward, though, that I stuck with it. A few years later when we moved to Macon, I began running the loop and enjoying running in earnest. I began doing track workouts and discovered that I had some la-



tent and heretofore untapped athletic ability. I won some races and was hooked. Dave and I set a goal to do the Boston Marathon. First we had to qualify. I finished my first marathon in Huntsville, Alabama in December, 2006, and Dave and I ran the 2007 Boston Marathon together the whole way, holding hands as we crossed the finish. Through sickness and in health, shin splints and p.r.'s, we hope to run happily ever after for many years to come!

This month's featured blog:

Runner Envy

*selected by
Amy Tarpley*

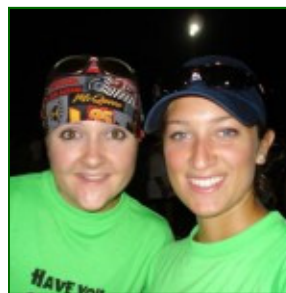
Yep. I am horribly guilty of this.

There they go. No pain, no problems... as I gimp along in my short walk. As they run past, I feel a boil starting somewhere deep within. Why can they run and not me?! How is this fair?!?! ... why do I sweat so much? While they trot along happily, I stew about how life isn't fair and I seem to get the short end of the stick.

However, as they disappear around the corner, I reason with myself and count my blessings. A week ago I was on crutches and could barely get off the couch. Now, I am at least able to go out and walk. So, I convince myself to be happy for them, and hope they have a good run ... though still jealous.

The only thing that keeps spirits high now is that faint glimmer of hope, that one day I will be running again. I want my 5:30am runs back. I want that twilight time when most of my subdivision's still asleep, and I can enjoy the peace of early morning. That time of the day when I'm the only one out, and the only sound I can hear above my mp3 player is the rhythm of my shoes and my steady breathing. This is why I envy that person as they run past. Because I know that this is their time... this is their twilight.

So, runner envy. Believe it. I know I do ... all the time.



Jacqueline Hunsicker (in the photo on the left) is currently nursing an injury and started her blog for "those of you who need companionship in getting yourself back on top ..." You can read more about her recovery at macontracks.org/blogJacque.

DID YOU KNOW?

Two MTRC members - Heather Braun and Chris Horne decided to join their lives together and got married in Las Vegas, NV on October 10, 2009.

On the same weekend another couple - Amy and



Troy Tarpley celebrated their first wedding anniversary. They stayed in Macon and participated in many local events.

On another subject, our Youngsters **Grace Tinkey** and **Dylan Swafford** won GISA State Cross-country Championship on October 31st. You can meet the Champions during Tuesday Track workout and Sunday Loop run. Congratulations!

(The Tale of Two Debs - continued from page 1)

We reach the turnaround point and see our crew once again. We grab more food. Deb fixes her feet once again. We are off once again.

When we hit the aid station at approx mile 29 or 30ish I'm excited and feel grateful that we only have 20 more miles left. I share that thought with Deb who apparently is thinking the same thing. We have to laugh as we both hate doing 20 milers on any given Saturday.

We return to the aid station where we first see our crew - mile 33.2 (16.8 till the finish). We eat, I change up shoes, and then we head off. We are on pace to outdo our last 50 mile record by about 30 min. Sweet.

One mile later ... we meet Toto. Now you might remember Toto as a small cute dog in the Wizard of Oz. That is incorrect. Toto is more like the size of Cujo and decides to stand his ground in the middle of the dirt road where we are running, ears back, low growl in throat. We cautiously and slowly pass to the left and when assured he is not going to follow start running once again. Side note: When we go to the left of

the dog the very well marked course turns to the right. Oh my!

After a mile or so nothing looks familiar. On cue as though in a movie a truck drives up and we flag him down. He is knowledgeable about the race and the course. He lets us know we are no longer on the course and we have to back track. Talk about feeling deflated. Deb and I get back to the race course and start heading in.

Our game plan is now changed. We are no longer looking to PR. We just want to catch up to the last person. (OK, so technically that is us but not in our minds). So we dig down and find some untapped inner strength we never knew existed. It takes us nearly an hour but we finally spot our target.

Team POD rule #3: Pass with conviction. With pleasure ... and of course words of encouragement to Daniel from CA as we blow by.

I would like to say the rest of the race is a breeze but it isn't. The hills are taking their toll, the missed turn is nagging and mentally draining us, and the temperature is dropping. Deb is having some serious pain in one of her calves but never mentions it except to say, "Let's walk this hill." This has to be one of the lowest points of our race. It hurts to run and it hurts to walk. So to compensate we switch up between two hoping to give the different muscles a break.

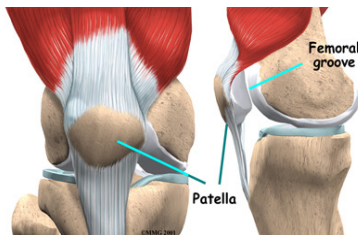
The sun is gone and we are sure we are somewhere in the last mile or two of the race. Out of nowhere we see two lights heading towards us. It's Steve and Magi, our crew. They let us know that we are a 10 min walk from the finish line. We walk back to the finish line with our crew. This sounds like a very anti-climatic ending but we are able to bust out a full sprint in the last 100 yards. (OK, it is probably only a 10 minute per mile pace but it seems fast at the time). Apparently, Deb also knows about Team POD rule #3 as she passes me with conviction in the last 10 feet. Good going Deb!

I'd like to say I feel happiness, relief, or a sense of completion upon crossing the finish line but really all I feel is cold and hungry. It isn't until a hot shower and a meal when I can look back and reflect how fortunate I am. I have a friend who is willing to run 50 miles with me. I have a second friend who is willing to do the 100 miler with me. I have a sister who is willing to go the extra mile with me. We have Deb's hubby that can both inspire and make a killer PBJ sandwich. It is a journey like this that reminds me how fortunate and blessed by the Father we all really are.

RUNNING INJURIES: Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome

by Brian Ross, MPT, ATC, CSCS

This month I am writing about a condition common to many runners, **patellofemoral pain syndrome (PFPS)**, also called **chondromalacia patella (CMP)**. This condition is so common in the sport of running that it is actually referred to as “**runner’s knee**.” As a reminder, there can be numerous causes for injuries in runners; therefore it is important to see your medical professional to help determine the source of the problem, especially if you are experiencing pain.

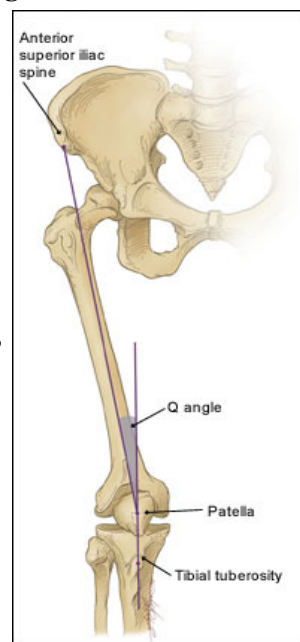


Patellofemoral pain syndrome (PFPS) is pain that occurs on the anterior, or front, of the knee. PFPS is usually due to irritation of the undersurface of the kneecap or patella. The patella is a small bone that sits on the end of the femur in what is known as the femoral groove. The undersurface of the patella is covered with a layer of smooth cartilage that normally allows the patella to glide effortlessly in the femoral groove during knee flexion and extension (bending and straightening). However, in some individuals, the kneecap will tend to rub against one side of the femoral groove, and the cartilage on the undersurface of the patella will become irritated. This irritation of the cartilage results in knee pain, which is the primary symptom associated with this condition. Many times the knee pain is more noticeable with running, sprinting, squatting, jumping, walking or running on uneven surfaces or hills, and using stairs (especially going down stairs). Many times pain is also experienced when sitting for prolonged periods of time with your knees bent. You may also experience occasional knee buckling, in which the knee suddenly and unexpectedly gives way and does not support your body weight. A catching, popping, or grinding sensation when walking, running, or with knee movement is also common.

PFPS is interesting in that it occurs more often in young, otherwise healthy, athletic individuals. There are many factors that can contribute to PFPS. These most common contributing factors include: biomechanical, muscle imbalance, and overuse. No single biomechanical factor has been identified as a primary cause of PFPS. Three **biomechanical problems** that can lead to PFPS include pes planus, pes cavus, and an increased Q-angle. **Pes planus** or “flat feet”

is a condition in which there is a lack of a supportive medial arch in the foot. This foot type can lead to foot pronation during running, which can cause a compensatory internal rotation of the tibia or femur (femoral anteversion) that upsets the patellofemoral mechanism. This is the premise behind using custom orthotics in patients with patellofemoral pain. **Pes cavus** is the opposite of pes planus in which there is a high arch of the foot that does not flatten with weight bearing. Compared with a normal foot, a high-arched foot provides less cushioning for the leg when it strikes the ground. This places more stress on the patellofemoral mechanism, particularly when a person is running. Custom orthotics, and/or proper footwear, such as running shoes with extra cushioning and an arch support, can be helpful. PFPS is two times more likely to affect women than men. Exactly why this is the case is unknown, but it is thought to have to do with anatomical differences between men and women. Women tend to have wider hips resulting in an increased angle at which the femur (upper leg bone) meets the tibia (lower leg bone). This angle is referred to as the **Q-angle** (see diagram). An increased Q-angle can lead to increased lateral forces on the patella during flexion and extension of the knee.

Muscle imbalance can also lead to PFPS. The potential muscular causes of PFPS can be divided into inflexibility and weakness. Tight IT-band, hamstring, and calf muscles put increased pressure on the knee. This increased stress causes the quadriceps to work harder and can alter the way the patella rides in the femoral groove. Muscle weakness also contributes to PFPS. The quadriceps, specifically the vastus medialis obliques (VMO), is the primary group of muscles that move the patella. Weakness in this group of muscles can cause the patella to track out of alignment. In my experience, I have found that the muscles of the hip (specifically the internal and external rotators) and the core (abdominals and gluteals) are also very important because these muscle help to stabilize the femur at the pelvis. If the muscles controlling the



femur are weak and cannot keep it stable, then this may potentially lead to patella tracking problems at the knee. Strengthening of the hip rotators and core muscles is vital for treating and preventing PFPS, because these are the muscles that stabilize your femur at the pelvis.

Overuse can also lead to PFPS. If you have any of the biomechanical factors or muscle imbalances listed above, then just the repetitive force of a normal running stride alone can be enough to lead to PFPS. Repeated weight-bearing impact may be a contributing factor, particularly in runners. Steps, hills and uneven surfaces tend to exacerbate PFPS. Once the syndrome has developed, even prolonged sitting can be painful ("movie-goer's sign") because of the extra pressure between the patella and the femur during knee flexion.

Treatment. Because PFPS is a very complex condition with many different possible factors causing the problem, it is important that you seek medical advice from your orthopedic physician, licensed physical therapist, or certified athletic trainer. At the first sign of pain, cut back your mileage. The earlier you lessen the knee's workload, the faster healing can begin. It has been recommended that over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication (NSAIDs) may help with PFPS; however, the safest anti-inflammatory is ice. Performing an alternate activity such as using an elliptical trainer or swimming will allow for continued cardiovascular training. A good flexibility and strength program will also help in the recovery of PFPS. A physical therapist or certified athletic trainer should be able to identify specific things that are causing your pain and then design a rehab program to address these problems. A good rehab program should consist of flexibility, strengthening (especially for the quads, hips and core), and balance exercises. These types of exercises will also help in the prevention of PFPS. Visit a specialty running shop to make sure that you are wearing the proper shoes for your foot type and gait. Custom orthotics may be an option if new shoes do not fix the problem. When it is time to return to running, keep mileage increases to less than 10 percent per week, and gradually increase hill work in your program. Below are some strength exercises that can be used in the prevention and recovery from PFPS. Please refer to the Macon Tracks discussion forum at www.macontracks.org for more information about running-related injuries. God Bless!

Strength Exercises: Perform each exercise 2-3 sets of 10-15 reps, 3 times a week.

Straight Leg Raise



Bridging



Side Lying Planks



Right/Left Side-Steps w/ Theraband



Squats



Lateral Step-Ups



2009 Macon Tracks Piedmont Sports Medicine Series Races:

Peacemakers 5K - Nov. 7th

Will Robinson Memorial 5K - Nov. 21st

Bartram Forest Marathon & 50K - Nov. 28th

Reindeer Run 5K - Dec. 5th

2010 Series:

Museum of Aviation 5K, HM & M - Jan. 16th

Karen Clements and Tom Weitzel
are currently in the lead for the Race Series,
with twenty races completed

Whether you're a new member or have been a member for years, we want to hear from you!

Please submit profiles, stories, race recaps, or other running-related articles to macontracks@cox.net

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MTRC had a strong representation at the Vidalia Onion Triathlon on September 18th. *Photo by Mandie Cook*