

Running Briefs
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Running Briefs

Injured? Maybe it's your gait...

By Denise Jerome

Unlike many other sports, runners may run competitively for years and learn nothing about gait technique. Swimmers perfect their strokes and cross-country skiers work on mastering the old kick and glide or V1, but has anyone ever taught you how to run with an efficient stride to avoid injury? If all your joints aren't moving smoothly or if certain muscles aren't firing or relaxing at the proper time, then you could be setting yourself up for an injury.

Being able to run with an efficient stride is dependent on many factors. If you are not recruiting your abdominals correctly to stabilize your pelvis, you may have chronic back tightness. If your hip flexors are so tight and short from your desk job that you can't extend your hip properly during pushoff, you can run into IT band problems. If your lateral hip muscles don't hold your pelvis level, you can experience hip bursitis or more back

pain. If your calves are so tight that your ankles have lost range of motion, they may cause your knees to track improperly. Even old injuries that healed long ago can cause muscle inhibition or joint restrictions.

Recently in my physical therapy practice I saw a young runner with a recent onset of Achilles tendon pain. She had sprained her ankle one month prior, but was not noting any symptoms in her ankle. During gait analysis, I noted that she had a lack of range of motion in her ankle during the pushoff phase, and that this was a result of the previous sprain. Because her ankle didn't have adequate flexibility, her Achilles tendon was getting strained with every step, particularly with speed work and on uphill. The treatment was joint mobilization of her ankle and soft tissue mobilization to free up some restrictions to the inside of her Achilles tendon and calf. She had normal range of motion

after one treatment. We modified her training program for a week and I gave her some gait modifications to watch out for, along with a couple of prescription exercises to follow. She was back to running hills pain free in a week. She could have iced and stretched her Achilles tendon until the cows came home and it wouldn't have corrected the underlying problem. Had she not taken care of the motion restriction in her ankle, she probably would have continued to have deviations in her gait pattern that might have caused problems somewhere else up the musculoskeletal chain.

If you or your running partner have noticed a "hitch in your get-a-long", maybe it's time for a full gait assessment and biomechanical evaluation. You may need some manual physical therapy to get you moving better, along with some instructions for corrective exercises specific to your problem. If you are already having

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Dysfunctional RCN Member goes to Spain

By Jim Loftus

It was one of the most difficult moments in my life. I got a call from the President of the World's Best Running Club. "Jim," he says, "will you please write a report on your trip to Spain?" How could I turn him down? My head hit the kitchen counter and I whined repeatedly, "I CAN'T WRITE AS GOOD AS SCOTT McCREA, I JUST CAN'T!" After repeated blows to the forehead Eileen grabbed me by the sides of the head, (where there is still hair), gave me that fierce look I've grown to love, and said, "Just write the article you moron!" Actually she doesn't talk like that at all but as my Uncle Tom always said, "Never let the truth get in the way of a good story."

So anyway, where was I? Oh yeah. I was lucky enough to go to the World Masters Athletics Champi-

onships held in San Sebastian, Spain from August 22 to September 3rd this year. This event is held every two years and typically draws anywhere from 5,000 to 10,000 participants. This year's event drew 6,000 from 92 countries, and quite honestly was one of the most impressive experiences in my life. There were 300 participants from the USA, which was the fifth largest contingent from any country. They were all amazed that someone came all the way from Alaska; we were celebrities. The majority of the participants were from Europe, but there were also quite a few from Central and South America, as well as Australia. There were 1,600 women and 4,400 men participating in five year age groups for every single Track and Field event. The age groups start at 35 and stop at 95+. PICTURE THAT!

Actually you can pic-

ture that. Go to www.canadianmastersathletics.com. Click on the links and go down to "Doug's Masters Pics". He's got lots of albums that can be viewed—look for the Donostia pictures.

San Sebastian is a city of 165,000 sitting on a beautiful Atlantic beach just a stone's throw away from the border with France. We're talking Basque country here, and they call the city Donostia. The Donostians were most hospitable and put on a great show for all of their guests. Most of the participants wore their country's colorful sweats everywhere they went and they paid no attention to me when I screamed, "IT'S TOO HOT TO WEAR SWEATS, YOU MORONS!" (It might be wise for Alaskans to stay out of that part of the world for a few years.) All of the participants and guests had free bus passes

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Running gait analysis: just the thing for your "get-a-long"

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symptoms, your body is telling you that something needs to change. Don't

wait until it becomes a chronic issue. Many running injuries and overuse problems are due to mechanical errors in tech-

nique that can be corrected.

Denise Jerome is a manual physical therapist with a special interest in gait.

She works at Equinox Physical Therapy and owns her own cash-based physical therapy practice, Jerome Physical Therapy.

Loftus cruises to 5th place in the World Master's track championships

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for the entire time. The busses and stadium were filled with groups from all over the world sitting and chatting away in their languages. It was quite a spectacle. You'll never get a more positive and friendly group together anywhere. It makes you think that the real problems in the world are because of the leaders, not the people.

Unlike the REAL runners in Fairbanks who are capable of getting in great shape and running long distances up tall mountains, my event has always been the 800 meters. Doing intervals on a deserted track is my idea of fun. Go figure. In any case, about a year and a half ago I saw the notice about San Sebastian and decided it looked just crazy enough. After barely dodging the usual bullets of work overload, sickness, and injuries that all old guys get, I ended up actually sending in my entry form and making reservations.

Eileen and I touched down after an endless fight and proceeded to deal with jet lag for a few days. Beer helps, I

learned. (So I had it for breakfast... got a problem with that?) The USA team had two full-time managers who were very helpful in getting confused Alaskans oriented. For my age group, there were 65 guys signed up for the 800m, although fewer showed up. They only allow eight into the finals and had two preliminary races. The first one consisted of four heats where they took the first four from each race. I was scared to death of falling down in the pack on the waterfall start and jumped out quick to avoid disaster. Too many deserted tracks in my past. The races were very strategic with everyone checking out the others and looking over their shoulder to see who was coming up. I took second in the heat and moved on.

Fortunately there was a day layoff as my legs were as stiff as boards the next day. We just walked around through the town and that helped a lot. The second race had two heats. They took the top three from each race and the two next fastest times. I was in the heat with the favorite to win, Robert Minting from Great Britain. Hav-

ing many previous encounters with my forehead on the kitchen counter, I decided to see if I could stay with him. I'm pleased to say that in an 800m race I'm just as fast as he is. For 700m, anyway. It was a brutal finish and I barely hung on to finish fourth in my heat. Luckily, I managed to be 8th overall, qualifying for the finals. Once again, I had dead legs. Only this time, there would be no day off. At this point, however, I didn't really care (can you say "BEER TENT"?). I was so elated about making it to the finals that nothing else really mattered. I was ready to dance salsa in the street with the Puerto Rican team. It turns out that my attitude helped. I had goose bumps walking into the stadium but once the race started I was relaxed and happy. After the first lap, I was in last place, but boy was I happy. On the second lap I realized that I was so relaxed that I actually had some juice left in the old legs. I was able to catch three guys, and almost caught a fourth. To take fifth place in the world was absolutely fine with me and the thrill has not really worn off yet.

Come to think of it, it might not ever wear off.

After the track meet, Eileen and I went touring in Spain. Feel free to chat us up on the subject. We can give advice on married couples traveling together. As in: this should not be attempted! Ask us about how we coped with the new disease named after us, ADDDDDDDD. You see, in addition to the normal ADD conditions we also suffer(ed) from Dementia, Dyslexia, Disorientation, Diarrhea, and Dysfunctionalia. It was fun.

So in closing, I want to encourage anyone who is interested to go ahead and try this someday. We really should get a contingent from Fairbanks to go to the World or even to the National Meet. It would be a lot of fun to go to Eugene, Oregon the next time there is a big meet there. Let me know if you are interested. I am now qualified to give seminars on the proper consumption of beer for Masters athletes. Thanks to all who gave me moral support over the last year—especially Steve Bainbridge, Dan Callahan, and the SRC Running Club: Howard, Dennis and Greg.

2005 Equinox Marathon Report

By Steve Bainbridge

A huge moon was hanging on the horizon as I headed out of the door of my house at 5 a.m., headed for the Patty Center and the start of another Equinox Marathon. It seemed possible that we could have totally perfect weather for this day. This was unexpected, as the day before, rain threatened to make the bib pickup at the Pumphouse Restaurant a rather damp affair, and the promise for Saturday was not much better than "intermittent showers". So I had come to the start of the Equinox totally prepared with all of the Running Club North pop-up tents as well as tents borrowed from Beaver Sports. But given the stars and the moon and the clear sky of this Saturday morning, it appeared the only thing we would need the tents for would be to make the finish line more visible.

Ken Larimore had Patty Center unlocked and the lights on to welcome the first of the 6 a.m. Saturday morning bib pick-up crew, and soon the volun-

teers from Moose Mountain Ski Patrol showed up to load their trucks with the oranges, bananas, and cookies destined for the top of Ester Dome. Members of the UAF Cross Country/Ski Team, led by Scott Jerome and Ingrid Olson, were out in the early morning darkness setting up traffic control signs along the marathon course. Kelly Egger and Roger Sayre gathered enough PowerAde and goodies to refuel the runners at the Turn-around, and Bob Tsigonis drove in at 6:00 a.m. sharp with his motorhome—a place for John Estle to set up his computer and keep updated result sheets spooling out of his printer for posting on any unsuspecting vehicle parked in the finish area.

A couple of brave soldiers from Fort Wainwright showed up at 7:00 a.m. with the howitzer. They wanted to know where they could go to warm up because the heater in their jeep wasn't working all that well. To me, the cold morning

meant that we would soon be seeing a sunny day.

After a few pre-race announcements, the boom of the howitzer sent the runners on their way and the 43rd running of the Equinox Marathon was about to challenge each and every participant.

Sitting and waiting for my relay partner to show up at the bottom of Ester Dome Road, I heard the train passing through the 8-mile mark at 8:45—about 15 minutes earlier than I usually expect the first train to show up, and right about the time I expected the front runners to be arriving there. Bugger! Luckily it was just a short passenger train and it was gone before the first runners reached the tracks. They didn't miss it by much, though, as Mike Kramer, Matias Saari, and Kevin Brinegar were passing by me in the parking lot at Ann's Greenhouse at 8:50 a.m.!

As the day went on, with the last walkers passing by each water stop and road crossing in turn, the course was gradually

wrapped up. The finish line was shut down at 5:45 p.m., just after the last finisher collected his patch. Then came the awards ceremony at University Community Presbyterian Church, where a large crowd applauded the day's accomplishments. The announcement of the "Spirit of the Equinox" was led by Dave Bloom and Bad Bob Baker. Keeping everyone in suspense (and in stitches) until the end, Bob finally announced this year's recipient—John Estle. The evening closed with last year's Spirit of the Equinox award winner, Bob Eley, telling the crowd of his year-long training effort to prepare for the Equinox Marathon, and his celebration of a sub-seven-hour finish. It just doesn't get any better than this!

Again, my thanks to all the many volunteers that helped with this year's event—almost 100 folks without whom this race wouldn't happen. Wow! I am already looking for-

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Equinox Marathon a success

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ward to next year's Equinox Marathon (to be held on September 16th) and the

Equinox training runs that lead up to the big day. In fact, the 2006 entry forms are already available on-line and in my truck... Let me know if you want one. See you at the starting line!



Above: Runners make their way up the sledding hill at the start of the 43rd annual Equinox Marathon. Below: Dee Daniels makes her way back to the top of Ester Dome near the 17-mile mark. Photos by Shon Daniels.



Running Away from Home

Tupelo Marathon, Tupelo, MS, 9/5/05

Bob Hildebrandt 5:41:59

Akron Marathon, Akron, OH, 10/1/05

Bob Hildebrandt 5:27:33

Wish these folks good luck on their upcoming races:

Tina Devine: Humboldt Redwoods Marathon, Redcrest, CA, 10/16/05

Monte Jordan: The Other Half half-marathon, Moab, UT, 10/23/05

Paulette Goodwin: Marine Corps Marathon, Washington, D.C., 10/30/05

Lisa Morris: New York City Marathon, New York City, NY, 11/6/05

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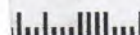
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RCN Annual Membership Meeting: Oct. 19th

The RCN annual membership meeting is on October 19th, 6:30 p.m., at Keith Pollock's house (834 Goldfinch). Elections for the 2006 RCN Executive Council will be held and the 2006 RCN Event Calendar will be carved in stone.

The RCNEC has made a recommendation to change the by-laws to include a Vice President position, bringing the total number of board members to twelve. A change in the by-laws must be voted on by the general

membership, and this will occur at the annual meeting. Election of board members will follow. The current slate of candidates is as follows ("I" indicates incumbent):

President:

Steve Bainbridge (I)

Vice President (pending approval):

OPEN

Secretary/insurance:

Jenny Mahlen (I)

Treasurer:

Bev Weis (I)

Calendar:

Gary Pohl (I)

Membership Coordinator:

Dee Daniels

Mary Lindahl

Media/Newsletter:

Tracey Martinson(I)

Flint Hills Liaison:

Eve Lamborn (I)

Member-At-Large (3 positions):

Daniel Baker (I)

Keith Pollock (I)

OPEN

If you are an RCN member and wish to run for any of these offices, please notify Susan Kramer at eventplanning2004@hotmail.com or just show up at the annual meeting, as nominations are accepted from the floor.

If you are an RCN member and don't want to run for office, come to the meeting anyway and exercise your right to VOTE! If you are a race director, come to the meeting and help set the calendar. If nothing else, come for the socializing and food.