

TORONTO WOMEN RUNNING

Fall 1981



a newsletter

183 Huron St., #8, Toronto, Ontario M5T 2B6 (416) 626-5465

Running During Pregnancy— A Personal Recollection

For me, the positive effects of running during pregnancy were many, for they helped me cope with the physical, mental and emotional changes which accompany any pregnancy.

To deal with the physical - I found that due to running, I was motivated to continue doing most of my pre-running warmups (stretches, pelvic tilts, etc.), i.e., exercises which also maintained some degree of flexibility and strength necessary to facilitate proper carriage of the baby. This also minimized back pain that often accompanies pregnancy. With the tremendous increase in blood volume and in weight, swelling of the feet and other areas is difficult to avoid, but because running improves circulation, it must have had a positive effect on this particular ailment. As long as I continued running, I found that I could also eat a nutritious and plentiful diet without putting on too much unnecessary fat. Odd as it may sound, walking was more awkward in the final few months than running.

In the course of the inevitable major emotional upheavals, I found running to be a stabilizing factor. My job terminated with the end of the symphony season; I had to move from one city to another; I had to cope, as everyone does, with a change in lifestyle from one of relative independence to an acute awareness of future obligations; I went from 95 lbs. to nearly 130 lbs; I did not have to cut back drastically on smoking or drinking, although some people do, but I did often sacrifice the freedom to eat junk food, consume extra coffee, enjoy late nights. Therefore, running was one of the few things from my previous life that I could hang onto for it reminded me of who I was before this other being became part of myself.

I often had the feeling that I was carrying a time-bomb into unknown territory and wondered if I would be able to go through with it all. Running, which always did help dissipate tension and frustration, became even more necessary during pregnancy. I deliberately made the time I spent running a time to think positively. Also, I really believed that if the labour was to involve endurance, then running as an endurance activity would be beneficial. Considering that my body had reached mammoth proportions and the heat and humidity of last summer were sometimes unbearable, endurance was involved even in running the daily mile. My mileage went from 20-30 miles per week to 1 mile a day, and even this caused some raised eyebrows, family concern and, on one occasion, medical opposition.

In the last few days, particularly when Braxton Hicks or "practice" contractions became more frequent, I found that during running they were somewhat more intense - a positive sign that

some groundwork or pre-labour was taking place.

My expectations of having a healthy baby, of having an unmedicated labour, of having a home-birth or at least the best possible birthing experience were fulfilled. I will never have any positive proof that running affected this outcome but I know that it felt so good for me in so many ways that it must have had a positive effect on the baby.

In conclusion, running during pregnancy is not for everyone, nor are unmedicated births always possible or desirable, but I really believe that one should maintain physical fitness, especially during pregnancy.

If running during pregnancy was a man's concern, inevitably more research would be available to encourage and/or inform pregnant runners of the positive or potentially hazardous effects. However, until such documentation is available, I hope that some women will continue to run safely and cautiously throughout pregnancy.

Gwen Dunlop



Kris Cruikshank

Toronto Island Fun Run, June 1981

The Buddies' Column

If you'd like to find other women who run in your area, send us your name, phone number, area of town, and the time of day and distance you like to run. We'll print it in this column and hopefully we can get more of us running regularly!

Downtown Oshawa - 2-3 miles, evenings and weekends;
Elizabeth (416) 728-8117

Structure: What Our Members Want

Toronto Women Running has been operating as an 'informal' organization since its inception in 1978. Informal in this context means relaxed; a structure, nevertheless, but one which is not based on a defined constitution, with set rules or order of procedure to operate a club. The election or appointment of members as officers is an aspect of a formal organization.

The issue of formality of structure has arisen a few times in the short life of TWR. This concern with structure has been based on how well the club is meeting the needs of its members, how to increase membership, and how to get more members of the club involved in the operation of it and its activities.

In the Summer 1979 TWR newsletter article, "Expanding Our Scope", a general meeting was announced to discuss TWR's structure and to develop a clearer one to accommodate increased participation in the running of the club by all those interested. The meeting resulted in the handful of members who attended basically agreeing to maintain the informal structure of TWR.

In the summer of 1980, a questionnaire sent to all our members yield only a 27% return rate. The issue of structure was re-addressed. Members were asked to provide their thoughts on this matter. Generally, most respondents were not in favour of making the structure of the club more formal. However, there were just as many unsure responses to this question as there were negative ones. Also, the low number of returns makes it difficult to interpret that this is what our members want as a whole. Another point in this regard is that many of the answers were inconsistent. For example, some members responded negatively to the more formal structure, but were positive to the election or appointment of officers/directors.

What is important in these responses, I feel, is the comments that members gave concerning this issue. I wish to share these with you as opposed to providing statistics, as I see that they shed some interesting rays of light on the subject.

STRUCTURE: Do you think it should be more formal?

- It is a worthwhile organization with a superb goal; it should be made available to more women, so I guess all that structure is necessary.
- It would be worth trying again.
- This would probably be a good idea as the organization increases in size.
- This may solve some problems of getting others involved.
- It might be a good idea for certain people to have specific functions and to concentrate on them.
- No; formality sometimes spoils good friendly relationships among members.
- Don't care.

Many members responded that they were not familiar enough with the current situation to comment.

OFFICERS: Should officers/directors be elected/appointed for a set term?

- Officers should only be appointed for a short term and then let other members take over.
- I don't think people are well-known enough at present for election.

Half the respondents stated that people serving as officer/director should do so only for a set term of one to two years.

WOULD YOU SERVE?

- If I could help promote the concept, it's valuable.

Seven members responded yes, eight no, three replied, "not at the present time".

MEETINGS: Should there be more frequent meetings? How often, and could you come?

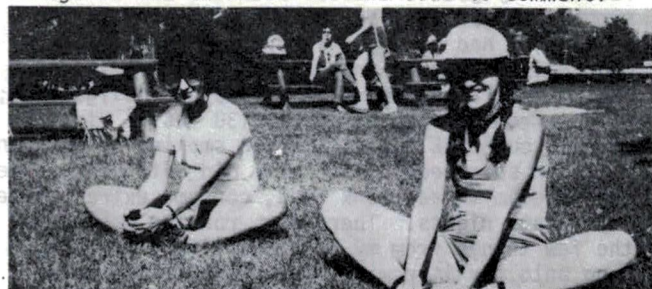
There were six negative answers, one "don't care", five said "try to come depending on time", eight said yes.

Frequency of meetings received replies of "once a month (seven members)", one said 3-4 times a year, and one said every two months.

CURRENT STRUCTURE:

- It is available to anyone who wants to be involved.
- For those interested in socializing it seems open for participation.
- Can't comment because I've not participated.
- Does good job considering limited resources; suggest weekly run from central point, e.g., Monday, 5:30 - 6:00 pm with social after.
- Doing super job keeping members informed; as club grows more members will become involved.
- Use TWR as source of information and do not wish to become involved otherwise.
- Yes, but relies a lot on self-motivation to get involved; open to more structure to see if it works.

Several women replied that they were not sure enough of the structure of the club to comment.



Kris Cruikshank

What does all this mean? As I see it, the question of structure is continually open for discussion. Personally, I can see the need for more structure for the purposes of involving more women in the direction and growth of the club.

We hope our current attempt at introducing a clearer structure (explained in your last mailing) will do this. The delegating of responsibilities according to events that will be organized will allow those of you who are interested in short-term tasks and commitments to become more involved in TWR.

We will continue to discuss how TWR's structure is functioning; its purpose; its relation to other running and women's groups; its role; participation of its members; and its direction. If you have any comments, concerns or questions regarding this issue, I would be most happy to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me at 536-7548.

Kris Cruikshank

Wilderness Expedition on Centre Island

Having captured the wandering reader's attention with such a stirring caption, WOMEN-OUT-OF-DOORS invites you to read the third episode in our short but spectacular herstory.

Last Friday night, a group of paddlers braved the inland waterways of Centre Island, infiltrating to the very heart of the R.C.Y.C., on their first W.O.O.D.S. (Women-Out-of-Doors) expedition. After plying our paddles for nearly an hour, we retreated to a Chinese restaurant on Dundas Street to pursue another common interest - food. The rest of the evening was marked by great organizational planning and general hilarity - particularly the latter.

Women-Out-of-Doors is a network for outdoors-oriented women who are anxious to network with any women who have skills or interests to share or who are keen on acquiring some of their own. In general, we are feminists and/or lesbians who are sensitive to and appreciative of nature and the out-of-doors as well as others who share the out-of-doors. We are also extremely amusing, energetic, and love to have fun.

If you are interested in helping plan a canoe, camping, and/or bicycle trip, please call Jane at 537-8752 for information.

Yoga to Unlock Body Stresses

Yoga asanas (postures) are not merely exercises or simply athletic experiences which improve health. Neither is yoga a sport since it is devoid of any spirit of performance or competition.

Yoga works for the person who practices it. Tensions in the body reflect tensions in the mind. These are nothing but repressed emotions, products of unresolved conflicts. If the emotions are allowed to surface, then the body can be free.

Yoga can be the key to unlock the known and hidden stresses of life which manifest themselves as pains in the body. The body then heals itself, health and sleep improve, and one has an increased sense of well-being.

Yoga is a philosophy. Not a dry philosophy, but one of action. It is an art and a science, too. By its practical application, yoga promotes health and refines the body, senses, mind, intellect, reason, will and even the soul.

Yoga is an exact science in which the anatomical and the physiological actions involved are thoroughly examined and systematized by study and practice, observation and experimentation. It affects the mind and the intellect, bringing in its wake health, knowledge, wisdom, even temper and calmness. Yoga molds those who practice it in proper life conduct by making each person the lord of his or her own self.

If this all sounds too good to be true, it can be asked, can the practice of yoga guarantee 100% security and a perfect life? -- No. There is no such security in life. However, the practice is deeply rewarding and even transforming.

Hatha Yoga is one of many possible ways to improve the quality of every aspect of life. It keeps the body well and eases tension by teaching the art of relaxation.

Sally Ker and Marlene Mawhinney

(Sally Ker is a yoga teacher at Aurora Highlands Golf Club and Huron Heights Secondary School (night program). Marlene Mawhinney is on the faculty for training teachers at The Yoga Centre, Toronto, and director of The Yoga Studio, Newmarket).

Tidbits

Next coordinating meeting: October 15 at 7 pm, Kris Cruikshanks', 55 Callender Street (north off Queen, 2 blocks east of Roncesvalles); potluck supper. Bring your ideas, energy, friends & food.

Yoga classes: Gwen Dunlop is compiling for the next newsletter a list of places which offer various kinds of yoga. If you have suggestions, call her at 531-5267 with details.

Cross-country run: Mother and son will be running across Canada commencing April 8, 1982. We require driver(s) who can donate their time and who would also be willing to help coordinate and assist us in this endeavour. The run is being done to raise money for a charity which is still pending at this stage. Interested people please call Judy Willmott at 248-5318.



Kris Cruikshanks

TWR is for you!

For \$5 you can join Toronto Women Running. Help promote women's running and join us in fun runs, clinics and races. You will be mailed the newsletter, which will keep you in touch with other women who run.

Name

Address

City Code

Telephone (home or work)

Particular interests (e.g., group runs, racing, special clinics, socials)

____ Enclosed is my membership fee (\$5 - 1 yr.)

____ Send me a "Toronto Women Running" T-shirt; enclosed is \$6 plus 65¢ for mailing.

Men's sizes: S M L

Send to: 183 Huron Street, #8
Toronto, Ontario M5T 2B6

Upcoming Races

- August 29 William Ewing Road Race 15 km
Viola Patterson
66 First Street
Orangeville, Ontario L9W 2E4
(519) 941-1205
- September Springbank International Road Race
SANCTIONED
London, Ontario
W. P. McInnis (519) 471-2933
- September 5 Sixth Annual Labour Day Road Races
5 km, 15 km Port Stanley
Robert Stormes
25 Butler Drive
St. Thomas, Ontario N5R 4Y9
(510) 631-2167
- September 12 Ontario Road Race Championships
SANCTIONED
Ross MacDonald School, Brantford
Gord Boyd
2 Harvest Lane
Brantford, Ontario N3R 5R2
(519) 753-8044
- September 13 Bell-Orillia 10 km Run SANCTIONED
Bell Canada
48 Mississauga St. W.
Orillia, Ontario L3V 3A8
(705) 325-2431
- September 13 Robers Baycrest Fun Run 10 km
SANCTIONED
Men's Service Group
3560 Bathurst Street
Toronto, Ontario M6A 2E1
(416) 781-8878
- September 13 Labatt's Island Fun Run, Toronto
Centre Island SANCTIONED
Carl Georgevski
55 Harbord Street
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2W6
(416) 978-2991 (bus.)
- September 13 Etobicoke Olympium Fun Run 5 km, 10 km
Lynn Hunter-Hope
590 Rathburn Road
Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 3T3
(416) 626-4154
- September 20 White Oaks Classic SANCTIONED
Richard Mahler
2223 Bennington Gate
Oakville, Ontario L6J 5Z3
(416) 845-5345
- September 20 Toronto Bonne Bell 10km Run for
Women SANCTIONED
Bonne Bell 10km
1 Rimini Mews
Streetsville, Ontario L5N 2S2
(416) 821-1244
- September 20 Matador 10 km, 20 km
Tom Read
248 Franklin St. S.
Kitchener, Ontario N2C 1S1
(519) 745-5151

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- September 26 C.M.A.A. Third Womens' Masters 5 km
Championships (women over 35 yrs. old)
Sunnybrook Park, Toronto (police stables)
Christine Walker
34 Rodda Blvd.
West Hill, Ontario M1E 2Z6
(416) 284-0695
- September 27 CFTR Charity Fun Run SANCTIONED
CFTR
25 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario
- October 4 Labatt's Toronto Marathon SANCTIONED
OTFA
160 Vanderhoof Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M4G 4B8
(416) 424-6923
- October 17 Skylon International Marathon
The Skylon
5200 Robinson Street
Niagara Falls, Ontario L2G 2A3
(416) 356-2651
- October 17 The Boardwalk 10,000 Born to Run
SANCTIONED
Born to Run
642 Bloor Street W.
Toronto, Ontario M6G 1K9
(416) 535-1531
- October 18 Labatt's Running Series Championship
Christie MacMillan
48 Mississauga St. W.
Orillia, Ontario L3V 3A8
(705) 326-7361 ext. 441
- October 18 Durham College Turkey Trot 5 km, 10 km
Durham College Turkey Trot
P.O. Box 385
Oshawa, Ontario L1H 7L7
(416) 576-7622
- October 24 Silver Relays High Park 5 x 5.2 km
Bob Madeley
726 Melton Drive
Mississauga, Ontario L4Y 1K6
(416) 279-1507
- October 31 Burlington 22nd Annual Road Race
Gord Rusby
472 Woodland Avenue
Burlington, Ontario L7R 2S1
(416) 637-7833