



The Watauga Youth Run

Making a Difference is Only 35.2 Miles Away

I had the pleasure of meeting *by Andrew Strickland* Matt Jenkins over a year ago when he drove down from North Carolina to run the inaugural Make It By Midnight Marathon. With his friendly nature, numerous tattoos, and (so the ladies tell me) extreme good looks he made quite the impression on everyone at the race. He wound up winning Make It By Midnight – and winning many new friends as well.

Over the next year I ran into Matt regularly. Since we are both Marathon Maniacs and serial ultramarathoners, we were bound to wind up running together again. He waited after his finish at the Chickamauga Battlefield Marathon to cheer me home to a PR. I returned the favor at Museum of Aviation when he was having a rough day. We both ran endless laps around the Clyde Shepherd Nature Preserve in 90 degree weather during the brutal Hot to Trot 8-Hour Race.

We are also regular readers of each others' running blogs. I am always fascinated by Matt's tales of running marathons barefoot or in socks. Matt is a former marine and likes to make things as extreme for himself as possible. He also enjoys the attention – as much as I do in my career in the theatre.

I was not surprised to read on Matt's blog that he was planning to run three races totaling over a hundred miles on three consecutive Sundays in August. What did catch my attention was the cause. Matt works for Western Youth Network (WYN), an organization that provides after-school programs for middle school students in Watauga County, North Carolina. WYN is facing quite a dilemma: grants they rely on to keep

afloat – totaling more than \$100,000 – have been eliminated. Similar organizations in North Carolina closed their doors when the cuts came down. WYN is trying to keep its doors open, trying to continue serving the children of Watauga County. Matt's three runs were designed to raise money for WYN and, more importantly, raise awareness of the crisis the organization is facing. Inspired by similar runs across the country, Matt designed a route that would take him to every school and site served by WYN across the county. The first day would take him 20.2 miles to the two major sites used for the after school programs. The next Sunday would tour the schools on the east side of Watauga to the tune of 35.3 miles. The final day would finish the school tour with 53.2 miles to the schools in the west. If that wasn't hard enough, the runs would be done on busy roads with no street closures with limited aid spread out in some cases more than 9 miles apart. Watauga County is the home of Boone – and its mountains – so the courses would be difficult indeed.

I was moved by the cause and Matt's efforts to help. As an educator I felt deeply the need for the services WYN provides. I have also been re-evaluating myself as a runner lately. I feel that I am too selfish, not volunteering enough, relying on the good nature of others for my hobby to

flourish. For once, I wanted to fully help with a cause in which I believed. I contacted Matt and told him I wanted to run with him. I offered to run either the 35.3 or 53.2 mile legs. Matt, being quite worried about the safety of the 53.2, encouraged me to run the dangerous (but less suicidal) 35.3 miler.

On Saturday, August 22, I made the 6+ hour journey to Boone, NC. Matt took my three drop bags to schools at roughly 9-mile intervals. I tried to get some sleep and prepare myself for the rigors of the run ahead.



Andrew and Matt in Boone, NC

Running Club News

I hope everyone has enjoyed these hot summer months. I know our family has. By now many have had their vacations and time off from school and or work. As we get closer to fall weather our club has one primary mission to focus on. That is organizing and hosting Middle Georgia's finest running event, our 33rd Annual Macon Labor Day Road Race. Many people have been diligently working for weeks making sure everything gets done. We have permits in place, shirts ordered, awards selected, volunteer teams assigned, etc, etc. Our club members and supporters continue to amaze me with their great commitment to the success of this event.

In the midst of all this work many of us still find time to train for this race. We've had as many as 30 people at the Tuesday Night Track Workout at Stratford Academy. Also our numbers continue to be strong on the Sunday morning Long Run at The Loop.

The Macon Tracks Piedmont Sports Medicine Race Series is also going great with 15 races completed and 11 to go. It's not too late to get in the remaining races and score some points towards the Race Series. See where you stand by going to: <http://www.macontracks.org/race-series.htm>.

We will be planning our fall social soon and invite all of you to come by and socialize with your fellow club members. We'll enjoy good food and conversation. Be on the lookout for more information on our website. See you then.

Sam

2009 Macon Tracks Piedmont Sports Medicine Series Races:

Macon Labor Day Road Race - Sept. 7th

Race for Camp Little Shot 5K - Sept. 12th

Gordon's Fall Line Festival 5K - Oct. 3rd

Take Back the Night 5K & 10.5K - Oct. 10th

Jay's Hope 5K & 10K - Oct. 31st

Peacemakers 5K - Nov. 7th

Will Robinson 5K

Bartram Forest Marathon & 50K - Nov. 28th

Reindeer Run 5K; Christmas Lane Dash 5K

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

LET'S WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Tracey Eubanks opened up the Edge Fitness clubs in Warner Robins. When he hit his milestone (40) he made the decision that he wanted to be in the best shape he has ever been in and took up running. He used to run and do sports in his earlier years and his return to the sport has brought him out to the Loop on Sundays. His dedication to his fitness has already paid off as he landed 3rd place in his age group at the Jim Herrin race. **Tracey has also generously offered a free month at the Edge Fitness club to all Macon Tracks members.**

Shannyn and Kevin Gardner



Shannyn and her husband Kevin moved to Macon two years ago. Kevin is a paramedic and Shannyn works in law enforcement. They both decided that they wanted to get in shape and began running. Shannyn and Kevin joined Macon Tracks to help keep accountable to their goal of staying in shape. The two of them have already participated in track workouts and can also be spotted at the local 5K/10K races. Shannyn has been tossing around the idea of participating in a marathon. (The local marathon pusher has already passed along the new Galloway training program info along).

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

My Running Journey

The irony is that I have always hated *by Rachel May* to run. In high school I played lacrosse, and I remember thinking how great a sport it would be if the running could be eliminated. I played deep offense, so the running was largely limited to brief sprints. I remember in pre-season training we would run a 3 mile loop before practice, and that I came in last and considered quitting the team or faking injury rather than endure another long distance run. Now, however, running has become how I identify myself; weeks, months, years marked by races, by personal records, by early mornings before dawn and late nights when I should be sleeping.

The journey to runner was a long one. As a high school and college student I was blessed to be thin with little effort. I was active, but not an athlete. After college, the reality of a real job, life and a daily dedication to abundant eating and drinking, all physical activity ceased. It didn't take long before the weight crept on, and finally, at my heaviest (to be honest I don't know what it was, I threw the scale in the trash) I reached 180 pounds. As I began to acknowledge my weight issue and become motivated to change it, I grudgingly turned to running. As I struggled to be more active and my motivation waxed and waned, a dedicated marathoner and family friend suggested that I needed a goal, that 5 days a week at the gym watching Wolf Blitzer probably wasn't that inspirational. Knowing my deep (if child-like) love of Disney, he suggested I sign up for the Disney Marathon. At the time, there was a full year to train. It seemed doable – scary, miserable and insane – but in a year, can't you do anything?

So I trained. Slowly. Miserably. I hated every run. I began only able to run 2 minutes at a time. But slowly, over the first several months, I could run farther without wanting to commit suicide every time I faced the treadmill. I remember with absolute clarity the first time I ran 5 miles. I have never felt so victorious! Five miles felt like the marathon itself, and I felt the need to tell everyone about my accomplishment (and eat an entire pizza thus undermining my entire workout, but we won't discuss that). Over that year of training the weight came off, my self-esteem improved and while I still hated every run, the misery subsided.

When I ran the Disney Marathon in January of 2005, my only goal was to finish before the course closed. I finished in a very slow 5:34, but I managed to run (slowly) the whole thing. It was at the moment when I crossed the finish line that I loved running. Until

that moment, every step had sucked, every workout was time I would rather have been doing something else, but the moment I crossed that line, the moment I became a marathoner, I became a runner. Ironic that I became a marathoner before I became a runner.



Rachel with her best friend Jenka Fyfe
in Charleston, NC

But my journey with running has been more than a physical transformation, more than a personal passion. Running helped me realize the power of fitness not only to transform one's life, but also the feeling of empowerment that running provides and the knowledge that if you can do *that*, you can do anything. Until that marathon, I was headed to lawyerhood. After that marathon I changed course, got a masters degree in exercise science and decided that I wanted to spend my professional life helping others ignite their personal journey to find their physical self. As the Director of Wellness at Mercer University, I have found my dream job. I am fortunate to be able to help people try to reach a better state of health and I enjoy being a part of their journey, wherever it may start and wherever it may be directed. But beyond the schooling, the biomechanics, the behavioral change theory, what I find is that a little old-fashioned marathon training schedule is all you need. I'm not talking necessarily about running, but with every situation, be it physical, professional or emotional, all you need to do is establish a goal, set a timeline and train to the best you can. It may take you six weeks to reach a weight loss goal, a new PR, a new job, a new outlook – or it may take you twenty years.

Running transcends the miles, it goes beyond the early mornings or the late nights and makes us strive to be better and to believe unflinchingly that with proper preparation, we can achieve greatness. One foot in front of the other; pick it up and lay it down; repeat.

This month's featured blog: **Kat Runs Like a Girl**

*selected by
Amy Tarpley*

Yesterday was my 2nd 10K of the year, and I did something I had never done before.

Before I tell you what I did, I guess I'll go back and tell why real quick. I like to read a couple of local runner's blogs as well. A few of them use a coach and follow specific training programs. I think it only makes sense to not only read the information they post, but to use it as motivation, AND pull tid bits of information and learn something as well. They speak of techniques and race pace training runs and such. A lot of that confuses me to be honest, but I think I get the overall idea... maybe? So, after reading a post last week, I decided to plan out 1/2 mile split times for my race on Saturday and have a goal finishing time.

the fine tip sharpie and wrote my goal split times down on my arm... I felt like a REAL runner... neat!

I got to the race and I was so stinkin' nervous. I NEVER get nervous before a race, because I never really worry too much about how I do. I like races because they are fun. It's a chance to get out, run a different course, and be around many other peeps who also enjoy running. If I feel fast, I go fast. If I feel slow, I go slow. I never intended to PR on races where I did so before, it just happened that I felt great that day and I went with it.

The race was great! I started off at my goal 8:50 pace, and pretty much floated from 8:30 to 9:00 min. miles. I had moments in the run I felt like I was flying, and moments when I wondered why I was even there... as usual.

As the race wore on, I was noticing I was consistently beating my mile split plans. I felt good, so I didn't slow down. I figured I'd keep the pace, and use the extra time later if I had any problems. Problems never occurred. Once I finally came into view of the Finish line timer, it read 53:25... Heck Yeah, Obviously I was going to break the 55 minute goal I'd set for myself. Finished in 53:57, a whole minute faster.

After finishing the race I was a very happy girl for achieving a goal. And I taught myself a lesson. I can train to go a little faster. I can set goals and not be scared of not meeting them. I think I was resisting goals in fear of not meeting them?

My goal for the Labor Day 10K is to beat my all time PR (Labor Day 2006 52:26)... I am sure I can do it, if not at least try. If I don't, there is always another race day!

Oh, and I placed 2nd in my age group.



Kat with her mom and boyfriend at Jim Herrin race

That shouldn't sound so crazy. I've been doing a lot of racing this year, and yeah, I even had some PR goals written down in my training log. I haven't met a single PR goal, I think I set them too high!

So, on Wednesday I decided that I was going to run my 10K in 55 minutes. Not being a PR (52:26) but a few minutes faster than my previous 10K this year (57:4?). Reasonable right? I thought so.

Saturday morning I got up at 5:45, showered, and got on the running gear. Ate my mini bagel with peanut butter and drank a half cup of coffee. Then I got out

Kat enjoys reading, photography, spending time with her family, and (duh) running.

*You can read more of Kat's blog at
<http://kat-runlikeagirl.blogspot.com>*

ANNOUNCEMENT!

MTRC T-shirts and singlets
will be available for purchase
at the Macon Labor Day Road Race packet pick-up
on Friday, Sept 4th through Sunday, Sept 6th
at Gateway Fitness Studio at 300 Mulberry St.

The 'Art' of GPS Running

by Tom Weitzel If you would like a refreshing new perspective for that long run, then you might want to consider the "Art" of GPS running. All you need is an area map, some imagination, planning, a GPS watch and the run itself.

The idea is simple. You have likely seen aerial views of corn fields where farmers have destroyed their corn with farm equipment in a pattern that sends a message. It might be the likeness of Abraham Lincoln or a few words for or against a particular cause. You have also seen pictures of the ancient earth carvings of images that are so large that they can only become meaningful when viewed from the air; such as those found in the Desert of Peru in 2002.

Runners who have modern GPS capability, too much time on their hands, a local map, and a plan can create their own running GPS art. Garmin Connect, Map My Run and other sites allow the user and others to see an aerial view of exactly where the runner has been on their run. Given that, what happens if you run a pre-determined route that has been "predesigned" to deliver your aerial creation? You could write your name across the city! You might proclaim your last PR or run a likeness of one of your running buddies. The possibilities seem endless.



I predict that this form of art will become popular in the very near future. Anyone with a modern GPS watch who would like to give it a try has that power now. Currently there is a limited audience. However, I think that, within a year or two, web sites will begin to feature such creations; both the good and those that are not so good.

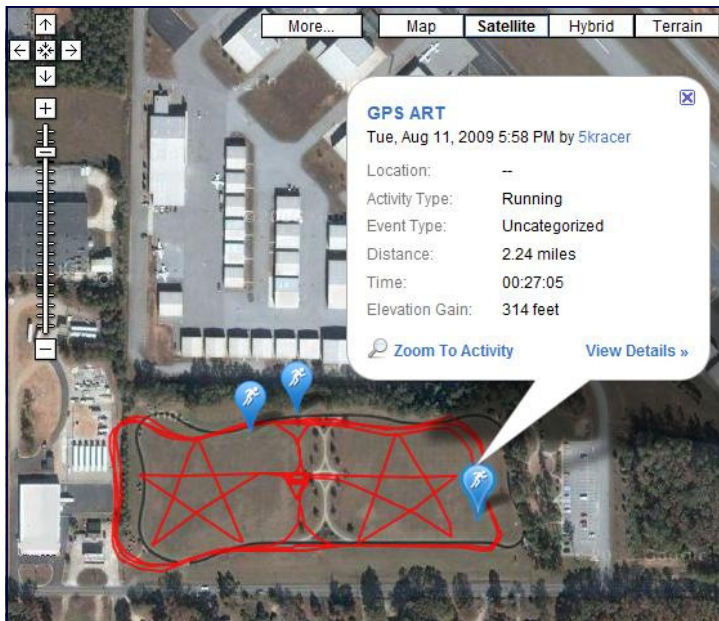
I also predict that the bicycle guys will take credit for this idea. In the age where speed counts we must remember that they are capable of moving faster. That means that they may be able to flood this new art space at a rate that we might only dream of. Their end products will also likely cover more total geographical space than ours.

I also predict that "Team Creations" will emerge and will cover the geography of hundreds, if not thousands of miles in scale... And why would we not want to write "USA" in 1000 mile tall letters across our continent during our GPS run?... And might we get Garmin as a sponsor?

Welcome to one possible spin-off of your sport in your future.

After writing this article Tom also suggested to use Google Earth program with its tools that allow to easily change the scale and measure all distances. After his first trials he says that a cross-country version would probably be the best since street layout doesn't always allow to follow your imagination.

*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*



Scale is important. If you chose to "Run Your Name", a quarter mile tall letter will be less total distance than say a mile tall letter. The total number of letters also weighs in, as well as how much back-tracking you might need to do in order to allow you to end up with a meaningful transition between letters. Dead-end streets also pose a challenge.



Snapping Hip Syndrome

by Brian Ross, **Piedmont**
MPT, ATC, CSCS **SPORTS MEDICINE**
Complex

In last month's article I discussed prevention tips and techniques on how to avoid running injuries. The next few articles in the series will deal with specific injuries that are common to runners and how to recognize, prevent, and treat them. In this article, I will be discussing a problem common to many runners, **snapping hip syndrome**. Before I get started, you must know that there can be numerous causes for hip conditions in runners so it is important to see your medical professional to help determine the source of the problem, especially if you are experiencing pain.

Snapping hip syndrome is a condition that is characterized by a snapping sensation, and often an audible "popping" noise when the hip is flexed and extended. This "popping" sensation may happen only occasionally or all the time. There are several causes for snapping hip syndrome, but most commonly it occurs due to tendons catching on bony prominences and "snapping" when the hip is moved. There are three causes of snapping hip syndrome. The most common cause of snapping hip syndrome is the **Iliotibial Band Snap**. This occurs when the Iliotibial band (a thick, wide tendon over the outside of the hip joint) snaps over the greater trochanter (the bony prominence over the outside of the hip joint). If this is the cause of snapping hip syndrome, patients may develop *trochanteric bursitis* from the irritation of the bursa in this region. Another cause is the **Iliopsoas Tendon Snap**. The Iliopsoas tendon is the primary hip flexor muscle, and the tendon of this muscle passes just in front of the hip joint. The Iliopsoas tendon can catch on a bony prominence of the pelvis and cause a snap when the hip is flexed. Usually when the Iliopsoas tendon is the cause of snapping hip syndrome, patients have no problems, but may find the snapping annoying. The least common cause of snapping hip syndrome is the **Hip Labral Tear**, which is a tear of the cartilage located in the hip joint. If there is a loose flap of cartilage catching within the joint, this may cause a snapping sensation when the hip is moved. This cause of snapping hip syndrome typically causes a snapping sensation, but rarely an audible "pop." This cause of snapping hip syndrome may also cause an unsteady feeling, and patients may grab for support when the hip snaps. Unfortunately, symptoms of all three types of snapping hip syndrome may

last a long time, especially if ignored and left untreated.

In many cases, the symptoms of snapping hip syndrome are usually due to an imbalance in muscle strength and flexibility around the hip and thigh muscles. **Diagnosis** of snapping hip syndrome is done through history and examination by a medical professional, usually an orthopedic doctor, certified athletic trainer, or physical therapist. Your doctor may choose to take X-rays in order to confirm no bony problem around the hip joint. An MRI may be ordered if the cause of the condition is thought to be due to a tear in the cartilage within the hip joint. **Treatment** of this condition is as follows: (1). If the condition is in the acute stages (first 2-3 days) and is inflamed or painful, use ice packs 15 to 20 minutes every 3 to 4 hours for 2 to 3 days or until pain subsides. In the chronic stages (after 3-4 days) you can use a heating pad to help with soreness and tightness in the muscles. (2). Use anti-inflammatory medications, if prescribed. (3). A physical

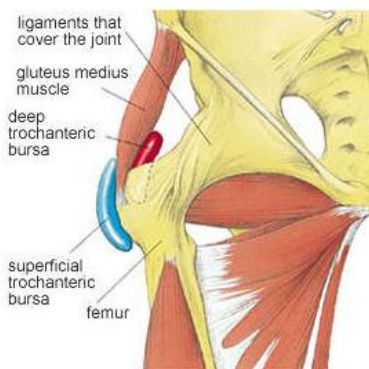
therapist or certified athletic trainer can use modalities such as ultrasound to decrease inflammation, stimulate blood flow, and heal tissues. (4). Since the problem usually occurs because some muscles are too tight and some muscles are too loose or weak, a physical therapist or certified athletic trainer can develop a stretching and strengthening program for your hip and thigh muscles. Exercises will help stretch and strengthen the muscles and tissues around the hip that lead to the snapping and will reduce the amount of snapping and discomfort. Below are some exercises that can be used in the prevention and recovery from snapping hip syndrome. Please refer to the Macon Tracks discussion forum at www.macontracks.org for more information related to the running related injuries. God Bless!

Stretches: Perform each stretch 3-5 times, hold for 10-15 seconds. Perform each stretch 2-3 times daily.

Supine Hamstring Stretch



Piriformis Stretch



Standing Hamstring Stretch



Hip Flexor Stretch



We were joined there by Ronnie and Gina Holste, a husband and wife training for a half-marathon. Ronnie works with Matt at WYN and had wisely planned to run the most downhill leg with us. The camaraderie was amazing as we sped down the hills, dodging traffic and enjoying the cool mountain air. The Holstes got caught up in the excitement of the run and ran past their parked car and on with us to the next school.

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

Bridging



Side Lying Planks



*More stretches and exercises
can be found on MTRC website*

(Continued from page 1)

I was surprised to find that I was the only person running the full distance with Matt. Other people had committed only to back out again. I know Matt didn't blame them. The course, in theory, looked brutal: massive elevation drops and gains, busy roads, limited sidewalks and narrow shoulders, and a huge number of people in town as students returned to the local Appalachian State University. At 7:00 AM Matt and I ran up the first of many hills away from the WYN Headquarters and through the beautiful college town atmosphere of Boone.

I am not used to running with someone. I train alone and rarely feel comfortable even pacing with someone in a race. Yet the purpose of this run was to be a visible group moving through the county with an important cause to share. As Matt and I ran the difficult climb up to Blowing Rock, NC, we talked constantly. The miles flew by. I could not believe how fast we were running – and how easily the hills were disappearing behind us. Matt and I both apparently have a similar problem with pride and stubbornness. Neither of us was willing to let the other know when we needed to slow down. When we realized we were doing this, we laughed about it and started owning up to needing breaks now and then. Still, we cruised into the first school way ahead of schedule.

For the remainder of the run, Matt and I largely ran alone. I was struck by the differences in the schools we visited: from the beautiful facility in the resort town to the rural charter school on the gravel road with portable classrooms, all of these places share a need that WYN fulfills.

As we ran the final 8 miles to the finish I watched the reactions of the people around us. Some seemed impressed by these two crazy men running up the mountain – especially the one with the tattoos without shoes. Every now and then a driver would call to us or someone would drive by cheering. A small group was waiting outside a natural grocery store to boisterously cheer us on to the finish.

Matt encouraged me to sprint on ahead at the finish. He wanted me to be the first finisher in his race much as he had been the first finisher of Make It By Midnight. I accepted the honor, but felt that he really should have been the first across.

This was one of the most unusual races of my life. Only two people ran the entire distance. Very few people watched it. Most probably thought it was just two guys with a running death wish. Only two people were at the finish line – and one was Shannon, Matt's wife. Yet this run has caught the attention of many people. Matt has raised more than \$4,000 for WYN through donations. Numerous television and newspaper interviews have spread the word further. With still the 53.2 miler to go, Matt's dream of running to bring hope to WYN seems to be a success.

During the run Matt talked about doing the race again next year. He's considering running across the state of North Carolina as well to focus attention on the dwindling funding for after school programs. I am sure with the heart and determination of Matt and the wonderful people he works with, WYN will be around to serve the children of Watauga County for years to come. I was honored to be part of their cause for one very special Sunday.

If you are interested in reading more about the Watauga Youth Run or donating to the cause, please visit <http://wataugayouthrun.blogspot.com>

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