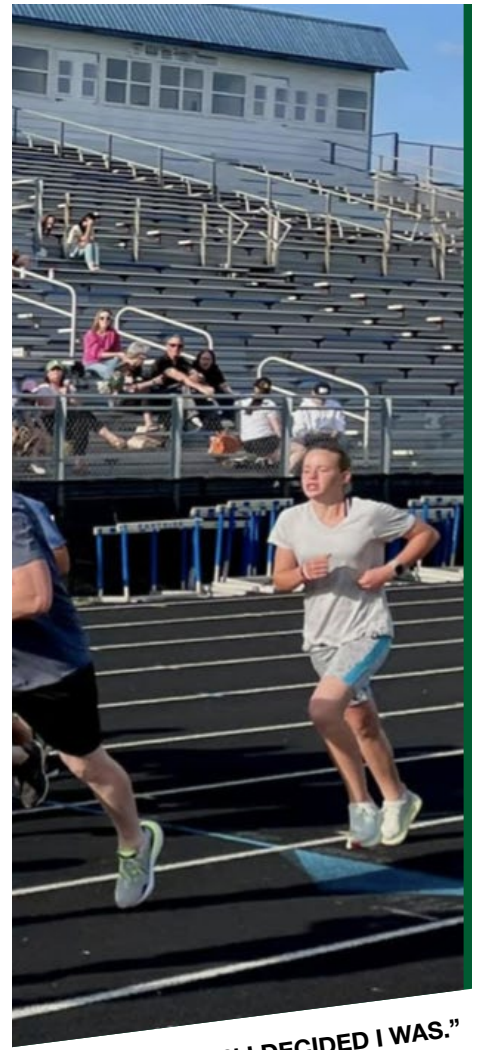


GTC NEWSLETTER



"ON SATURDAY NIGHT, I SAID TO MYSELF, 'ARE YOU READY TO DEAL WITH A VICTORY?' I DECIDED I WAS."
- JOAN BENOIT ON HER THOUGHTS PRIOR TO THE 1984 OLYMPIC MARATHON

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HIGHLIGHTS



Everything you need to know about the Greenville Track Club's All-Comers Meets beginning in June.

[Pages 3-4](#)

UPCOMING RUNS

- ZF Get in Gear 5K* – May 11
- GTC Paris Mountain Trail 12K – May 25
- Freedom Flyer** – May 27
- Sunrise Run 8K*** – June 8
- GTC SC Open & Masters Track & Field Classic – June 22
- Red, White & Blue Shoes 5K* *** – July 4
- Paris Mountain Trail Run 7K – Aug. 10
- Edouard Michelin Memorial 5K* *** – Aug. 17
- BMW Performance Classic 2M* – Sept. 20
- GE Cross-Country 6K* – Oct. 6
- Spinx Runfest** – Oct. 28
- GTC Paris Mountain Trail 16K – TBD
- Zoom Through the Zoo* – Nov. 16
- Paris Mountain Road Races** – Dec. 7
- Santa Run 5K** – Dec. 14

*Corporate Shield Race

** GTC Running Series

FOLLOW US ON:



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

By Jim Roberts, GTC President

Fellow runners, walkers, and crawlers:

The next 3 months will overflow with club events.

ZF Transmissions 5K (Corporate Shield); 12K Trail Run; Memorial Day Mile (formerly Freedom Flyer 2 mile); Open & Masters Track & Field Classic; 9 GTC All-Comers meets; GTC Sunrise 8K; and the Red, White & Blue Shoes 5K. That's a staggering 15 events to choose from. See details within the rest of this newsletter. As always, events need volunteers so please go to the specific event websites to sign up. The success of a race is directly proportional to the number of volunteers.

The GTC needs more volunteer race directors. If you are interested, please contact me. If you've never been a race director, you will learn much.

Membership continues to grow at an amazing rate. Membership fluctuates, but as of the writing of this article the GTC has **1,365 members**. If you're unsure of your membership status, you can check by visiting runsignup.com/Club/SC/Greenville/GreenvilleTrackClub.

Please be safe on the roads and trails and be aware of your environment, avoid running in the dark—and if you wear ear buds, consider wearing only one to increase your attentiveness. Summer will be here, and with it our need for adequate hydration, and protection from the sun. Let friends and family know where and when you'll be out there, and if the opportunity arises, being out with a friend might be a welcome change.

The number of our members who wear GTC singlets in races is impressive, so keep it up. Personally, it spurs me on to catch up to others wearing them. Perhaps we'll have a chance for friendly competition at one of our All Comers meets this year!

Thanks for all you continue to do for the GTC.

Jim Roberts



GTC MEMBERS MEETING: APRIL RECAP

In April, Grant Banks, physical therapist and co-owner of Active Alliance Physical Therapy, entertained us with an interactive “training” session on how to avoid, and treat, tendon injuries in runners.

A number of us experience a tendon injury in our running careers. This was an excellent opportunity to learn about the function of our tendons, and exercises that decrease the likelihood of injury.

By asking us to demonstrate our own strength, flexibility, and control using selected standing postures, Grant quickly illustrated areas of improvement necessary for protecting those tendons!

After Grant's presentation, GTC president Jim Roberts honored one of our own: Sandi Hardaway. Sandi received a commemorative plaque and a gift certificate for a new pair of running shoes at Greenville Running Company for her years of financial management of our club. Sandi retired from that responsibility this year.

Our next Members Meeting is on Monday, May 6th at the G.O. A.T. Bar and Grill, 1021 S. Main Street in Greenville. We look forward to seeing you there!





GTC ALL-COMERS MEETS

A FAMILY'S PERSPECTIVE

By Ashley McCauley Pearce

A fun family tradition is what the Greenville Track Club All Comers Meets have been for me. A tradition that I brought from my childhood to my life now with my husband and four boys. I found my love for running at a young age as I participated weekly each summer in the All Comers Meets. I was able to practice and learn about running in a fun and encouraging environment each summer which led me to joining my middle school cross country team. I then ran through high school and college. These meets were such a joy for me as a child that my husband and I started taking our boys each summer. Now, our oldest has started running for his middle school. As a kid I was most excited about getting the ribbons. I kept mine hanging in my room until I went to college. Now my kids enjoy collecting their ribbons. I love that the Greenville Track Club has continued to put on these family friendly track meets year after year."



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

by Bill Keesling, Founder

The seeds for a series of summer track and field meets at Furman University were planted while I was a grad assistant track coach at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. I arrived with my family in Greenville around Labor Day of 1969. I had just been hired as the Furman Track and Cross Country Coach. While coaching at UT I had seen the impact that the Knoxville Track Club had on the university track and cross country program. In the back of my mind I had the desire to see that process in place in Greenville and at Furman.

After getting my feet on the ground for a couple of years, in April of 1972 the Greenville Track Club was formed. Memory fails, but records indicate that that summer or the summer following GTC All-Comers track meets were being held on the Furman Track each week starting in late May through July. While it took a little time for this to catch on, these meets became full track meets with most all events on the track and in the field. Meet records were maintained and sometime before 1978 a Meet of Champions was held at the end of the summer.

Obviously, it took some time for the word to get out that this was happening each week. My recollection was that we had these meets on Tuesday evenings but those with better memories may correct me. According to a research document done back in 2013 by Duncan McArthur, first Secretary/Treasurer of the GTC, attendance at the meets began with "several" participants and by 1977 150 or more were racing, throwing and jumping. These numbers were helped greatly by a number of summer camps that came from western North Carolina each week!



GET ON TRACK

THE GTC ALL COMERS SUMMER SERIES

By: Susan Heiser, 2023 & 2024 June Meet Director

The Greenville Track Club has offered more than 50-years of All Comers Track Meets, an important part of our running community since their start in 1973. Over the years the week night and locations have varied, but the format and family-friendly atmosphere have been maintained. All Comers meets are community track meets for everyone—all ages, all abilities— and no prior experience required. **The 2024 GTC All Comers Summer Series will take place on Tuesday evenings starting at 6:00pm throughout the months of June at Eastside High and July at Greenville High.** Registration opens at 5:30pm and the 10 minute warm-up begins at 6:00pm. No meet will be held on July 2nd due to the 4th of July holidays.

These meets are informal and offer a wide variety of running events for children and adults. They are intended to provide a fun and relaxed atmosphere where people can bring friends and family to compete in their favorite track events.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE: Simply come to the track, complete the registration and waiver form, then head to the start line for the events of your choosing — as many or as few events as you like. Entry is FREE for current GTC members and all youth aged 17 and under. The non-member fee is \$5.00 per meet. All participants must complete the registration and waiver form, either on-line or in person, before they participate in their first meet of the series. From then on, participants simply add their names to the sign-in sheet at each meet. (NOTE: Families can list everyone on a single registration form. Individual participants 17 and younger must have their waiver signed by a parent or guardian.) Please arrive early to complete your form or...save time and register [online](#) .

WHY PARTICIPATE: The GTC All Comers meets are a one of a kind experience, an excellent opportunity to introduce family and friends to a low-key track meet, and a fun way to spend a summer evening. Many people come to the All Comers meets to learn about track, try a new event, practice their race skills, use a race as a workout or time trial, spend time with friends, de-stress after work, get exposure to a structured track meet, or simply have fun while exercising.

WHAT TO EXPECT: Each meet features a 10 minute self-paced group warmup jog, starting at 6:00pm, and follows with our youngest participants, 5 and younger, in the 50 meter dash. This is followed by the family 100 meter relay, which matches a 5 and younger competitor with a parent or older sibling. The family relay starts with the parent on the 100 meter start line and the 5 or younger athlete at the 50 meter exchange. At the “go”, the parent runs to the youth athlete, and they can either slap hands in exchange or grab hands and complete the race together. The toddler and youth events are especially fun and heartwarming to watch, as are the other multi-generational races that provide a shared family experience, so rare in sports.

All results are unofficial and not published. Athletes, parents or coaches are responsible for recording their athlete’s finish times. Result cards will be available at the sign-in table for those who want to take note of their results. Participation ribbons are offered to all finishers 10 years and younger at the finish of each race. The meet schedule generally follows the format of a formal track meet and is designed to alternate between sprint and distance events so that athletes have a little time to recover between events. There will be eight track events contested at each meet.



ORDER OF TRACK EVENTS

- 10 minute warm-up/jog along
- 50 meter dash (5 years & younger)
- Family 100 meter relay (5 years & younger) 100 meter (heats run in lanes)
- 1 mile (2 heats - fast heat 1st)
- 400 meter (heats run in lanes)
- 800 meter (heats - waterfall start)
- 200 meter (heats run in lanes)
- 3200 meter

Heats are formed at the start-line before each event, with consideration given to grouping by age, gender, speed and field size in order to provide the best competition for all. Sprint heats are run in order from youngest to oldest, and the 1 mile is run with the faster heat first (typical estimated times of 6:30 min. or faster). For the 3200 meter, athletes who are jogging are requested to run in lanes 3-6. Drinking water will be available near the finish line, and ice treats may be provided on hot evenings. All events will be contested rain or shine, however, meets may be delayed or canceled in the event of a lightning strike within 10 miles of the track facility.

HOW TO REGISTER: Registration tables will be located near the entrance to the track close to the finish line. Unlimited participation is included with your registration.

- 1) Complete the GTC All Comers Summer Series registration and waiver form (good for the whole series). This can be completed in person or [online](#) .
- 2) Pay fees in person or online (required every meet). GTC members are FREE. A \$5.00 per meet fee will be charged to Non-members 18 and older. All youth 17 years and younger are FREE.
- 3) Add your name to the specific meet sign up sheet or register for each meet on-line (required at every meet).

HOW TO HELP: Volunteers are the key to the success of this series. Volunteering is a fun way to be involved and watch the competition while helping. Volunteers are needed to manage registration, organize heats, start races, run the time clock, call out splits and hand out participation awards (youth 10 and under). Any time you are not busy, cheer on the competitors, young and not-so-young, as they give their best!

Please sign up [online](#) and expect a commitment of 1.5 to 2 hours at each meet. Experienced club members will teach you how to do your task. Many thanks to the volunteers who have served as race directors, registration coordinators, announcers, or meet officials over the past 50 years, as well as those who choose to serve in the future.

The GTC All Comers Summer Series provides opportunities for youth, open and masters athletes to gain fitness and experience while having fun as part of our track and field community. Please consider joining us at the track this summer.

Come participate, watch, volunteer!

GTC YOUTH RABBITS

By Ashley Lavelle

The spring is starting off with a bounce and a bound, as the Rabbits are heading into a brand-new running session! The Rabbits youth running group has started their spring practices which will “run” from March 25-April 17. The Rabbits will then take 2 weeks off, and then kick off the summer session from May 9-July 19.

For the **spring session**, the Rabbits are excited to actually compete in the Eastside JV Track Meet, as well as participate in the Reedy River 5k race! The spring session will also continue to offer guest speakers, to further the kids’ knowledge of running in the community. The **summer session** will focus on training for the Red, White, and Blue Shoes 5k GTC race, and participating in the GTC Tuesday night All Comers summer meets at Eastside High School in June, and Greenville High School during July. There will also continue to be special speakers, water balloons, and popsicles!

The Rabbits running group strives to create a fun and educational learning environment where kids can learn the basics of running, while also being challenged to run faster, further at their own pace. No workout is ever the same, and the coaches work hard to keep the workouts fun. Workouts might include a scavenger hunt, water balloons (the Rabbits’ favorite!), relays, or a traditional fartlek. All of our coaches have a background in youth education or running, and work with each child to be successful in the sport of running.

Our group also works with these runners to stress important principles that they will need to develop as they age to include: the importance of team work, sportsmanlike conduct, respect, discipline, and the ability to work with others who may be different than themselves.

Our group continues to grow, as we had a record signup of 42 children for the spring session! We love to see this growth, and encourage others to come join us. See the [website](#) for additional information, or [email](#) Coach Ashley. We hope to see you out there!



GTC SC OPEN & MASTERS TRACK & FIELD CLASSIC

By Jim Roberts

On June 1st, at Eastside High School, over twenty-five different track and field events will be contested. Over the years this meet has attracted athletes of all levels from beginners to Olympic trial and medal winners from more than 10 states.

Of all the many club events, this meet may be the most fan accessible. If you’ve never seen running, throwing, and jumping events in one place, you will be entertained.

For the 7th time the USATF SC Association has asked our meet to be the South Carolina Association Open & Masters Track & Field Championships. That is a testament to the quality of athletes, volunteers and officials that GTC has established over the years of this annual event.

Last year there were 403 entries - the 2nd highest since I’ve been the meet director. Putting on a meet like this is impossible without numerous volunteers and officials: up to 15 officials and 25 volunteers are needed. If you are interested in volunteering for some or all of this event, please sign up [here](#).

For more information, visit our [website](#).



GREENVILLE TRACK CLUB-ELITE HIGHLIGHTS

By Mike Caldwell



Weitzel and Mastandrea early in the race.



Davonte Jett-Reynolds (#4) during pre-race check-in.



Garcia, Mastandrea and Weitzel post race.

FEBRUARY

Jack Mastandrea ran 2:18:46 on a bright and sunny Saturday morning in Orlando, FL to place 46th in the 2024 USA Olympic Team Trials Marathon. Seeded near the back of the 200 starters with a personal best time of 2:17:28, run in Ottawa, Ontario in 2022, Jack used a “start conservative” race plan in the warm weather conditions. He passed 10 miles in 52:10 and the halfway point (13.1 miles) in 1:08:28. Jack maintained that pace through 19 miles before slowing slightly over the final seven miles.

Jason Weitzel continues to be ranked first in the most recent South Carolina Road Race Rankings, published by USATF State Record Keeper Bill Marable. Jason is ranked ahead of Greenville’s James Quattlebaum, who previously led the rankings for much of the past couple of years. It is the fourth consecutive month that Weitzel has ranked first among the state’s road racers. His training partner and teammate, Eddie Garcia, remains third in the rankings.

Davonte Jett-Reynolds ran a personal best of 8:00.03 in the 3000 meters at the Hemery Valentine Invitational on Saturday night. Running on what is considered the fastest indoor surface in the country at Boston Univeristy’s Indoor facility, Davonte placed in a tie for 31st overall among the 160 competitors in the 3000m event. He improved his PB by 2.67 seconds and his Seasonal Best by 3.73 seconds. He placed fifth in his heat of twenty athletes.

MARCH

Eduardo Garcia ran a personal best 45:14 to place 10th in the USATF 15K Road Championships in Jacksonville’s Gate River Run. It was 64 degrees with 95% humidity at the 8:00 am men’s start near Jacksonville’s Fairgrounds. Eddie passed 5K in 14:48 and 10K at 30:03 before the climb up the Hart Bridge, also know to runners as the “Green Monster” for its elevation and placement during the final third of the race. After cresting the bridge at 8.3 miles he was able to run the final mile in 4:30 as he finished next to TIAA Bank Stadium, home of the Jacksonville Jaguars. Eddie averaged 4:51 per mile and 3:01 per kilometer. The time was a new GTC-ELITE program record for a 15K race. There were 11,786 finishers in the 15K race, which is the largest road race in Florida.

Ryan Drew and Jack Mastandrea placed third and fourth in the Oskar Blues Four Miler in Brevard, NC. Ryan ran 18:49 (4:43 per mile) and Jack 18:53 (4:44 per mile).

Davonte Jett-Reynolds and Ryan Drew opened their outdoor track season by placing 4th and 6th in the 1500-meter event at the 49er Classic in Charlotte, NC. Jett-Reynolds closed well with a sub-2:00 final 800 and finished with a time of 3:47.98. He passed his teammate Drew over the final 120 meters as Drew finished at 3:48.94. Both runners dropped down in distance to the 1500 as they prepare for upcoming 5,000s.

Davonte Jett-Reynolds ran 13:57.94 to set a new personal best for 5,000 meters at the Raleigh Relays on Thursday night. On an almost perfect Carolina evening with no wind and very deep fields of competitors, Jett-Reynolds placed 10th in his heat (the 7th of 9th 5000m heats). After passing 3000m in 8:21.74 he covered the final 2000 in 5:36.2. Davonte covered the penultimate lap in 1:04.47, but slowed considerably over the final 150 meters (final 200 at 36.9). His previous PB was 13:59.44.

APRIL

Jack Mastandrea ran a personal best of 29:03 to lead a trio of Greenville Track Club-ELITE athletes to top 15 placings in the 47th Cooper River Bridge Run 10K in Charleston, SC. On an unusually brisk, and windy, Saturday morning Mastandrea covered the initial 5K, including the 5.6% uphill grade (575 feet elevation change) on the bridge, in 15:05 before running 13:58 over the final half (5K) of the race to place 12th overall. He was followed by teammates Jason Weitzel (14th) at 29:24 and Eduardo Garcia (15th) at 29:31. Weitzel’s time was only two seconds shy of his personal best of 29:22, run here in 2022. Garcia’s time was 26 seconds faster than his previous road 10K PB of 29:57, run here in 2019 and at Northport, NY’s Cow Harbor 10K in 2023. Mastandrea was the fourth American citizen to finish in a deep international field, while Weitzel and Garcia were the 6th and 7th Americans. The top seven finishers were of African heritage as was ninth place. Mastandrea’s time is a new program record for Greenville Track Club-ELITE for the 10K road distance.

Greenville Track Club-ELITE was established in 2012 and is in its second decade as a post-collegiate, Olympic-development program.



TRAINING TIPS FROM GTC-ELITE

By Mike Caldwell

We have heard many runners express statements similar to “Why should I run a 5K when my goal is the Half Marathon?” Or, “I don’t like 5Ks because they hurt.”

Many of those runners will never reach their potential in their goal race, because they are not optimizing their racing capacity by not racing at shorter distances. One of our philosophies within Greenville Track Club-ELITE is to train and race at shorter distances to improve at our goal distances.

Our marathoners train and race at the 5K, 10K, 15K and Half Marathon distances to improve their marathon times. Does that mean we don’t do marathon-specific training? Of course not. But developing the capacity to run fast at the shorter distances only enhances their ability to run faster marathons.

For the non-elite runner the same philosophy should hold true. If your goal is a Half Marathon, then you should include some 5K and 10Ks in your training/competitive plan. Why does the shorter distance race seem to “hurt” more? In reality it shouldn’t since the duration of time spent running is much shorter. It could be that you need to push yourself to run at a faster pace. Frankly, you shouldn’t be “sprinting” at those distances (until the final portion of the race, anyway). So it seems that attempting to run at a faster pace is the issue.

That begs the question, “Are you including interval-type sessions and/or tempo runs into your training program? Both types of training are essential to optimize your training.

Interval actually refers to the rest or recovery period between faster/intense efforts during a workout. Hence, the rest interval. However, “intervals” are now commonly referred to training protocol. Usually an interval workout consists of faster running for two to five minutes with a specific time for recovery. For example: 5 x 800 meters with 2 minutes rest between each 800.

Sometimes such a workout is labeled “repeats”. We usually refer to “repeats” or “repetitions” to shorter periods of duration or distance covered such as 200, 300 or 400 meters. Due to the more intense effort and the utilization of the glycolytic energy system, the rest/recovery period may be equal to or longer than the actual distance segment run.

By including “repetitions” and/or “interval” training in your program you prepare yourself to be able to run faster. It is fairly common to include training speeds much faster than your current race pace. When that is done properly, the actual race pace seems more achievable.

We discussed “tempo” runs in the February issue and these types of runs are an excellent method for your body to use lactate as a fuel source and therefore not slow down in the later portions of your race.

These types of workouts will also allow you to race at the 5K and 10K distances without so much perceived “hurt.”

We would recommend including a few 5Ks and at least one 10K in your buildup to a Half Marathon. You may be surprised that your average pace in the HM is easier and probably faster.



MEET A MEMBER: VINCE HERRAN

By Bill Blask

B: How long have you been a member?

I joined the Greenville Track Club about 40 years ago. I think we're lucky here in Greenville, to have such a strong track club. The club is a continuation of my team running since high school in Charlotte at Myers Park and college in Raleigh at NC State. It was the Reedy River Run in 1979 that got me going again.

B: Preparing the February newsletter with Lydia today, we realized that you are number one in the 2023 Running Series for the men's 70-74 age group.

I've hung in there and won my age group a number of times, especially lately now that I'm older. I enjoy the Running Series and was for a few years its director until a recent hand off. I've probably racked up thousands of series points and miles over the years. I'm definitely a fan of local running. I typically like to do six or eight of the hometown races every year, so it's easy to do pretty well in the series.

B: What brings you to the racing venue? What's there for you?

If I don't race, I don't tend to push myself to another level. So, I tell myself that I have to run at least five or six races a year. Otherwise, I just won't train and run hard enough to stay age competitive. It's a great way to stay in shape.

B: Did you race also during COVID, some of those virtual races?

I did a couple of those.

B: What did you think of that venue?

I recall one near the Wittenberg school downtown along the Swamp Rabbit Trail. The race course was well marked and well organized. I thought it was an odd but interesting way to conduct a race. I prefer the whole crowd in a normal race, where we all start together. But I was surprised that it worked as well as it did. I thought GTC did a great job pulling that off.

B: Have you noticed any changes in either your approach to running, or your ability to maintain your racing intensity over the years?

Definitely there have been changes. It seems as I get older, I actually have to work harder than I did when I was younger to get results.

B: GTC, led by Mike Burchett, conducts Wednesday track workouts. Are those helpful for a "senior" runner?

Kudos to the Greenville Track Club for their Wednesday workouts! I've been a long time regular, maybe 20 years. The shorter, faster, interval workouts seem to help everyone. It's a part of my routine and I appreciate Mike's coaching and facilitating.

As a "senior" runner I also use elliptical trainers for low impact, indoor running. I now run a few days a week on the elliptical plus two days outdoors. The outdoor running is Wednesday evenings at the track with Mike's group, and a 5-mile Saturday morning run.

B: It sounds as though you haven't had to have any surgical work just to maintain your fitness.

Right. A little pain tells me to listen to my body and cut back or lay off as needed. Once I needed to lay off running for an entire year. My "discomforts" during running went away and I came back but definitely toned it down.

B: You've been doing a variety of distances over the years. Is there a favorite distance or venue that comes to mind?

There is. In high school and college, I was a cross country runner, so more than two miles up to a 10k was my sweet spot. I also joined my buddies from the NC State team to do a couple Atlanta Marathons and the Grand Father Mountain Marathon. My fourth and final marathon was the Marine Corps in 1998 at age 46 (I hit the wall every time but still finished). When I was in my 50s I joined a Fleet Feet group of early Saturday morning runners. Our 10 mile weekly routine shifted my favorite distance to the half marathon.

B: And now that you are in your 70s ...

Now that I'm in my 70s, I've come back to where I started with 5K and 10K races as the sweet spot. I generally don't train or race more than six miles, to keep from overdoing it.

B: That sounds like the voice of reason to me.

I have my "cut off" distance. I would love to run a 10 mile or half marathon. I think I could do it, but I'm worried about the consequences. I've hit a good rhythm between my mileage and cross training.

B: If you had something to offer to people in your age group or anyone enjoying our sport, what advice would you give?

When I was younger I said to myself keep running as long as you can and be a lifelong runner. I thought then it would be easy because it's not people or venue driven, you just need a pair of shoes and little time. Now even though it's getting harder to say that, I still want to hold on to that mindset and do what allows my body to keep running for a

lifetime. Good shoes and now very soft thick soles like Hoka are part of the equation, "thanks" Fleet Feet.

B: There must be some emotional components.

There are. We talk about the runner's high, and I definitely believe it's real, that great feeling you experience when you run; but, I think it's better described as the absence of the way you feel when you don't.

B: So runner's high is really the absence of the non-runners low. You want to see yourself continuing to pursue this while you can.

Absolutely. I push myself, but I don't think about being competitive nearly as much as just being out there. In the older age groups, it's more about the last man standing than it is running fast. Showing up is 90% of the game.

B: Are there others in your family that are runners too, or is it just you?

It's just me. My daughter and son played soccer for at least 10 years; that's a lot like running.

B: Are you still working 9 to 5, Vince, or have you retired?

I retired three years ago when I was 69. I worked at Cryovac/Sealed Air for 42 years. I helped to start their running team. It was great experience as captain of our Cryovac Corporate Shield. I was also the GTC Corporate Shield director for a couple of years in the 90's and developed a good old spreadsheet scoring system that is now more automated.

B: Do you have any difficulties running with a group of people in terms of speed or pace?

No. Running is more fun as a group. We get together, we start, and all get back together when we're done. We have a little bit of social time and then off we go. You tend to find the people that run your pace. And if you're flexible enough to speed up or slow down a little bit, you'll always find someone to run with. I never found that to be a problem.

B: Have you ever considered running in some of these USATF meets, say - championships or regional meets?

I have done it a few times, including this past summer.

Jim Roberts encouraged me to try it. He thought I could be competitive and represent the track club in my age group. It was fun. I did the half mile and the mile. I didn't win it, but maybe at least scared somebody!

CORPORATE SHIELD RUNNING

By Cherie McCain, GTC Corporate Shield Director

With the first two races (GTC Run Downtown and Milliken Earth Run) of the 2024 season complete, this year’s Corporate Shield is shaping up to be our most competitive year. This is our first Corporate Shield year with THREE divisions, and the landscape is already looking very different.

Mother Nature significantly influenced the participation in the Milliken Earth Run or should we say ‘Mud Run’ for many of our CS Teams. Despite about a 36% overall no-show rate, we still had 30 teams which scored a total of 1423 points, which is as many CS teams as scored points at the Run Downtown. 280 of our 352 finishers were members of a Corporate Shield Team. Host Milliken closed the gap in Division I taking over 2nd place, Kemet closed the gap in Division II and Joy Real Estate moved into 3rd place in Division III. Divisions II and III have only 50 points between the Podium positions, and there are many teams within 50 points of claiming a podium - with still 7 races in the season there is plenty of opportunities for teams to make a move toward a Podium!

Evidence from the results of Milliken Earth Run proves that with the new 3 divisions structure, the teams which had significant increases in their total score was based as much on participation as it was speed. Increased numbers of walkers and joggers are helping to push teams into extra points!

The next two races on the calendar, [ZF Get into Gear 5K](#) on May 11 and [Sunrise 8K](#) June 8th are both open for registration!

To follow the standings for the GTC Corporate Shield, please visit incitecg.com.

Hope to see you all out there —running, jogging, or walking!

2024 CS RACE CALENDAR

- **May 11** | ZF Get in Gear Road Race
- **June 8** | Sunrise Run 8K
- **July 4** | Red, White & Blue Shoes 5K
- **August 17** | Edouard Michelin Memorial 5K
- **September 20** | BMW Performance Classic 2 miler
- **October 5** | GE Cross Country Race 6K
- **November 16** | Zoom Through the Zoo 5K



MILLIKEN EARTH RUN

By Beth Trenor

The Milliken Earth Run (this year’s re-branding by a number of the earnest but grinning sloggers was “The Mud Run”) was held on a very rainy Saturday, March 9th. This event is the second in the Corporate Shield season and is one of just two cross-country events on the calendar (the other being the GE 6k in October).

The Earth Run shares its race course with the Eye Opener High School and Collegiate Meets and was host to the NCAA Southeast Regional Cross Country championships in 2023. The Earth Run’s theme of sustainability mirrors Milliken’s commitment to sustainability in our “People, Planet, and Product” categories and is a way we can showcase our campus and bring together a community of runners and walkers.

The 2024 event was a memorable one, with threats of severe weather and thunderstorms leading up to the start of the race. Participants and volunteers braved steady rain and splashed through many huge mud puddles over the 3.1-mile course, but all seemed to have smiles on their faces by the end! As a relatively new Race Director, I’m proud of my organizing team, our wonderful volunteers, and the 352 amazing finishers! Thanks to each and every one of you for making it a success, and we’ll order better weather for next year!



CORPORATE SHIELD GE TEAM CAPTAIN: EMILY HEADLEY

How did you get into running?

I regularly make the joke that “I have been running ever since I could walk”. In 5th grade I won a race around the playground at recess and I think I have had the running bug ever since. I ran XC and track through middle school, high school, and then I ran D1 for Clemson for 2 years. Both of my parents and my grandfather were competitive runners, so I give all the credit to them. It has been and always will be a cornerstone of my life.

How is your own running going now?

I am currently enjoying running more than ever! A few years after college graduation I struggled with burnout, but I spent that time focusing on new physical activities (biking, swimming, volleyball, ultimate frisbee, etc.) and now that I have started running again I am more addicted than ever before. I no longer train exclusively for the 1600m and 5k like I did in college, but rather I constantly switch it up. I tried my hand in the marathon distance, half Ironman, full Ironman, I recently set a personal record in the half marathon, and I have my eyes set on completing my first Ultra marathon this year. I am really enjoying running daily and doing my best to stick to a training plan, but also giving myself grace - if I don't want to run I can bike or play a fun sport with friends!

Do you have a most memorable event?

I ran my first full Ironman in Chattanooga, Tennessee in September 2023. 2.4mi swim, 116mi bike, 26.2mi run. It was hands down one of the best days of my life. I have been racing for over 15 years and have ran times and races that I am very proud of, but nothing compares to finishing this first Ironman. My entire family was there cheering me on, the weather was perfect, the energy in Chattanooga was electric, all of my fellow racers were so encouraging and kind, it was all around stellar. The swim went significantly better than expected, I felt great on the bike, I ran the first half marathon faster than expected and felt perfect, and then BOOM. The Chattanooga hills caught up to me and I bonked. But even having bonked, I was mentally strong and happy and enjoyed every challenging step of the race. I finished the race in 12:30, told myself I would never do one again, and then the next morning I started Googling which Ironman I am going to do next.

Is there a person who has influenced your passion for running?

My grandfather; I call him Pop Pops. He has lived in Greenville the majority of his adult life and has run almost every race that is held

around the Upstate area. His favorite is the Paris Mountain Road Race because he loves how hilly and challenging it is. He has passed his love of running down to my mom, who then shared that love with me. My Pop Pops is currently battling dementia at 89 years young and he's the strongest, most positive, inspiring person I know. Whenever I visit him the first thing we do is discuss training, previous races, upcoming races, and share stories of his long, successful running career.

How did you become the GE Vernova Team Captain?

I started working for GE in early 2022 and immediately joined the running club. Shortly thereafter, the previous captain accepted a new role outside of GE and was looking for someone to take over. I felt extremely new and inexperienced, but I absolutely love a challenge especially when it has to do with running. I thought being more engaged in the GE Corporate Shield team would be great life experience and a fun way to meet new colleagues. This will be my first year being the GE 6k race director - with the help of Tori Head and Greg Brown - and I'm looking forward to having a great first race on the GE Vernova campus!

How do you motivate first time runners or what advice do you give them?

Sounds simple, but have fun! Running is such a mental game and I have learned that I always tend to run my best when I am in a good mood, running a fun route, or running with good people. Don't put too much pressure on yourself. If you need to run a bit slower, great. If you need to walk for extended periods of time, awesome. If you miss a workout, totally cool. If you feel great and run significantly faster than your training plan tells you to, perfect. The most important thing is putting your shoes on, getting outside, being consistent, and training your brain and legs to be accountable and to run (or walk!) when you want them to.

What do you hope to bring to the Greenville Track Club/Corporate Shield as a new Team Captain?

I am very excited to be a member of the GTC/CS squad! Running is a huge passion of mine, and I hope to bring a great deal of enthusiasm and engagement to the table. We are working on growing the GE team in size, both employees and family members, and I am personally working on spreading the word of how fun the running scene is in Greenville.

GTC RUNNING SERIES STANDINGS

By Bobby Richmond; Sponsored by Incite Consulting Group

HIGHLIGHTS FROM GREEN VALLEY...

Participation in the brutal 10 miler continued to grow this year with a full 143 finishers 13% while participation sank considerably in the 5 miler with only 35 club members 25% collecting their obligatory 10 points. Club members were much faster this year, improving on average by 2:24 in the 10Mi and 2:28 in the 5Mi. The improvement in both races was led by females who cut an impressive 3:14 in the 10Mi and 5:07 (1:01/mi !!) in the 5Mi.

The Green Valley 10 Miler is normally the premier race to pickup “sleeper points” due to lower turnout, but not this year if you’re in the F40-44, F55-59, or M55-59 point groups who had 6, 6, and 11 club members finishing with point group average times that were 7:29, 5:09, and 8:35 faster than last year respectively!

Point Group improvement was primarily driven by runners who didn’t run in 2023, but there were some notable year over year improvements:

- Kip Conner (M70-74) ran 6% faster this year in the 5Mi, improving his pace by 37sec/mi!
- Michael Kasha (M75-79) shaved nearly 45 sec/mi in the 5Mi!
- Victoria Michal (F60-64) cut 5 minutes from her 10Mi ‘23 time for a very impressive 1:27 chiptime!
- And although Weldon Humphreys (M80-99) didn’t run the 5Mi last year, he did manage to run the the extremely hilly 5Mi at virtually (+/- 2 sec/mi) the same pace as his Run Downtown 5K pace from just 3 weeks ago!

Running Series Standings through Greenville Running Co Green Valley Road Race are updated here.

FEMALE POINT GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

Female 25-29

- Rebecca Scamardo (110pts) ran an impressive race, collected her 60 “sleeper points”, joined the 100pt club, became award eligible, and moved into a comfortable 70pt lead!

Female 30-34

- Madeline Blizzard (60pts) clocked in at 1:11:01 (7:06/mi), the fastest female time in the club, to takeover 1st place in her first race of ‘24

Female 35-39

- Beth Trenor (110pts) ran a smoking 1:16:47 (7:41/mi) to build on her 1st place lead, join the 100pt club, and became award eligible already. Beth finished 1st in the club in ‘23
- Annelies Van Hecke (80pts) fortified her 2nd place standing with her 2nd 40pt finish in a row
- Sunday Davis (10pts) made her ‘24 debut by running a 32:07 (6:25/mi) in the 5Mi, the fastest time in the club, male or female!

Female 40-44

- Nathalie Baulain (60pts) and Tara Ross (50pts) made their debuts to the ‘24 season by moving straight into 1st & 2nd place respectively
- Megan Witt (40pts) and Cheryl Hicks (40pts) strong 40pt and 30pt finishes put them among the 5 runners within 20 pts of 1st in the division

Female 45-49

- Jennifer Ogle (60pts) returns to the running series by taking over 1st after sitting out in ‘23
- Newcomer Suzanne Byars (50pts) debuted by taking over 2nd with her 50pt finish

Female 50-54

- Debby Tyndall-Combs (70pts) leap-frogged from last to 1st with her 60pt finish, which isn’t a huge • surprise since Debby finished 2nd in ‘23
- Newcomer Gretchen Carpenter (50pts) made her Running Series debut by starting in 2nd place

Female 55-59

- Dawn Ferguson (100pts) isn’t playing around this year. She expanded her lead to 30 pts and joins the 100pt club thanks to her 2nd 50pt finish in a row
- Tracy Cook (70pts) retained control of 2nd thanks to her 30pt finish. Tracy won her point group in ‘23
- Lydia Dunn (60pts) ran a !!really fast!! 1:28:46 to debut ‘24 in 3rd place

with her 60pt finish and Theresa Webster (40pts) had a solid 40pt finish for her debut to put her in 5th this year. Theresa edged out Tracy Cook by just 2 sec/mi in this hyper competitive division!

Female 60-64

- Deanne Blas (110pts) is taking no prisoners this year with 2 out of 2 1st in point group finishes so far this year
- but, Victoria Michal (80pts) is getting faster every race, and moved into 2nd with a 30pt buffer over 3rd thanks to her 50pt finish

Female 65-69

- Series newcomer Dian Ford (110pts) has come to win with 2 1st in point group finishes, and a 60pt lead over 2nd place. She finished in a very quick 1:27:03, one of the fastest female times in the club
- And another series newcomer Pat Konstant (50pts) took over 2nd place

Female 70-74

- Patti Hunnicutt (110pts) is rolling into ‘24 with impressive back-to-back 1st in point group finishes, and a 70pt lead over 2nd

MALE POINT GROUP HIGHLIGHTS

Male 25-29

- Josh Ferguson (110pts) doesn’t want to finish in 2nd again this year, so he’s starting ‘24 with 2 1st in point group finishes highlighted by a smoking fast 1:11:00 (7:06/mi)
- Patrick Dekold (50pts) debuted ‘24 with a solid 50pt finish coming in just behind Josh with a 1:12:40 (7:16/mi) finish. This could be a really competitive series if Josh & Patrick keep the participation up!

Male 30-34

- Seriously... No male club member’s 30-34 finished a race at Green Valley this year?!?!?!?

Male 35-39

- Newcomer Phil Gregory (60pts) ran a really fast 1:10:25 (7:03/mi) to take over 1st place
- Last year’s winner Nolan Winters (50pts) debuted with a strong 50pt finish to takeover 2nd place
- And newcomer Chris Strub (10pts) had the fastest male 5Mi time in the club at 32:29 or 6:30/mi!

Male 40-44

- 1:01:58 (6:12/mi) pushing his lead over 2nd to 50pts
- Newcomer David Cowan (60pts) took over 2nd place thanks to a smoking fast 1:06:31 (6:39/mi)
- And Justin Childress (50pts) moved from last to 3rd with his 40pt finish



GTC RUNNING SERIES STANDINGS, CONT.

By Bobby Richmond; Sponsored by Incite Consulting Group

Male 45-49

This fastest division with 5 or more finishers averaged 1:19:37 in the 10Mi

- Newcomer James Lafever (90pts) expanded his hold on 1st to 30pts with a 40pt finish
- Last year's winner Dan Stoner (60pts) made his '24 debut with a 1:04:53 (6:29/mi) to pick up 60pts and move into 2nd
- And Cedric Potel (50pts) used his 30pt finish to move into podium • contention after finishing the year at 4th in '23

Male 50-54

- Another newcomer Carlton Sink (90pts) took over 1st place by 30pts • thanks to a really fast 1:15:30 (7:33/mi) 60pt finish
- And Doug Stout (50pts) moved into podium contention with a 50pt finish after finishing just 16th in '23

Male 55-59

- No sleeper points available in this brutally competitive division as 6 runners picked up only 10pts
- Bob Seedlock (110pts) is making a statement this year with back-to-back 1st in point group finishes. Bob finished in 4th last year
- Meanwhile Bernard Vermeersch (70pts) and James Bellerjeau (70pts) are actually tied for 2nd as James finished faster than Bernard at Green Valley, and Bernard finished faster at Run Downtown

Male 60-64

- Last year's point group winner Scott Murr (90pts) moved back into 1st with a 30pt lead after picking up 60pts with an impressive 10Mi time of 1:12:46 (7:17/mi)
- Meanwhile last year's point group runner-up Alfred Canteruccio (50pts) jumped back into podium contention with his 40pt finish and Reid Thomas (50pts) made his '24 debut with an impressive 50pt finish landing him just short of 3rd by tiebreak [race count]

Male 65-69

- David Smith (110pts) ran a smoking fast 1:10:46 (7:05/mi) in the 10Mi to stretch his hold on 1st to 40pts
- Last year's point group winner Pete Nevins (70pts) moved up a slot into 2nd with back-to-back 30pt finishes and a volunteer contribution at Run Downtown
- Michael Beeson (50pts) made his '24 debut with a strong 50pt finish that moves him into podium contention after finishing 7th in '23
- And William Webster (40pts) debuted for '24 with a strong 40pt finish putting him just 10pts from podium contention

Male 70-74

- Jim Roberts (90pts) used a point group win and volunteer contribution to take a 40pt lead over 2nd. Jim finished the running series in 4th last year

GTC RUNNING SERIES 2024 RACE SCHEDULE

- JANUARY 20: GTC Run Downtown 5K (50pt max) - January 20
- FEBRUARY 10: GTC Green Valley Road Race 10Mi (50pt max) & 5Mi (10pt max)
- APRIL 20: UCB Reedy River Run 10K (50PT MAX) & 5K (10PT MAX)
- MAY 27: GTC Memorial Day Mile (50pt max)
- JUNE 8: GTC Sunrise Run 8K (50pt max)
- JULY 4: GTC Red White and Blue Shoes 5K (50pt max)
- AUGUST 17: Edouard Michelin Memorial 5K (50pt max)
- OCTOBER 26: Spinx Run Fest M (70pt max), HM (70pt max), 10K (10pt max) & 5K (10pt max)
- NOVEMBER 30: GTC Paris Mountain Road Race 20K (60pt max) & 10K (10pt max)
- DECEMBER 14: GTC Santa Run 5K (50pt max)

Remember your GTC Membership must be current the day of the race to accumulate points. See the full list of rules at greenvilletrackclub.com/running-series. Running Series Standings are updated [here](#) in case you haven't checked them out yet.



- Mike Pedigo (50pts) debuted for '24 with a strong 50pt finish to put him in 2nd by tiebreak [Distance]

Male 75-79

- Last year's series winner Lee Cook (60pts) moved into 2nd with his 60pt debut for '24, missing 1st by tiebreak [Race Count]

Male 80-99

- Bill Blask (70pts) retook 1st place thanks to his 60pt finish
- And Weldon Humphreys (50pts) moved into 2nd by tiebreak [Race Count] thanks to his 5 Mile finish



INTRODUCING THE FIRST ANNUAL GTC MEMORIAL DAY MILE

By John Hart, Race Director

Monday, May 27, 2024

Many runners like to vary their race distances, often going longer than, say a 5k. As a reminder though, there are also race distances that are shorter, and therefore can be faster distances. Why run longer and slower when you can run shorter and faster.

While one mile "fun runs" have their place, so too do more serious one mile races. The number of competitive one mile races in the Greenville area are few and far between. The first annual Memorial Day Mile seeks to address this deficiency, showing solidarity with a national movement afoot — to Bring Back the Mile — America's distance (1-2).

The event also acknowledges our fallen service members on Memorial Day for their sacrifice in protecting the United States.

The race will be USATF/RRCA certified and will begin in groups based on runners' estimated finish times. There will be a group for all speeds, with equal opportunity for all runners to be up front at (or very near) the starting line.

So come on out and see how fast you can run a mile in!

Register at adventuresignup.com.

References

1. Bring Back the Mile: America's Distance. Available at bringbackthemile.com
2. NPR. A Campaign To Bring Back 'America's Distance': The 1-Mile Race. Available at npr.org



PARIS MOUNTAIN TRAILS 12K

By Mike Burchett

The Paris Mountain Trails 12k, the first GTC Trail Series race of the year, will be held on **Saturday, May 18, 8:00 am** at Paris Mountain State Park. This is a change from previous years, when we held the race on Memorial Day weekend. There will also be a slight course change this year that we are still waiting for the park to finalize, but we think that everyone will like it. Everything else - the patches, the pancakes, the great people and beautiful scenery - will remain the same. Registration is live at runsignup.com and race-morning registration will be available. Come out and join us for our 20th year of trail running at this wonderful venue!



45TH ANNUAL SUNRISE RUN

By Tim Stewart, Race Director

Set your alarms early for the 45th annual Sunrise Run! We'll be taking over the streets of Simpsonville for the annual homage to early risers on **June 8**. Come join the fun and start your weekend out right with an 8 km tour of the best of Simpsonville. We're proud to have the support of our longstanding partners, Run In and Simpsonville First Baptist Church, to put on this event. Run in the coolest part of the day on one of the fastest courses in SC! Eddie Garcia set the course record last year (24:06). Cool hat and socks giveaways get you ready for sweating it out all summer long in fine threads. I hope to see you all out there in the early morning of June 8. If you're not running, please consider volunteering or just cheering the runners on! It's a Corporate Shield event so come support your team and have a great time to boot! Register at runsignup.com.



SPLITS: THE LONG DISTANCE MILE

By Bill Blask

Run with me today on a long run. A long run begins, for me, sometimes with just a tickle, a thought: maybe I should do a longer run today. Maybe I'm tired of structured runs, with tempos or intervals. I need a break. Or maybe it's part of a training plan that has on its calendar a longer but less strenuous run.

But what is "long"? For me, any run over three miles is "long". For you it might be a different number. And for both of us, it may be a different distance on a given day.

We need long runs. Why? Because it lets us discover, and settle into, a sustainable pace. Our sustainable pace. It also shows us, if we are willing to observe, our weaknesses in performing bipedal ambulation — aka, running.

OK. Some people start running and just keep going. You ask them why, and they can't answer. Forrest Gump. I don't do long runs that way. There's a warm up, a getting-into-the-groove part, and a "last half" with a final "long distance" mile.

The last mile of any long run seems worth talking about. It always seems the longest. I call it my long distance mile. I'm usually tired, so it asks the most of me. It is where the risk of overextending myself is greatest. It is also where I have an opportunity to improve how I run. We'll keep that in mind.

Today it's 6 miles. I've decided I want to mirror the 10K (6.25 miles) distance for my next race: this year's UCB Reedy River 10K.

One thing I don't do for any run is begin the run by running. Instead, I move in place. I start putting mind and body together by using Bill Pierce and Scott Muir's Train Smart, Run Forever as a reference. About 10 minutes active stretching will do it.

Everything OK? All right. Now we begin covering ground, starting with a five minute walk to get all the parts and pieces in rhythm moving around. If that's good, we run.

But we're not committed to "long" yet. Our first mile or two will be a short-stride, easy-breathing, 150-160 SPM minimum cadence. (I'm pushing cadence these days.) Warming up our bodies to the point where we feel most of the parts and pieces.

And then...

...fascinating changes take place. Push-off strengthens. Hip muscles engage more fully and with more coordination. Float over the ground lengthens. Hip rotation on push off deepens (the arc of hip rotations gets larger).

And, feeling all this, we relax.

That's the start of our long run.

We settle into our pace. We are still adjusting, testing. Our muscles tell us they are starting to feel more comfortable. Our hips ... yes. That source of our stability. Our hips are beginning to more easily rotate in preparation for our push offs. That means our stride is a mess of small adjustments happening smoothly.

We start to let the legs work. Let the stride happen. Let things come easily. Then if we want, we can work consciously on other stuff just for fun. Or not. It's a pretty day.

Plus — the very definition of and requirement of sustainability — we are breathing in a rhythm sufficient to support this lovely activity without hyperventilating or gasping asthmatically. By now breathing has gotten simpler. Breathe in — step one, step two. Then exhale as needed. No need to think about it.

By now our pace has arrived. Hot dog! We're able to sustain our pace for the remaining miles out and back to Unity Park and the start of our run today. We've achieved one of our objectives!

Maybe we have time to futz with our forward lean. It comes back to me how hard that leaning forward balance actually is. I mean, IT'S HARD to get it just right. It all works when **a)** you don't fall, **b)** your back foot reaches its maximum extension before it starts pushing off, **c)** your hip reaches its maximum rotation toward that foot at the same time, and **d)** your push-off energy is just enough to attain or sustain the maximum speed you are capable of at this point of your run and keep you from falling forward.

Let's not futz with it today.

My watch says we're into the last two miles of our run. Since the real work is in the last miles, I'm going to focus on me, not "we". You are now on your own.

So far I have met one personal goal in my training: my sustainable pace. My chirping Apple Watch run app has been reminding me that my cadence of 160 SPM has usually been met. Objective number two done.

So I focus about ten feet ahead of myself and go into my head, at least for these last two miles. I think of other stuff like how I will fix the gate on the back porch before it sags enough to self-destruct and fall off. Or imagine myself during my last Air Ops ground crew gig during a local airport's annual airshow, a long line of

aircraft coming towards me, props turning, straining to see me, and me, hoping they do! Distractions so I don't overthink everything that's working. I do that until the last mile.

Mike Caldwell, GTC-Elite's coach, surely might have said this (or could at any moment). Training takes place when, on purpose, you test your limit on a given day for a given distance. For me that last mile is my training mile. The long distance mile. Every other mile is preparation for this.

Tired, I remind myself not to strain, just do. I make up my mind to add just a little extra energy in my push-off. I let my breathing - still inhaling in two steps — adjust its exhale as needed. Keep things smooth. My earbuds tell me, "You are on cadence at 165", but I just look down, and go.

Persist.

Then with about 400 meters left I slowly raise my gaze from the path just in front of my feet, looking as far as I can see ahead. I'm not sprinting as I usually do to finish a race. I am just finishing, but with whatever I intend to use of myself today. Not giving up any of the pace or breathing or energy I've been using for that last, long distance mile. Just finishing with a certain precision the job I set out to do.

OK. We're done. Nice job! After a cool-down walk, when we're home we'll do Bill and Scott's post-run stretches and roll-outs.

So, how do others run long distances, mile after mile? I use "long" runs to get all my pieces and parts comfortably in sync. Do marathoners, running all those many miles, also have that same objective?

Perhaps... it just takes them a little longer to get it done. But going a LOT faster.

10K does it for me, thanks.

Well, that's it for now. Y'all know my standard disclaimer. Shaker of salt, airing out my brain. Bottom line: don't be me, be you. Just put yourself out there. Be aware. Do that, and you'll be fine.

See you on the road.

Where's the eating and drinking part? The ibu and foam rolling? Am I missing something?

