

GTC NEWSLETTER

“Running is a panacea for a healthy life: physically, mentally, emotionally. Aging can be a healthier process due to this simple activity. It requires minimal equipment, allows time for reflection, provides an opportunity to get in touch with nature, incurs minimal cost, and breaks down age barriers.”

Cathy Troisi, quoted by Jeff Galloway in *Running Until You're 100*, Mayer & Mayer Sport, 2007, 4th edition, page 16.



BMW Classic 2M

PRESIDENT'S LETTER: STEPPING OUT

By Robin Walter, GTC President

GTC members,

Fall is in the air, and there seems to be a new spring in our step. Everyone seems busier than ever trying to keep up with their calendars. Events and obligations may seem to be appearing with a frequency approaching pre-COVID times! One way or another, we're stepping out!

This newsletter highlights a lot of great people that, one step in front of the other, have persisted in accomplishing amazing things. From the races that just happened in the last few months to the races that happened many years ago, the perseverance and determination carried these folks forward.

That perseverance carries us through life as well. Through the ups and downs, through the Zen and not so Zen moments, perseverance and determination gets us to the next step. We were and still are being challenged with a pandemic that went around the world.

Each one of us has traveled a journey, a journey that has been different for every single person. Still, we can choose to go forward together. Our club's purpose might be summarized as its goal of helping all of us members to do that. By recognizing our shared interest, of paying forward our goals, pleasures, and achievements. Of honoring our collective history.

This newsletter highlights a lot of great people that, one step in front of the other, have persisted in accomplishing amazing things.

We are more capable and stronger than we can ever imagine ourselves to be. We keep going, keep striving, keep dreaming, and keep setting new goals. And above all, we keep cheering and supporting everyone else

along the way. That's what our Greenville Track Club is for. We celebrate our own and others' accomplishments, large and small. We encourage each other in this shared interest and pleasure.

Now that we're stepping out, let's get charged up and pay it forward. It is my privilege to help direct our organization in support of your efforts, and in its recognition — as highlighted in this Newsletter issue — of some of your achievements.

Congratulations on stepping out and moving forward from some tough times.

We're here to help.

Robin Walter



Have any questions or ideas?

Please let me know at president@greenvilletrackclub.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

- [HALL OF FAME INDUCTION](#)
- [MEET A MEMBER: LEE COOK](#)
- [UCB REEDY RIVER RUN](#)

- [GTC FLASHBACK](#)
- [CORPORATE SHIELD RUNNING](#)
- [BMW CLASSIC 2M](#)

- [RED, WHITE & BLUE RUN](#)
- [SPLITS: STRIDE](#)

MEMBERS MEETING: 5TH ANNUAL GTC HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

MODAY, OCTOBER 4, 2021



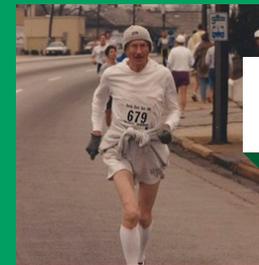
INDUCTEES



MICK MCCAULEY



(DICK) J. LYONS



**DR. RUFUS (RUDY)
KAY NIMMONS, JR.**



DIAN FORD



JUDY WALLS



MEET A MEMBER: LEE COOK

By Bill Blask



Lee Cook often appears in the race results listings as not only the top male in his age category, but among the top “age percentage” performance ranking of all runners in the event. He has been running since he was 40. He is a 76 year old twice-retired Army veteran, and lives in Greer.

B: First of all, when did you begin running in a consistent way.

I got started running late in life. I grew up in a farm community in western Missouri. In those days, running was not on anybody’s agenda as a sport, so I didn’t even think about running.

When I was 20 years old, I was drafted into the Army. The only running I was doing at that time was whatever the Army required for their physical training — the PT test. There were five events you had to pass for the PT test, including a one-mile run. I found out as soon as I got in the Army that I wasn’t in very good shape because that one-mile run was my toughest event!

Years later, as I’m approaching 40, I’d been in the Army quite a while and was stationed at Fort Lee, Virginia. By then they had changed the PT test from five events to three events, but now it was a two-mile run instead of one mile. One of my civilian friends that I worked with was a runner. He suggested that I start running with him, which I did. We eventually had a small group that usually would run at lunchtime. I had been running with this group for a few weeks when it was time for the staff members at the installation to take the PT test.

They grouped us into heats because there were so many of us — there were about 20 guys in my heat. I finished first in my heat

by quite a bit over guys who were mostly younger than me. I thought, well, this running thing must be paying some dividends because I’m in much better shape now than I was just weeks earlier.

And then a few weeks after that, this friend convinced me to run in a 10k race at Petersburg, Virginia, which is adjacent to Fort Lee. It was a point-to-point race that started out in the country and finished on Main Street in Petersburg. Since I hadn’t run any races before I didn’t know much about it. But as we entered the outskirts of town, I couldn’t believe that so many people had lined up along the streets to watch the race, especially at the finish line.

After the race I thought, well, you know what, this was kind of fun. And it had been a very competitive race. Back then, most of the people who ran races were very competitive runners.

So that’s really what got me started, and I just kept up with it from there. I just kept doing it because I kind of liked it. The only downside was that, after several weeks of running, all my uniforms started to outgrow me. After a while, I had no choice but to take all my uniform pants to the tailor shop for alterations.

In those days there was no such thing as cross training so all I did was run. I had a Casio watch that had a timer on it. When I ran in the morning before work, I would just set the timer, since I knew when I had to be back home to get ready for work. So all my runs were based solely on time rather than distance.

B: You have continued running more or less uninterrupted since then?

I retired from the Army after an assignment at Redstone Arsenal near Huntsville, Alabama. I was a member of the Huntsville Track Club and ran in a lot of their races as well as other races in the area, mostly 10Ks. After a few years, my civilian job resulted in a move to Greenville in 1994.

Shortly after I moved here, I tore the meniscus in my right knee, while working in the yard of all things. I had some pain in my knee and I knew something wasn’t right. I had an MRI done, and the MRI showed the meniscus was torn. The orthopedic surgeon wanted to do surgery to repair it, but after a couple of weeks my knee was feeling better so I opted not to have surgery. But at the same time, I thought running in the future was not going to happen because I had a bum knee.

About 15 years later, I retired from my civilian

job. By then, my only exercise was working out on one of those clunky cross-country ski machines. That thing provided a great workout but I eventually wore out the rubber rollers so that was the end of pretending to be a cross-country skier. I still felt the need for some type of exercise so I joined a nearby gym in 2009. At the gym I would walk on a treadmill as part of my workout, and one day I decided to see how running would work on a treadmill, because I had not been running at all for all those years.

It turns out that I could run on a treadmill with no real problem and was fine. It’s like one thing led to another and as I kept running on the treadmill, I decided to just start running on the roads like I had many years before. Of course, there was the Greenville Track Club, so I joined the club, and was soon running and racing again.

So there was about a 20-year break in my running, and that’s what some of my running friends tease me about! They joke that I still have ‘young legs’ because I had saved my legs for 20 years! That is pretty funny but I think there is some truth to it.

B: So you have legs that still to this day have a feeling of energy.

Yes, I think that’s very true. When I run, and I’ve told other people this, because of my age, I make sure that I do quality runs. Several years ago, I bought the book that Bill Pierce and Scott Murr at Furman wrote, Run Less Run Faster. Their concept is to do three quality running workouts each week and two cross training workouts. I don’t follow any of the training plans in the book precisely, but I do follow the concept of the book. I try to do three runs a week, plus three cross training workouts at the gym, and one day of rest. I don’t always get to do that due to factors beyond my control, but that’s what I normally do.

I guess I don’t feel my age when I’m out on the road running but there’s nothing easy about it. There are a lot of times when my legs say, “Oh man, you need to stop and rest!” But the mind says “No, you got to keep going because you’ve done this before and you know you can do it!” I’m kind of tough on myself about workouts and running and those kinds of things. There’s also a lot of self-talk going on while I’m running. In the end though, I’m happy with the way things have turned out since I restarted my running routine.

B: Have you experienced any injury after you started running following that 20 year lapse?

MEET A MEMBER: LEE COOK (CONT.)

Yes, I have. I had a case of runner's knee that required physical therapy. I've had IT band issues. Hamstring issues are probably my worst because that injury keeps popping up every now and then. I've had a couple of bouts with abdominal muscle strain. But I always get through those setbacks with the help of physical therapy.

I'm my own worst enemy when it comes to dealing with injuries. Part of my problem is that I'm terrible at backing off when I have an injury. I know I can't 'run through it' but I try anyway.

B: You tend to make a healing process a little longer doing that, I suspect.

Right, and to be quite honest I have missed out on some races that I've signed up for just because of injuries that popped up at the wrong time.

B: Then your common sense comes into play, I would think, knowing that to run further at this stage is just risking a much longer recovery.

Yes, exactly. There's some instinct in us that tells us that, but common sense can get a little fuzzy when you're trying to get mileage in prior to a race.

B: Runners get more aware over time of how to avoid injury. We get more aware of what is going on when we run. What are you aware of in terms of what is happening to your body as you run?

That's a good question. There's a lot of mental things going on as well as physical things, and so what I try to do is think about my running form, like keeping my chin up, my arm swing, cadence, foot strike... There are so many things to think about, all in hopes of keeping a smooth steady pace.

I try to think about the overall running form primarily to avoid an injury. For example, doing sprints and letting my stride get too long resulting in a hamstring problem. That's happened more than once.

B: I didn't hear you talk about one thing and that is your breathing. Does that ever come to mind?

Yes, as a matter of fact, I have experimented with my breathing and I'm glad you brought that up. In fact, that would have been one of the first things I should have mentioned. I've experimented with breathing patterns in the past. My normal breathing pattern is two breaths in for two steps and two breaths out for two steps. I have experimented with other ways of breathing, and the three by two I think works well for some people, but I can't maintain that timing. I would just default back to two by two. But breathing is a big part of what I think about, for sure.

B: Let's talk about the the courses that you've run.

The simplest, of course, would be the oval, or 400 meter track where I just ran a 5,000 meter race. Another, a tougher one, is something like John Lehman's race in the winter, that hilly 10-mile Green Valley course. But the toughest, as advertised, is the Paris Mountain 20K. My favorite though, is the Kiawah Island Half Marathon, flat and scenic.

B: What happens to your running style, your breathing and stride and cadence, when you encounter, let's say, a hill of some significance?

In the neighborhood where I run, there are lots of hills that I get to practice on. I try to stay calm and focused because hills can be very daunting, but I try to keep my normal breathing pattern without huffing and puffing too much, which is hard to do going up a steep hill! I've caught myself doing a "one breadth in, one breadth out" pattern on really steep hills which sometimes can't be avoided.

My arm swing is much more pronounced when running up hills than it is on flat roads. I also try to lift my knees more as I'm going uphill to avoid the feeling that I'm shuffling my feet. I like to look up the hill so I know how much longer I need to maintain the "hilly" form.

The bottom line for me on running hills is: a more robust arm swing, lifting my knees a little higher, and maintaining a two by two breathing pattern. This approach works for me on the usual assortment of hills, but the Green Valley hills for example — those are tough.

B: There are two things that interest me in what you've said. One had to do with with what I'll call 'perceived effort'. I think Dr. Daniels uses a term like that, almost like some kind of a sensor that we carry with us, which is in our brain that says, this is hard and this is easy, and everything in between those two extremes. Do you have a feeling as though you're consciously managing the level of effort as you go up a hill, or do you just give it what it needs?

I'm consciously thinking about trying to keep an even pace going up the hill because I know I can't go any faster up the hill. I know my pace is going to be slower, no matter what I do, so I think mostly about just getting to the top of the hill with a steady pace, knowing that I can quickly pick up the pace once I get to the top. I try not to over-exert myself going up the hill.

Frankly, since I run hills during my training

runs, I don't really mind them that much. I'd rather not have to do them, but it's not like, 'Oh no, another hill!' I just think about, 'Okay, I've done these many times before, so I know how to handle it.'

B: The other item that caught my attention that we didn't talk about was what happens to your stride going up versus going down the hill?

My strides going uphill are definitely shorter than going downhill or on flat terrain. I try to pick up the cadence a little bit. And I do that a lot, even on flatter runs. That's why I sometimes think about cadence because I try to hit that 180-steps per minute mark. My Garmin watch tells me that my normal cadence is around 175 or something like that. Overall, I try to keep the cadence steady going uphill, as opposed to striding out farther.

B: Your cadence seems to be one of the things you worked with as a runner.

Yes, I actually think about cadence quite a bit, just doing a normal run. I had not really focused on speed work at all in the past but the last couple of years I've picked up on doing speed work. I noticed that when I pick up the pace, I can get up to about 185 steps per minute for cadence so it does make a difference. Sometimes I think my strides are too long, so I need to shorten my strides but increase my cadence, and I actually do that. Mentally, I can tell. Okay, now I'm taking shorter steps but they're faster.

B: When you are aware of that whole process of running, let's come back to your stride. Do you think of your foot reaching further out in front, or are you pushing off more strongly behind you?

actually think more about the push off than reaching out, and that's what I've tried to do, to 'toe off'.

B: Which is where you get some of the power in your running stride.

Yes, and I think more about the push off and follow through than stepping out in front of me. A strong push-off combined with a quicker cadence naturally creates a longer stride. For example, on regular training runs, my cadence and strides are roughly 175 steps per minute and 1.10 meters but for a race the numbers go up to around 180 and 1.20.

I try to be more efficient because I know that, as a heel striker, every time my heel hits the ground, I'm doing a little braking action. That's why I try to focus on the push off. I've also tried to switch to a mid-foot strike, but I've never been able to master it.

43RD UNITED COMMUNITY BANK REEDY RIVER RUN HIGHLIGHTS

By Mike Caldwell

We've gotten really good reviews for this year's event. That was encouraging. Our sponsor, United Community Bank, was great. They did whatever we asked. Jersey Mike's people came in with 1000s of sandwiches. That was impressive. Our other sponsors also were supportive.

I think the differences this year were mainly due to being in COVID protocols. We didn't have as many participants, and that was planned, but then it went beyond that and we had more no-shows than usual. That was mainly due to the increase in COVID cases and positive tests over the last month before the race. I think we did a good job of spreading people out through social distancing, and the whole event went pretty smoothly. The start was good, the finish was good, and people cooperated very well in dispersing afterward.

I thought that the Greenville Track Club did an especially good job on the arrangements for the race finish. We did our best to try to have a really 'world class' finish, good signage, good fencing on the bridge, and overall expected to produce a venue worth attending. There was a start and finish in the middle of downtown Greenville - a great city - so it was special.

One of our goals when we're trying to set up the 10K course was to show off different aspects of the city and the course. We wanted to show the main historic part as well as to show off the trails in Cleveland Park, and I felt we we definitely did that.

The police helped us quite a bit within the city. The City of Greenville helped us set the course up as far as planning the route. Anytime they can provide those services to us in the manner that they did shows great cooperation.

Regarding the 10K course itself, there's probably at least six to 10 different courses that have been laid out for the Reedy River Run over the years. There's always going to be one or two good hills. I don't think you can find really a flat course that encompasses downtown Greenville unless you stay on the Swamp Rabbit Trail the whole time.

It also matters where the hill comes in the race. In the old days the Reedy River Run started in Heritage Park where the library is now. You had to come up the hills to get back. This year the first big hill is a gradual climb up to Fluor Field followed by a compensating downhill. It's nothing that's going to change your stride. Later we go up Westfield - that hill was new this year. Westfield came early in the race, around the 2K mark. I think the earlier the hill is, the easier it is. After 3K it's pretty much downhill or flat for the next four and a half kilometers. Then the runner has to come up the hill in Falls Park, but we eliminated the second half of that hill this year, and that made a huge difference.

And then there was the tough Broad Street hill: runners got it twice! The way the bridges are, we couldn't get away from that duplication.

This year's 10K course was, we felt, reasonably fast. One of our runners, James Quattlebaum, talked to me earlier about going for the record - it's just an event record because we change the course so many times - and James ran a good time. He might have gone



faster if somebody had been pushing him. But the competition was not as strong this year. I think that this was a result of COVID: we didn't really get the elite field we usually try to and, frankly, that was on purpose. We really didn't cater to a lot of other athletes coming in this year because of the expenses that we had incurred by canceling the race last year. Still, the first three finish times were really good, and then after that it dropped off quite a bit. However, that gave other people a chance to place up there in the top, which they did.

I think we had great volunteers considering the pandemic situation, but we probably need a few more volunteers at some specific points on the course for directional purposes. We want to ensure that every part of the course has someone there directing runners. On the other side I think a lot of the things we tried and learned this year went pretty well.

One big difference this year was a deliberate minimization of spectators. We did not encourage people to come to watch because of COVID. The planning process started months if not a year earlier. It was doubtful that we could even pull the race off. We never knew what the gathering limits were going to be - one time it was a maximum of only 250 people! Luckily that limit went away. But at the same time we didn't want large crowds of people. Hopefully next year we're back to normal.

We've already opened registration for 2022. As of this morning (9/30/2021) we had over 200 registered for next year. This year we limited registration to 1000. Next year we're going to go back to 1500. We definitely want the elites, but we also want to encourage runners in South Carolina to participate. Reedy River should be a showcase for the best runners South Carolina has to offer.



GTC HISTORY FLASHBACK: JACK GILMORE AND THE WORLD DECATHLON RECORD

(Jim Roberts/GTC Archives)

This is another ‘blast from the past’, a story from the first 50 years of GTC’s history. With our 50th anniversary next year, we thought our readers would appreciate this bit of our club’s past. Jack Gilmore is one of GTC’s runners whose God-given talent and just plain gumption gave the rest of us something to aim for. This story was originally published in the Spartanburg Herald-Journal, September 29, 1985.

With only the 1,500 meter run left in the recent Thomasville, North Carolina Fall Decathlon, Jack Gilmore had the answer he had been looking for. “I had been wondering how I would do in a Decathlon,” said Jack, 51. “I didn’t know if I would do that well or if I’d even like competing in one. But I did want to try. I’ve competed in Masters Track & Field meets for about 14 years and been in several pentathlons, but never a decathlon.”

“For some reason, almost all of them are held out West, and I wasn’t going to go that far for my first one. I’m just glad Thomasville had one. I found out I had been missing out on a lot of fun.”

Fun isn’t the only thing Gilmore got from the experience. In completing his maiden Decathlon on September 14-15, he racked up 4,626 points, breaking the world record for 51-year-olds, formerly 4,479.

Jack turned up for his first decathlon by setting one, and then another, American record in the Pentathlon. In Raleigh, before his 51st birthday on June 28th, he compiled 2,181 points for the 50-year-old record. Then, in August, he came up with 17 fewer points in the nationals in Boulder, Colorado, but still enough for the 51-year-old American Pentathlon record.

For his Decathlon experience, Gilmore had Hector Cisneros of Texas to thank. “Hector set the world record for a 48-year-old three years ago, and he kept telling me I had to try a Decathlon. He said, ‘Once you do it, you’ll be hooked.’”

The way he started out at Thomasville, Jack wasn’t so sure. He ran the 100 meters in 13.1, a time which pleased him. But then he did only a 16-7 long jump — he had done 17-9 in Boulder two weeks before.

He recovered to complete the first day in fine fashion, throwing the shot 34-3 and 3/4, clearing 5-5 in the high jump, and running the 400 meters in 60.7.

He got off to another slow start the second day, finishing the 110 meter high hurdles in 18.3. “I was looking for at least 17.5.” But then he hurled the discus 110-11 and 3/4, his best of the year. He needed a boost of confidence for the next event — the pole vault. “The last time I had done the pole vault was in high school, about 33 years ago. I couldn’t practice because I don’t even own a pole. I just started out at four feet, which is what the old guys do, and worked my way up. I honestly didn’t know how I’d do. But I guess I did OK because I did 8-10 and 1/4 — in high school, my best was 9-10. I took two jumps at 9-2, but I missed and decided I was too tired for the third try.”

But not too tired to throw the javelin 136-9. He then headed to the 1,500 meter run. “My worst event is probably the 1,500 meters, but I knew that I only needed a 5:40 to earn enough points to break the world record, and 5:10 is average for me. He finished in 5:10:24 and the record was his.

Jack won the Pentathlon nationals back when he was in his 40’s and he plans to compete in the national Decathlon, Pentathlon, and Track & Field meets next year. He now definitely has a taste for the decathlon.

CORPORATE SHIELD TEAM CAPTAIN: TONY SORRELLS

By Tony Sorrells, Techtronic Industries Power Equipment



I am Tony Sorrells, CS Captain for Techtronic Industries Power Equipment. Techtronic Industries (TTI) is a global leader in the design and production of power tools, outdoor equipment, and floor care products for consumers and professional users. Superior quality has been the primary focus for TTI since its founding in 1985, which has allowed the company to provide innovative products across a wide range of powerful brands, which include Ryobi, Hart, Milwaukee, Hoover, Dirt Devil, and more.

TTI's Anderson, SC campus is primarily responsible for the development, production, and marketing of Ryobi and Hart products. For the upstate, the original engineering and manufacturing personnel came from Singer Motor Products Division, where I ran on the Singer Corporate Shield Team from 1984 – 1988; we were bought by Ryobi Limited and reorganized, then bought by TTI Co. Ltd. in 2000.

I am the last of the original Singer CS Team still connected. After retiring from the SC Army National Guard in 2009, I realized at the Run Fest Spinx 5k that we had enough people from TTI to launch a new CS Team for 2010. We connected with GTC and so it began. Personally, I needed to maintain the short term fitness goals to stay active, maintain wellness and avoid the midlife bulge – Corporate Shield was a great answer.

As with all extra activities competing for time in your schedule, getting people to show up for the CS events is a challenge. With the typical work week tempo today, it is difficult to break into people's routines — you are competing with personal and family time. One thing that helps is each person must register and pay, a refund of the early bird amount is only for those that show up and finish the event. I'm still looking for a more efficient way to do the refunds, it costs about as much to process each expense report as the amount being refunded...

The COVID year was a bust for our team. Everyone is in a post-COVID rebuild mode for running team energy, but here are some ideas from my lessons learned.

TIPS:

- It does help to identify those that already have running as part of their wellness activities and build a core group. These will become your continuous recruiters.
- Coaching and encouraging or pointing them in the direction of someone that can, helps with team bonding.
- Create a community reference file for running and wellness information.
- As part of your sales pitch for training and participation, include stress management and benefits for mental health. Leadership buy-in really helps. Corporate Shield gives all levels of performance the opportunity to compete in athletic activity, to improve health and well-being.

MOTIVATION:

- Communicate, advertise, notify – create an email newsletter.
- Find money for shirts during the budget planning cycle. Shirts help with group identity. Finding money is easier if you have a champion in Marketing and team participation is integrated into the corporate culture.
- If possible, find money for entry refunds – finishers, early bird \$. Finding a way to refund economically is a challenge.
- Establish an employee wellness network for recruiting. The network will be a good source of new names of people discovered to be runners or just starting. Once connected, team accountability helps keep people coming back.
- Create an environment that helps motivate everyone into exercising and recruits others to do the same.
- Identify or create cross training options for your CS participants – a power class?
- Generating enthusiasm and winning the schedule battle to become part of each person's routine is the key – good luck!



BMW CLASSIC 2M

By Robert Morse

For sure the pandemic and all the resulting uncertainty have made it challenging to organize running events. I'm not alone in this, of course. Most road races changed to virtual, allowing a window over multiple days for participants to come and run on their own using some form of electronic timing app.

For the 2020 BMW Classic 2 Mile, the Performance Center was limited by corporate to a maximum of 40 guests on-site at one time to reduce the risk of Covid. We also opted to have a virtual event over two days. We set up 15-minute "corrals" in RunSignup with limited capacity so we wouldn't exceed the limit of 40, and to

BMW CLASSIC 2M (CONT.)

assist runners in selecting when they needed to schedule their run. We only had 179 participants, which was lower than expected — and the lowest turnout we’ve ever had in the 22 years we’ve been doing the event. A lot of runners just don’t like the virtual format, which is why we were looking forward to a “normal” event in 2021.

Things were starting to open back up in June this year and the Sunrise Run was one of the first “mass start” events since the pandemic began. Unfortunately, fear of the surging cases from the Delta variant persuaded some race directors to go back to virtual over the Summer. I touched base with the Performance Center and the CDC website on a regular basis and was encouraged that the Reedy River Run went ahead “live” just four days before our event. The CDC website continued to maintain that the risk of transmission while outdoors was low, and absent any mandates — or even strong recommendations — for us to alter our format, we went ahead as planned with one major change: we made the decision to cap the event at 300 participants. Early registration was very low — even when the price went from \$10-15. Apparently lots of people wanted to “wait and see” if we’d go live or virtual. Unfortunately we can’t plan for food and other amenities this way. A cap on participation allowed us to avoid crowding before or after the event, and to park everyone onsite (no shuttle bus).

Even allowing a 7% extra for noshows on the day of the event, we got to capacity within a few days. I think most everyone who wanted to participate was able to. We actively asked our teams to let us know if anyone could not participate so we could transfer their registration to someone who missed the cut-off, and we did quite a few transfers in the days before the race. There were a number of people who’d had someone in the family test positive for Covid and were quarantined. In the end we had 275 participants, so the “no-show” rate wasn’t that much worse than normal, probably due to the efforts at re-assigning bibs, and the fact that the weather was really nice.

Some history of this event may be of value. Fluor (then Fluor Daniel) had the most popular Corporate Shield event in the 1990s with a 2-mile course on their campus on a Friday evening in September. A road race of two miles is a family and non-runner friendly distance ... not as intimidating as 5K or more, and people seemed to like the relaxed atmosphere on a Friday night. It also helps having a closed course on private property. When Fluor stopped hosting the event, BMW was an up-and-coming team. We were interested in hosting our own event, so we offered to host an event at BMW in 2000. The Performance Center was the obvious choice: a running race on the same track used for high-performance driving courses. However, it wasn’t easy finding a route on the property that avoided timing problems or faster runners overtaking walkers. The track at that time was only about one mile around, so we routed the race around the front of the Performance Center. Later BMW added an extended lower track; after three more iterations we came up with the current course in 2013. Overall it’s a very flat and fast course.



BMW CLASSIC 2M WINNERS:

- Spencer Weigand won the 2021 race with a time of 10:37
- Debbie Tindall-Combs was the top female with 13:34.

The women’s race was very close: the top 3 (including Sabrina Kirstein and Cinthia Lehner) finished within two seconds of each other!

BMW CLASSIC 2M TEAMS:

This was a very good year for the BMW team. It wasn’t our best turnout ever, but with 105 out of the 275 finishers it was our highest percentage of runners ever.

- “Open” category (all ages and genders) BMW was 1st and 2nd with ZF 3rd
- “Female” – BMW 1st, ZF 2nd, Michelin 3rd
- “Masters” (male and female) – ZF 1st, BMW 2nd, ZF 3rd
- “Grandmasters” BMW 1st, GE 2nd, Michelin 3rd

ZF is still the clear overall leader in the year-to-date standings with one race to go, but BMW was able to put some distance on GE ahead of their race in October. Thanks to all for a season of great competition!





RED, WHITE, AND BLUE SHOES 5K

By Mickey McCauley

One of the things that makes Red, White, and Blue Shoes different from any other race is that it is centered around the national holiday. It gives people an opportunity to come out and celebrate Independence Day, as well as participate in a special event. The race is early in the morning, and that gives someone the rest of the day to enjoy the holiday, hopefully with family and friends. Typically, as we did in past years, we have festivities for the kids. It's a family thing, more than a lot of other races are. And we also had kids activities after the race for them to enjoy.

The course we set up in Simpsonville this year was a little harder than the one we have used in the past on the Furman campus, because we incorporated some of the Sunrise 8K Run hills. By comparison, the Furman Red, White, and Blue Shoes course several years ago was pretty much a flat course. Potentially a faster course than this year's. Same race, different topography and different experience for the runner. Incorporating one edge of another race course, the Sunrise 8K, in this year's RWBS course definitely changed the runner's experience.

We normally have about 1200 runners; this year we had somewhere in the mid 600s participating. Still a good turnout. It was great that Simpsonville allowed us to hold the event this year on their streets; the site of earlier races, Furman campus, was still closed to the public at the time we were planning the event. (Furman campus is now back open and our plans are good for next year at that site. Hopefully next year we can get the crowd back to where it was normally in the years before COVID.)

We really did not make many adjustments for COVID. We just set a straight shot for the start time. The fact of actually having a normal race was significant. We didn't have it for a while during COVID. To be there and be a part of the crowd, and actually see people enjoying themselves having a good time was wonderful. We had no complaints, everything went real smooth. Simpsonville police did a good job of keeping the streets safe for the runners. Overall, it was just a good experience to see people back together again. I did notice a lot of families racing, and kids running with their parents!

My grandsons ran in a couple of the Greenville Track Club All Comers meets this summer. It was a great experience to see the parent-child relay, where some of the younger kids were not only getting

exercise but enjoying the sport that a lot of us enjoy. Hopefully, that will continue for them down the road. Hopefully, their future interest will help our sport thrive in the years ahead.

Our schools provide that hope as well. Cross country is basically the largest sport in high school. There are more kids who run cross country in high school than any other sport, at least as of a few years ago. That's a good indication. Running is an individual sport. When you get into high school or middle school, it becomes more of a team sport, with cross country and track and field, scoring points and winning places as a team. But it is still running. I don't see running dying. We experienced a running boom 20 years ago, but even now I still see race participants increasing in numbers. It is an easy way to get your exercise; all you really need is a pair of decent running or walking shoes, and you can pretty much run, jog, or walk anywhere. So it's a sport that's easy to participate in. It's a sport that kids now in high school can carry on throughout life. Another high school sport such as football is certainly enjoyed, but people can't play football once they move into the real world. You can continue to run, and use it as a sport or simply exercise throughout much of your life.

Finally, I'll give a shout out to all our club members. We really appreciate those who volunteer for our events. We had plenty of help. It is a complement to the members of our club that they support the various races within our community. We look forward to having you back next year on July 4, 2022. Hopefully it'll be as big and as much fun as ever.

SPLITS: STRIDE

By Bill Blask



It is one thing to read about better running mechanics, and to see it in runners whose stride is, simply, beautiful. It is quite another to find that stride for oneself.

I'd already tried futzing with my cadence with good results. I'd also tried futzing with my stride, and crashed and burned.

But something good happened to me lately while running down the road. I know it's happened to others, but this was when it happened to me.

It all started by doing something different. Something simple. I added longer runs — 8-10 miles, long for me — to my weekly schedule. I used no special training techniques like Tempo Runs, just got out there and put in the extra miles once a week. Nice easy, steady pace. After awhile the miles got kinda boring. Don't tell, but I might have walked a little now and then.

Nothing special to report at first. Then I noticed that my usual after-run recovery aches and tweaks were becoming less of an issue.

A few weeks went by. Then there was something else. During those longer runs I was feeling each foot landing more solidly. That's my approximation of a hard-to-define feeling. The difference in how the landing felt got my attention. Then I began noticing more clearly where each foot was hitting the ground.

My feet were landing *right under my hips*. Not in front of them. Under them.

My stride had changed. It had moved where it was *starting*.

There was something else. I could feel my push off, the engagement of my calf muscles, more vividly. They were literally more of a factor in each stride, because they had to be.

In ways that I didn't fully understand, my stride was happening, not in front of me, but *behind me*. My stride had also emphasized its *end* point. Instead of *pulling* my hips, and my body, forward with each step, I was *pushing* it forward.

Now the good news.

My body "liked" that motion better. It was complaining less after the run. No hamstring night cramps. No abductor soreness. No rock-hard calves.

Here's an explanation that made sense to me. During those longer runs I was letting my body decide what was best. I was giving myself time in those extra miles to let go of what was not working for me.

Over time and more runs, my run pace now became more consistent. With my age and history, I knew that I was not going to be a front runner. But a consistent modest pace that could be injury-free and fun to run? I could be happy with that.

Inevitably came the usual post-mortem. What made possible that change to my stride mechanics? Was it new shoes? Nope — these had some miles on them. New colorful running shorts with a split side seam, adding zip to my hips? Yeah, that's a fantasy.

Well, what then? Was it that my hip muscles — gluteals mainly — were mostly dormant earlier, and "woke up" physiologically? Were they firing more powerfully and naturally? (Boy, that took awhile!) Was it a nervous system improvement in the overall coordination of my muscles? Was it simply a lovely training effect brought on by mind-numbing boredom and a few more miles?

Whatever the actual cause, could I now maintain this welcome change?

Well, it turned out that I could. I began testing this change at the start of each training run. What did my steps feel like? Did I feel that slight "jar" of each foot landing: was it under my hips? Did I feel my calf muscles active in each push off?

Now the last piece of the post-mortem: how to improve that experience. How could I make that new motion more efficient?

I quit while I was ahead!

At least now I had successfully addressed both my stride and my running cadence. I could measure the modest results in my race time splits, my training consistency, and not the least important, how I felt afterwards.

I could run with that. I got off my behind and went for a jog.

A possible takeaway for you? Each of us is different. Remind ourselves of that, and honor what our own body wants to tell us by giving ourselves time to listen. Occasional longer runs — ones that your body will permit — may be a means to encourage that to happen. Perhaps there's something in that approach for you.

See you on the road.

**"My stride
'feels better'?
I can run with
that!"**

