

President's Message



Recently I traveled to Golden on a Saturday and was somewhat surprised at the number of people walking around town and the number of people tubing on Clear Creek, the big difference? About 90% of those walking around

town were wearing masks and about 90% of those tubing were not, even when they were walking in town.

The most recent Public Health Order was amended and released on 8/21/20. Lots has changed with relaxation of some requirements relating to reopening of businesses and restaurants. Restaurants are allowed to have a percentage of their seating capacity based on several different factors while still maintaining social distancing.

It has been suggested that we have an outdoor meeting or run and encourage members to attend, which based on the latest Public Health Order hasn't changed the requirement that you do not gather in groups larger than ten and that you practice all safety protocols of wearing face masks and social distancing. I have looked into possible locations where we could do this but until the guidelines change and allow a larger group we can't do that, even though we have seen others violate the PHO.

Also covered in this document are the requirements for having meetings inside a room or building with some OSHA requirements relating to the air conditioning and ventilation system. What this

means to the BRR is that it might be some considerable time in the future before we can have a meeting at Avery or any other indoor venue.

With the help of some BRR members we are in the process of setting up a ZOOM club meeting hopefully in the next week or two. With Tim Cronin's help we had a "Share a Beer and Conversation" virtual meeting on June 1st and several members logged in and it was great to see some smiling faces. We are looking into having a special guest speaker for this meeting so plan to attend. I will send the info and the link when we have this in place.

Since there are numerous virtual races taking place now, including those put together by Bruce Kirschner and the Masters Racing Team members, and some actual in-person races, like those Lee Troop has put together, the From Da' Coach column this month is focused on what do you do about race pace if you haven't been training for speed?

I recently sent out to the members the proposed changes to the club's By-laws and asked for member comments. This process is now complete. Because we can't hold club meetings at this point the voting for these revised By-laws will be done online. You will receive an email with a link to online voting. After voting is complete members will be notified of the results.

Even though we don't know when things will get back to "normal", which limits our public image, we need to move forward and prepare for what we will do at that

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Boulder Road Runners

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President's Message, *continued*

time. As I mentioned in my column last month the board would like to have some input from members about their thoughts of other activities or programs that we could put in place to encourage runners to join the BRR. This is the next item on the agenda for the board of directors.

Several months ago I recounted how I was looking back to inspire me going forward. I know there are members who have had epic or memorable races, so put together a recap, with pictures if you have them, and send the story to our newsletter editor Lyle (lyle@his.com) so that we can enjoy.

—Coach Will

And some more humorous and inspirational quotes:

“Running is like mouthwash; if you can feel the burn, it's working.”

—Brian Tackett

“If you come to think of it, you never see deer, dogs, and rabbits worrying about their menus, and yet they run much faster than humans.”

—Emil Zatopek

And finally,

“The only reason I would take up jogging is so that I could hear heavy breathing again.”

—Erma Bombeck



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BRR WOMEN'S 60+ TEAM



Anywhere you can find a podium! The Pearl Street Mile COVID-Res Edition served as the USATF Colorado State Mile Championship in a very smoky atmosphere at Boulder Reservoir. Women's 60–69 Podium: Lynn Hermanson (USATF CO Mile AG (65–69) Champion), Katie Kaliski, and Virginia Schultz (USATF CO Mile AG (65–69) 2nd).

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Part 1: Speed kills! – all those who don't have any!!

from Coach Will Dillard



I know that many club members have been doing virtual races and in some cases an actual race. I am hopeful that we can see a return to more racing in the near future. When that happens will you go out and try to run at your previous speed?

This will be a two-part article that hopefully will help you prepare for upcoming events.

While you have probably heard about slow-twitch

(ST) muscle fibers and fast-twitch (FT) muscle fibers and Type IIa and Type IIb fibers and how these help determine just how fast you can run, all of that probably doesn't help to answer the questions, "How much speed work should I do? How often? How intense? How much volume? What type?"

Too much, too often, too intense will not accomplish your goal but will only set you up for a potential injury. The primary key to success is doing the correct amount of the type of training that best promotes the desired outcome. In the case of distance running, more endurance and more speed.

The objective of training is to bring the athlete to a peak fitness level at the proper time, with all the requirements for a good performance brought along in balance. What this means is that every race can't be an "A" type race, you need to choose a primary goal and use the other events as tune-up or marker races.

Fundamentally, speed is developed in two ways, stride length and stride frequency, there are no other options. To increase stride length you have to increase the power and flexibility of the legs. This is where weight work and stretching exercises can have the biggest impact. To increase stride frequency you need to develop faster reflex action and better coordination, relaxation, and technique as well as flexibility. This is where track workouts can help.

I have not been able to find the article that I read about what Bob Kempainen, the 1996 Olympic Marathon Trials winner, did to increase his stride length in preparation for the trials but here is a gist of what he did. He worked to increase his stride length by 1 inch. That might not seem like much but for simple calculation consider this. If he increased his stride length by 1 inch and he ran 1000 steps/mile at roughly a 5-minute pace over the distance of 26.2 miles he would actually "run" 2183.33 feet or roughly 0.41 fewer miles with the same time. He also taught us that you can vomit several times in the last 2 miles of the race, increase the pace, and still win. (Video evidence here: https://www.runnerspace.com/video.php?video_id=57408)

All of your speed must be built off of a solid aerobic base, this is what Frank Shorter, Lasse Viren, and Emil Zapotek understood and why they were able to reach the heights of success that they did. If you don't have the base you won't be able to handle the workload for gaining speed, and without the foundation of solid aerobic conditioning any workouts you perform at the track will not have the desired

effect. So to improve your speed you need to run as much as you can in your aerobic zone, which if you are using a heart monitor, as I have recommended in previous columns, you will be doing most of your running at 70–75% of your max heart rate (MHR).

Although it is advisable to keep some faster-paced workouts in your training throughout the year, the amount of hard speed work your body is capable of handling is limited. If you are training for a marathon you might be able to handle 10–12 weeks of speed sessions, but if you are training for a 5K, 10K, or 15K race then 6–8 weeks is probably all you will need to reach your peak speed.

Marathon runners should focus more on 800, 1200, and 1600 meter repeats while short distance runners should focus more on 100, 200, and 400 meter repeats. How much volume should be based on your base aerobic conditioning and shouldn't exceed 10% of your total weekly volume, or about 4800 meters for novice runners, 6400 meters for intermediate runners, and about 8000 meters for more advanced runners.

If you have any questions or would like some help developing a speed workout program send me an email at coachwill@coachwillsathletes.com

Wishing you miles of smiles....

Coach Will

Next month, Speed Part 2: Train First for Distance, Only Later for Speed

Restricting Carbohydrates Slows You Down

The faster you move, the greater the percentage of carbohydrates your muscles burn.

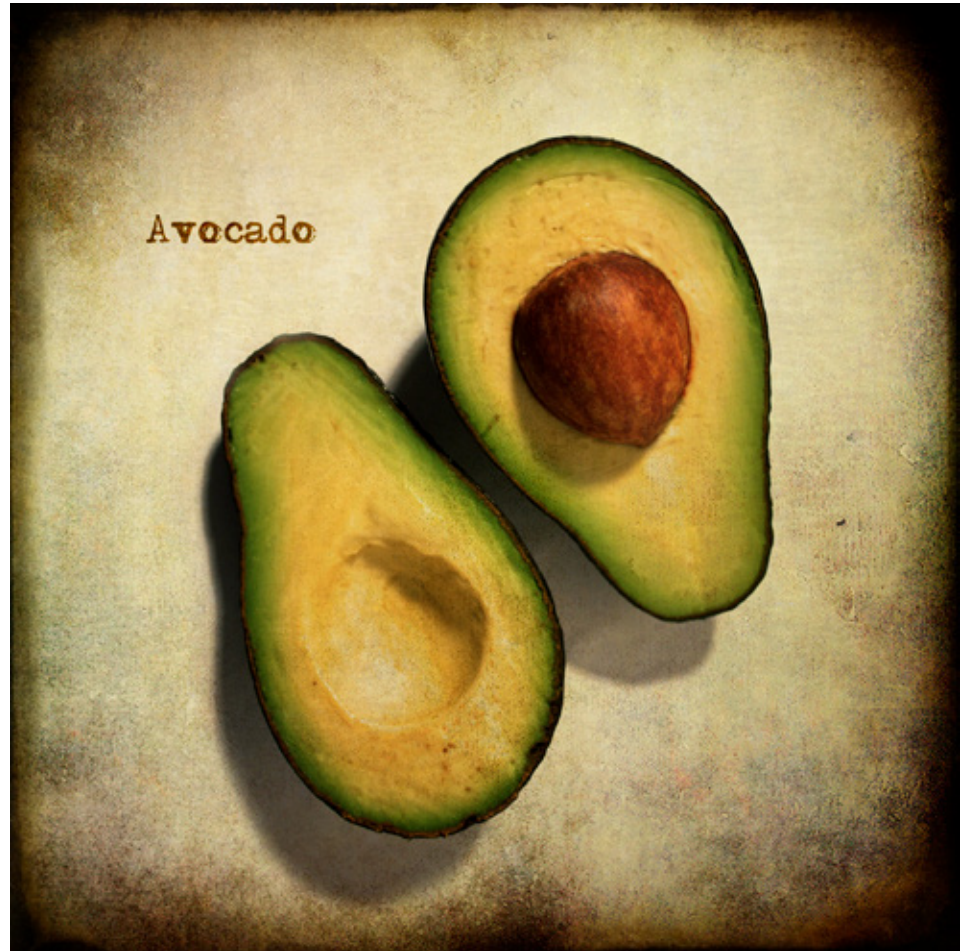
from Dr. Gabe Mirkin's *Fitness and Health e-Zine*, August 9, 2020

Restricting carbohydrates with a keto diet or fasting will tire you earlier when you exercise (*Sports Medicine*, January 21, 2020;11:1-28). Many studies show that low-carbohydrate diets impair performance in sports that require speed (*The J of Sports Med and Phys Fit*, April 4, 2018; *J of Physiol*, December 23, 2016). On a low-carbohydrate diet, you can't train very fast and you can't move as fast in races. The limiting factor to how fast you can move when you exercise is the time it takes to move oxygen from your bloodstream into your muscles. When you start to run low on oxygen, your muscles burn and hurt, you gasp for breath and you have to slow down.

Muscles burn primarily carbohydrates and fats (and a small amount of protein) for energy during exercise, and carbohydrates require less oxygen than fats. The faster you move, the greater the percentage of carbohydrates your muscles burn, and when you exercise at lower intensity, your muscles burn a greater percentage of fat. You can exercise equally fast at low intensity on low or high-carbohydrate diets, but when you pick up the pace, you can't exercise as fast on a low carbohydrate diet because you need more oxygen (*J Physiol*, May 1, 2017;595(9):2785–2807).

Flawed Studies to Support Keto Diets for Athletes

With ketogenic diets (also called Low Carb, High Fat, or LCHF diets), you try to get your body to use fat as the prime energy source for your muscles. To do this, you must restrict both carbohydrates and protein. Carbohydrates are just sugars in singles and chains, and they provide sugar to power your muscles. When your body is forced to use mostly fat for energy, the



fat is converted to ketones that can also be used to fuel your muscles. If you eat a lot of protein, your liver uses gluconeogenesis to convert protein to sugar, and thus you are not on a low-sugar ketogenic diet.

Anything that increases a person's maximal ability to take in and use oxygen (VO2max) will also help them to move faster and with more force over distance. One report appears to show increases in off-road cyclists' maximal ability to take in and use oxygen with a LCHF diet (*Nutrients*, 2014; 6(7)). That would have made them faster, but VO2max depends on a person's weight and a low-carbohydrate diet can cause you to lose weight. When

the study is corrected for the diet-induced weight loss, all of the oxygen capacity gains appear to be from the loss of weight rather than from taking in more oxygen or going faster.

Some studies do show that low-carbohydrate diets can help athletes lose weight (*Br J Nutr*, 2013; 110: 1178–87), and possibly have greater endurance in sports that are done at low intensity and below the lactate threshold (in which you do not get short of breath), such as multi-day running races (*Exercise & Sport Sciences Reviews*, July 2015;43(3):153–162). Athletes should never go on keto or LCHF diets unless they

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Low-Carb Diets, *continued*

There is evidence that a keto or LCHF diet can help athletes lose weight, but it has not helped athletes to race faster.

are getting a lot of protein to protect themselves from shrinking muscles and losing strength (*J Int Soc Sports Nutr*, 2012; 9 (1): 34). You are not truly on a LCHF diet if you eat a lot of protein because your liver, muscles, kidneys and intestines can convert proteins into sugar.

Why Do Some Athletes Use Keto or LCHF Diets?

Some athletes and sports nutritionists believe that if you could teach your muscles to burn more fat and less sugar, you could keep the sugar in your muscles and liver longer, and have extra sugar for the last sprint at the end of a race (*Metabolism*, 2016;65(3):100-10). That is correct, but burning more fat and less sugar for energy means that you have to slow down during training and in races (*Nutrients*, 2014;6(7)). You have enough fat stored in your body to supply you with energy for weeks, but you only have enough sugar stored in muscles and your liver to last for about 70 minutes of all-out exercise. Runners start to run out of sugar after an hour of racing, which is why all competitive racers take sources of sugar during races that last more than an hour. When your muscles run out of sugar, they hurt and you find it difficult to move them, which runners call “hitting the wall.” When your liver starts to run low on sugar, your blood sugar drops, your brain runs out of its main source of energy and you feel dizzy and can pass out.

Severely restricting carbohydrates causes your body to use fat as its primary source of energy and produce ketones, but nobody has ever shown that the extra ketones help an athlete to move faster or with greater strength (*Journal of Applied Physiology*, 2006;100(1):7-8). When your liver converts

fat to energy, it produces ketones that your brain can use for energy. Your brain gets almost all of its energy from sugar that passes through your bloodstream into your brain. Fat cannot pass into the brain from your bloodstream, but ketones can pass into the brain, so having extra ketones gives your brain a secondary source of energy if your blood sugar levels should ever drop. Again, no good data show that restricting carbohydrates improves athletic performance (*PloS One*, June 4, 2020;15(6):e0234027).

There is evidence that a keto or LCHF diet can help athletes lose weight, but it has not helped athletes to race faster, even in very long races such as in 100K (62-mile) time trials, even though their muscles burned more fat (*Metabolism*, Nov 3, 2017).

Anything that helps your liver store more sugar helps you to exercise more intensely for longer periods of time. The major way that weight loss helps you to have greater endurance and exercise longer is that losing body fat takes fat out of your liver, which allows your liver to store more sugar, thus giving you greater speed and endurance.

Don't Eat Large Amounts of Refined Carbohydrates

The worst way to prepare for a race is “carbohydrate loading,” eating lots of spaghetti, bread, or any other refined carbohydrates the night before the event. Almost 50 years ago, I showed that taking in huge amounts of refined carbohydrates can harm marathon runners by causing heart attacks (*J Am Med Assoc*, March 26, 1973;223(13):1511-1512). The extra carbohydrates are converted to fat that increases risk for forming plaques in your arteries. The extra fat also ends up in your liver.

Extra fat in your liver reduces the amount of sugar that your liver can store, so you tire earlier. This is why “carbohydrate loading” has been abandoned by all knowledgeable athletes.

My Recommendations

For both athletes and non-athletes, I recommend a diet that is high in the “good carbohydrates:” vegetables, fruits, beans, whole grains and other seeds, with plant sources of fats such as nuts, avocados, and oils. I think the most healthful diet is low in red meat, processed meats and fried foods. Sugar-added foods and drinks should be avoided except during prolonged, intense exercise. Not only will this diet help to protect your heart and blood vessels from arteriosclerosis, it should help you avoid excess weight which harms exercise performance and health. Storing extra fat in your muscles and liver reduces the amount of sugar that can be stored there and therefore harms performance. Loss of excess weight can improve performance by helping you store extra sugar in your muscles and liver.

I do recommend using intermittent fasting, which stimulates your body to switch to using ketones for short periods; see “Why Intermittent Fasting Works” (<https://www.drmirkin.com/nutrition/why-intermittent-fasting-works.html>). Various types of interval training for sports also have a similar effect; see “Interval Training for Sports” (<https://www.drmirkin.com/fitness/interval-training-for-sports.html>).

Reprinted courtesy of Dr. Gabe Mirkin. More of his articles can be found on his website, www.drmirkin.com/.

MASTERS OF SPEED

News from Boulder Road Runners' Elite Racing Teams

MEN'S 60+ TEAM

Bruce Kirschner, Runner and Men's 60+ Team Coordinator

from Jeff Dumas

Jeff emailed a series of questions to Bruce. Here are Bruce's responses.

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Brooklyn, the New York City borough where my parents had been raised. They had moved out to Westbury, an eastern suburb of New York City on Long Island, a few months before I was born. Westbury was smack dab right in the middle of Nassau County and equidistant from Long Island's north shore and south shore. I grew up there in the 1950s and 1960s until I left for college in Buffalo soon after high school. I believe Westbury and the New York City area is still a good place to be from.

I read in the local paper that you were a bit of a hippie in your younger years. True?

Well, I guess it's how you define "hippie." I believe you are referring to the August 2019 article in the *Boulder Daily Camera* and the *Denver Post* on the 50th anniversary of the iconic Woodstock Music and Arts Festival, which featured my story of being there in 1969. I arrived with my high school friends the day after my 16th birthday and a day before the crowds showed up. I was probably one of the youngest people there. It was certainly the experience of a lifetime. Too many stories to tell here though.

[Note From Jeff: Okay, we can resume this conversation during our next First Monday at Avery's.]

My high school friends and I were certainly listening to initially obscure rock music bands, such as the Jimi Hendrix Experience, the Jeff Beck Group, Jethro Tull, Ten Years After, Johnny Winter, and others (who we would often see live in the legendary but small Fillmore East venue on the Lower East Side of New York City), long before they became popular and fashionable amongst our peers. We also had what was considered long hair for those days and did not

believe in the Vietnam War. I usually wore denim jeans and water buffalo moccasins. But I didn't sport a headband and wear tie-dyed shirts like how "hippies" have historically been portrayed in the media. I plead the Fifth Amendment on everything else(!). So, yes, I was "a bit of a hippie."

[Note from Jeff: A "bit" of a hippie?? Read on...]

When did you start running? Was it in high school, college—or later, maybe, much later?

Wrestling was my chosen sport in high school. I had early success as a junior high school wrestler and led myself to believe I would be a great high school wrestler. Someone had used a thick black marker pen to write on the boy's locker room wall, "Basketball is for glory seekers, wrestling is for real men!" Although I was secure about my masculinity, I was not really tall enough for basketball. So, wrestling made great sense for me to have as my sport of choice despite the track and field coaches being interested in recruiting me. Our wrestling coaches made us run around the high school's rubber track, which was considered state-of-art in the late 1960s, as part of our conditioning.

[Note from Jeff: Definitely. The alternative was a cinder track—where the cinders were usually "refreshed" with the dregs from the school's boiler!]

Despite a nice and cushy track to run on, I just hated running. It seemed too hard not to get out of breath right away. I would hide out from the coaches until the run endurance training outside was over. In the parlance back then, I was "dogging it." By my sophomore year of high school, I realized that not only was I was not a great wrestler, I was merely mediocre. Before long I quit sports completely, started smoking



October 2015, Tulsa, OK, USATF 15K 60-69 National Champions.
Left to right: Bruce Kirschner, John Victoria, and Devin Croft

cigarettes, and became a too young couch potato and human slug.

[Note from Jeff: Picture that metamorphosis!]

I did not start running until my second year of college at the State University of New York at Buffalo, which was the furthest public university from Westbury. I had a full tuition scholarship there, not because I had done particularly well in high school, but due to my parents' low income. My father had a small kosher butcher shop in Queens, New York and my mother was a stay-at-home mom who did child care for others. Early in my sophomore year I was surprised to receive a phone call from my mother. My parents never used the telephone for long distance calls because it was too expensive. She was calling from the hospital to inform me that my 56-year-old father had suffered his first heart attack. This was a significant emotional event for me and had a major immediate impact on me. I stopped cigarette smoking cold turkey. I transitioned away from high-fat foods, like animal meat (I completely stopped eating all forms of meat in 1976), and toward healthier food choices.

[Note from Jeff: Yep, definitely "hippie"...]

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But the greatest lifestyle change was unbecoming a couch potato and starting regular exercise. I started to swim regularly and run. My first “jog” on the university quarter mile track could be better described as a walk. To complete one lap around the track I had to run slowly for a few yards followed by some walking. Between being at the highest weight I had ever been and smoking for years I was a very unfit 19-year-old human male specimen. Shame on me! I certainly wasn’t interested in running competitively at the time. Between my upgraded diet of healthy foods and new found running exercise I lost a significant amount of weight. This pleased me because my physical appeal to members of the other sex was very important to me at the time (read: much too young to sport a beer belly).

[Note from Jeff: Picture that. Can you imagine Bruce with a “beer belly”?!?]

Unfortunately, Buffalo weather between late fall and early spring could get very cold, snowy, and humid. Back then people would say, “If you run outside when it’s cold you’ll freeze your lungs!” I certainly didn’t want to risk that, so I only ran seasonally. I wasn’t able to run year-round until I moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico for graduate school. I ran my first race, a 5K sponsored by a local hospital, there around 1977. I placed in my age group and had the cognition that maybe this was my sport. It played itself out in the next few years as I continued to run consistently. We moved to Washington, DC in 1978 and I started running on my lunch hour with several much older and much more experienced runners. They took me under their wing, took me along on their long weekend training runs, and freely shared their wisdom. I ran my first major long distance race, the Marine Corps Marathon, in the fall of 1979. I ran a 3:16 and was immediately hooked on marathoning and competitive racing. My goal was to qualify for the Boston Marathon until my wife, Janet, and I started raising our three sons. I was still running and racing, but it took a back seat to the rest of my life and I stopped marathoning completely until I turned 40 and could easily qualify for Boston. I finally took the race off my longstanding bucket list in 1994 (with a 3:14 finish). When I was 45 I finished

the New York City Marathon in 3:12. I stopped running marathons completely after I turned 50 and ran the Big Sur Marathon in 2003. I ran a total of about a dozen marathons. It was a lot of fun, but it just took too much time to train for them and recover.

How did you end up living in Boulder?

Well, the truth is that I’ve never lived in Boulder. As I mentioned earlier, my wife and I moved from New Mexico to just outside Washington, DC in 1978 for my first professional position with the US Government. I was working in the US Department of Energy’s (DOE) headquarters for their renewable energy and energy conservation division. When President Reagan came into office in 1981 he dramatically slashed the budget for this part of the new agency. My position was in jeopardy and I was very ready to leave Washington for good. I had enough of life in the fast lane and a daily three-hour round-trip public transit commute. It was time to return to the Rocky Mountain West, which I had a love affair with, live in one place for a long time, and hopefully even raise a family. I quickly landed a position with a DOE sub-agency in Golden. Janet accepted a teaching position with Boulder Valley Public Schools in Broomfield. We moved to Westminster because I had a cousin who was a realtor who lived there. After our first son was born we actually looked into moving to Boulder, but housing was relatively expensive there even back then. Our realtor told us that we would get much more for our money in Louisville, which was a little backwater town seemingly stuck in the 1950s, still with some dirt roads not far from its downtown. Heck, just my kind of town! We moved there in 1986 and never regretted that decision. It’s only become a better place to live since then. As the popular t-shirt here now says, “Louisville is Cool!” Who knew back then?

[Note from Jeff: Ah, Bruce, according to my map, Louisville is in Boulder—Boulder County anyway!]

I understand that for many years, you were very active in the leadership of the Colorado Masters Running Association (or CMRA). Can you tell us about that?

Soon after we arrived in Colorado I became very active with the excellent Broomfield Road

Runners, which put on innovative monthly races. I was even their “Director of Race Operations” for a while. For reasons too long to explain, they eventually went defunct. I had also learned about and joined CMRA soon after moving to Colorado when I was in my late 20s. Their whole race awards system was geared to the over 35-year-old plus runner, but I didn’t care because the club allowed members to race free for their 13 races a year. Heck, just my kind of club!

I was an active volunteer and eventually started a new race for them in the 1990s, the Coal Creek Cross Country Challenge with neighbor and friend Randy Luallin. The 5.72 mile race, which started in Louisville, turned around in Lafayette and finished near the starting line, was entirely Randy’s brainchild. Randy had been a cross country runner at Boulder’s Fairview High School and I believe he still holds the mile record there. He loved cross country and wanted to start his own race. I hooked him up with CMRA but knew he was an “idea man” and not that good with marketing, organization, and execution, which were my strengths. The race course was all on trails and challenged the runners with ditch and creek crossings, a barbed wire fence hurdle, and a long stretch through a farmer’s field pockmarked with prairie dog hole “mines.”

[Note from Jeff: Don’t forget the damned hay bales—which had to be cleared heading uphill!]

We never knew what condition the field would be in until the day of the race, but it was usually rutted and sometimes muddy.

[Note from Jeff: Actually, it was usually scheduled for just after a heavy night of rainfall...]

We even placed a realistic looking life-sized inflatable alligator at the creek crossing. I set it up so the “alligator” moved with the water’s current. It usually scared the crap out of the runners crossing the creek because it looked so real and it was a surprise at just the moment where they needed to be most focused for safe passage. This was really funny to watch.

[Note from Jeff: I never saw the gator—because I was too busy staring at the steep creek wall that had to be scaled immediately upon hitting the

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opposite shore. If you didn't commit to hitting that slippery slope at full speed, the race could be over. Two tries and you were simply burned out!]

I believe this event was the first “adult” cross country race in Colorado if not the Rocky Mountain West. The race took on a life of its own, became a cult classic, and people came from all over the state to run it every Fall. Before long it generated about 40 percent of all CMRA race revenues. The race continued until the 2013 Boulder County floods changed the course of Coal Creek and the City of Louisville had to close the trail for flood rehabilitation work that took several years.

Could you tell us how you ended up switching your allegiance to the BRR?

Good question. Beyond race directing, I was pretty active as a volunteer in the club for many years, including serving on their Board of Directors for a while. After the Coal Creek race I started a new race for the club, the “Colorado Middle School Runner Challenge,” with Rob Fisher, former CMRA President and ace race director. The 3K race’s purpose was to introduce young runners to the sport and to help Denver Metro Area high school coaches identify promising talent coming up. I had talked to many of these coaches and they had told me that they were tired of “poaching” talent for their track and cross country teams from other sports at their schools. The race gained traction with each year, but CMRA senior officials failed to provide the support I believed we needed and expected. The club president at the time told me that this race was “outside the CMRA’s mission,” presumably because it didn’t cater to older adults. In my and Rob’s mind this event was about stewardship: introducing the next generation of Colorado and American runners to the sport and nurturing them as appropriate. I still believe that this is the responsibility of experienced runners: to help young people get fit and learn to love running as a lifelong sport. Despite many years of CMRA allegiance and major race directing success for their benefit I was frustrated with them and their narrow-mindedness.

I didn’t realize it at the time, but the time had come to move on. Around that time long-time



Chicago Half Marathon, 19 September 2019

BRR member Jeff Dumas recruited me to serve on the club’s Men’s 60–69 “B” Team at the USATF XC National Championship held in February, 2015 at Boulder’s Flatirons Golf Course.

[Note from Jeff: Recruited? Actually, more like “ambushed”. I saw Bruce running counter-clockwise around Louisville’s Harper Lake one morning—so, I immediately headed clockwise around the shoreline. The rest is history. ...]

I ended up as the last man to finish on our team (behind John Victoria, Heath Hibbard, Chuck Smead, and Rich Sandoval), but we won the gold medal. The BRR Men’s 60–69 “A” Team won the silver medal. Frank Shorter handed us our medals on the awards podium. It was a great day for BRR and I was happy to be a part of it.

For many years now, you have been the “Captain” of the illustrious BRR Men’s 60+ team. Could you please describe the team’s growth and its fantastic USATF running record over those years?

After our club’s USATF gold and silver medal wins in 2015, long-time friend and fellow BRR team member Devin Croft and I agreed to take the Men’s 60–69 team coordination reins from Jeff Dumas.

[Note from Jeff: Good thing... I was aging out of this group of highly competitive youngsters. At long last, a chance to get back on the

podium—with my fellow BRR septuagenarians!]

We co-coordinated team activities together for several years until he developed a serious injury (unrelated to running) that hampered his ability to successfully stay active with competitive racing. Devin still helps out on occasion, but I’ve pretty much served as sole team coordinator for the last few years. The truth is I don’t consider myself “captain” of the team. My teammates know I don’t like that title because we’re all older adults who independently operate very well with little or no direction. It’s really about good communication amongst us, which happens to be another one of my strengths. So the team inside joke is to refer to me as “Captain” just to rile me up. My response is usually, “At ease, at ease,” like they say in the military.

[Note from Jeff: Okay, how about “Skipper”? That has a nice nautical ring to it!]

We started out with a great Men’s 60+ team in the year I joined. Chuck Smead had been a silver medalist in the 1975 Pan American Games marathon in Mexico City. Doug Bell was already in the USATF Hall of Fame. Heath Hibbard won the 60–64 age group (out of about a thousand men!) in the Boston Marathon in 2015. I was able to promote the team’s accomplishments, which included several consecutive USATF Masters Grand Prix national championship race series first place wins, via my *Colorado Runner* magazine staff writing position. It wasn’t too long before runners all over the state knew who we were and about our successes. With the help of my teammates I had no trouble recruiting new talent. Kyle Hubbart was receptive to joining the team and became the 2017 USATF Masters Grand Prix Individual Men’s 60–64 National Champion. Dan Spale, already one of the very top 55–59 runners in the US came on board and has since been a major team contributor. He was followed by Roger Sayre, who won the 2019 World Masters Athletic’s gold medal in the half marathon, and George Braun, an outstanding runner who moved here several years ago from Boston. Recently, Mark Tatum and Adam Feerst, two very accomplished trail runners, and Paul Nicolaidis, who won his age group in the 2019 Boulder Boulder, came on to the team. Despite injuries that have set back some

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of the team's members, we have been able to continue to fill in with some great Colorado age group runners. There are currently about 18 members of our BRR Men's 60–69 team.

Historically, the team has won many USATF individual national championships in the last five or so years. But the real prize is winning the USATF Masters Grand Prix (MGP) national championship series, which usually features 8 to 10 races from one mile to the half marathon, held in locations across the US. Placing first in the USATF MGP confirms that your team is the best age group team in the country. We won it in 2015 and 2017 and placed second in 2016, 2018, and 2019. Although we receive prize monies, which makes us “professional athletes,” it certainly is not a driving force for any of us—surely nowhere near enough for any one of us to go out and buy a Tesla Roadster. How great is it to be in your 60s and be a “national champion” at anything? I should also mention that team members usually win their respective 1-year age groups in the Bolder Boulder 10K every year.

[Note from Jeff: And by a wide margin too—usually by three or four minutes over the next runner up!]

We have very diverse geographic origins, ethnicities, religious backgrounds, and political orientations, but we all have a love of running and racing in common—which is the only thing that really matters. I often think of us as real-life Marvel Super Heroes...and we're all beyond mid-life in our 60s! So how awesome can it get? It's been an honor and a privilege to serve such a great bunch of guys as team coordinator. I'm a serial organizer and have always had my hands in organizing multiple initiatives and activities. I really believe that a life well lived is a life of service and giving back—completely free of ego. “Tikkun olam” (the literal translation is “repair the world”) is a Judaic concept that refers to each of us taking responsibility for making the world a better place. Fred Rogers once said, “Life is for service.” These ideas really resonate with me. I believe in them and have tried to exemplify them in my own life. Serving as BRR M60+ team coordinator came very easily to me and is certainly an activity very consistent with my core values, particularly around self-responsibility for



Maccabiah Half Marathon, July 10, 2017

personal health, physical fitness, and just plain having fun while enjoying to the fullest the short time we are alive on our planet.

[Note from Jeff: Ugh, this reminds me of the Old Testament “four score and ten years” we are each allegedly allotted. Alas, that’s cutting it close for the BRR Mens 70+ team!]

Could you please tell us about your own racing career, particularly about USATF events?

It has been about 45 years since that first competitive road race in Albuquerque. I have been very fortunate to have had relatively few debilitating injuries, which were always short-term in nature. My knees are fine. If I only had a nickel for every time someone asked me, “How are your knees doing?” For most of the period since, I have probably averaged a race a month until recently due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellation of mass events, including foot races. I've made the podium, i.e., usually top three places, nearly every event I entered during this period and often won my age group, sometimes by large margins. Every year since 2015 I have been Senior Grand Master (60 and Over) at San Francisco's Presidio 10 Miler, which is also the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA)'s 10 Mile National Championship. In 2015 I won the *Colorado Runner* magazine “Male 60–64 Runner of the Year” for finishing first in their race series. I won my age group

at the Duke City (Albuquerque) Half Marathon in 2018. Last September I won the Chicago Half Marathon 65–69 age group. I trained hard for the 2020 New York City Half Marathon and hoped to make the podium there, but the March 15 race was the first international race to be canceled due to COVID-19. I think I have a decent chance of making the podium and perhaps even placing first in the age group in most races. But that only applies if none of my esteemed teammates show up. If one of them does, “Game Over!”

In terms of USATF, I realize that my racing strength is the longer distances. My sweet spot seems to be 15K to 15 miles. I struggle with the shorter distances, such as the mile and 5K. Unless the team really needs me, I pass on the shorter events and target the longer ones, like the Tulsa (Oklahoma) 15K this past October.

I've done so many USATF national championships at this point it's hard to recall and recount them. Surely one of my favorite memories was the October 2015 USATF 15K national championship in Tulsa. It was just Devin Croft, John Victoria, and myself, so we had only the bare minimum number of team members to field a full team. We were up against other teams with a full 5-man contingent. John and I drove to Tulsa together and shared a downtown hotel room not too far from the starting line. The night before the race was a Saturday and drunk people were yelling to each other in the hallway outside our room. The doors to the rooms blocked sound no better than balsa wood. We didn't get much of a good night's sleep. But we had it better than Devin, who was staying at the same hotel with his wife on another floor. That same night Devin overheard a couple fighting outside their room. The couple apparently had been sharing a nearby room with other people, but due to an argument ended up in the hall outside Devin's room. The man kept insisting he needed to return to the room to retrieve his backpack from their former roommates but the woman kept saying “Please put the knife away otherwise you're gonna end up back in prison!” Rather than intervene personally, Devin called the front desk and hotel management somehow managed to deal with the situation

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without additional disturbance and expel them from the property. While he was warming up near the starting line the next morning Devin, totally by coincidence, overheard two of the police officers on security detail for the race discussing the “craziness” at our hotel the night before, so apparently law enforcement ended up being involved as well.

It was my first time on the course, so that morning Devin and I agreed that I would stick with him and he would keep pace. There had been much rain in the days prior and it was a blustery, overcast, windy morning. Once we took off I decided to hang close to Devin and draft off him. Apparently, I was a little too close behind him and clipped his shoes a few times. Fortunately, they didn’t come off. Devin told me later that he knew it was me right in back of him and he was okay with it. John Victoria was first on the team to finish, followed by Devin, and then me about 5 seconds later. We ended up winning the national championship gold medal. It was another great day.

[Note from Jeff: The Tulsa 15K is the most competitive team road race in the country. This story of this race is one for the ages!]

Could you tell us about your first place age group finish in the half-marathon as a member of the US team in the 20th Maccabiah Games in Israel—including your months-long post-race recovery?

Sure. While watching the Summer Olympics in August 2016 I learned the next Maccabiah Games (AKA Jewish Olympics, the third-largest international sporting competition in the world after the World Olympics and FIFA World Cup) would be held a year later in Israel. I learned that their longest running event would be the half marathon, which also happens to be my favorite long distance event. I submitted an application to serve on the US Masters team. It was accepted immediately. It wasn’t too long before I was also named captain of the team, which was composed of nine American male and female runners age 40 and over. I think they

were impressed with my USATF and other racing credentials. Based on past Maccabiah half marathon finishing times, a podium placing would be possible, but certainly not assured. One of my BRR teammates said to me, “You’re already ranked by USATF. If you win the 60 and Over age group in Israel we can claim to know the fastest old Jew in the world.” I laughed, but that was about right.

The race start and finish was located just west of Jerusalem’s Old City. It started at sunset when the temperatures were still in the high 80s and humidity was around 90 percent. It would be very hilly and follow an exceptionally circuitous course. I cruised through the first few miles, but that feeling of ease and fluidity was not to last long. Minor soreness in the ball of my right foot, which had started weeks before, began to steadily worsen at about 6 miles. It wasn’t too long before the pain had become very bad, but I did my best to transcend it. I worked hard to maintain a good pace, but as time went on this became more and more of a struggle. I pressed on despite the extreme discomfort and finally crossed the finish line in 1:40. It turned out that I was the first “60 and Over” finisher out of ten competitors and winner of the gold medal in my Maccabiah Half Marathon age group. The second age group finisher was from Toronto, Canada and finished over 12 minutes behind me. An Israeli had finished over 20 minutes behind me for third place. Climbing on to the stage podium had a surreal quality to it. It was hard to believe that my dream of actually winning a gold medal in an Olympic-like running event had been fulfilled. After they put the gold medal around my neck there was no American



Bruce on the Maccabiah podium

national anthem playing (no real surprise), so I took the opportunity to shout to the crowd, “Viva America...and may God bless the State of Israel!” Again, had one of my BRR M60+ team members been there the gold medal would not have been mine. Soon after I returned home I told teammate George Braun, “Thank you for NOT being Jewish!”

The injury sustained during the race was much more serious than originally thought. Once back in Colorado my podiatrist diagnosed it as a tear of the “plantar plate” or the ligament that connects my second toe to my right foot. It was caused by a genetic biomechanical anomaly coupled with arthritis in the toe. The topography of the race only exacerbated it. The injury necessitated a three and a half month layoff from running with exercise clearance for only deep water running, which I conscientiously performed every day for about an hour at the local public recreation center. I still have some loss of sensation in that foot area.

[Note from Jeff: The story of this incredible race on the international stage is definitely worthy of a docudrama – or at least a telenovella!]

Men’s 60+ Team Coordinator: Bruce Kirschner, bhkirsch@comcast.net

Women’s 60+ Team Coordinator: Virginia Schultz, Virginia.Schultz@Colorado.edu

Men’s 70+ Team Coordinator: Jeff Dumas, jeff.dumas@comcast.net

One last question for Bruce:

We recently celebrated the 75th anniversary of VE-Day. Your father served in the U.S. Army's Fourth Infantry Division, which participated in the landings at Normandy on D-Day, the liberation of Paris, the Battle of the Hurtgen Forest, the Battle of the Bulge, and on to cross the Rhine. Can you share some of that amazing story with us?

Of course. My father, Arthur, was a tough New York City street kid who grew up in southern Brooklyn during the Great Depression and was inducted into the U.S. Army almost a full year before Pearl Harbor was attacked in December 1941. He served as Mess Sergeant (head cook) for the 4th Infantry Division's (4ID) 8th Regiment, L Company and fed about 250 men in training and on the war front. 4ID was the very first Allied military unit to land at Normandy, specifically Utah Beach, on June 6, 1944, D-Day.

Since my father and his cooks were considered support personnel they didn't arrive until after the landing beaches had been secured. He and his crew quickly caught up with their unit. The 4ID was there for the Battle of Cherbourg [France] and then continued to fight their way through the hedgerows and inland. The 4ID was the first Allied unit to liberate Paris after four years under Nazi rule. Then on to the hellacious Battle of the Hurtgen Forest, considered to be the most grueling WWII European battle. They fought in the cold rain and snow and in a forest of giant pine and fir trees while slugging it out yard-by-yard and day-by-day against fierce German artillery and infantry resistance. Then on to the Battle of the Bulge before being the first to cross the Siegfried Line into Germany to finally crush the German Nazis in their drive for world domination. In August 1945 Dad was on a troop ship back to the US to get a couple of weeks of rest before the 4ID headed to the Pacific and back into the thick of things for the planned invasion of Japan. Then the atom bombs were dropped and Japan's subsequent capitulation ended the war for them.

The "Ivy Division" ended up with one of the highest mortality and casualty rates in WWII. About one-half of the original L Company men were killed in combat. Most of the rest were casualties. The unit went through hundreds of replacements over the course of the war. My father and his cooks were fortunate enough to be some of the handful of original L Company men who made it through the war without being killed or wounded. Dad couldn't watch anything violent on television and certainly no war movies. When I was a young man my mother told me that he experienced frequent war-related nightmares his entire adult life. I never knew this, but I came to understand and appreciate what he and his comrades had been through. In retrospect, I believe my father suffered from PTSD, but its symptoms were so ingrained in the character of the man I knew as my father I could not recognize or differentiate it



Sergeant Arthur Kirschner

until after he died and I looked back.

When I was a child the only thing my father shared with me about the war was the pride he had in his creative and resourceful abilities to give his men the best meals possible despite challenges with food supplies on the front. He once told me, "We had to serve them the best meal because I never knew if it might be their last." Apparently his company kitchen served the best coffee and food in the Division, because that's where all the commanding officers went to eat.

Very soon after Dad passed away I interviewed some of the surviving L Company veterans. They shared with me stories about him I had never heard. I learned that 4ID commanding officers had designated his kitchen to serve as a temporary haven for soldiers who were experiencing serious "shell shock" and needed some respite from the trauma of being right on the war

front for so long. Dad's "Other Duties as Assigned" were to take care of these guys by giving them simple food preparation and cooking duties until they had an opportunity to regain their senses and sufficiently recover to be able to return to the frontline action. Outwardly my father was one tough hombre, but deep down he had a hidden heart of gold and no doubt took great care of the men understandably experiencing mental issues from battle stress and fatigue. These men were indebted to my father for the rest of their lives.

L Company's Captain John Reckord, a West Point graduate and the commander who promoted my father to Mess Sergeant, was killed by a German sniper in the Battle for Cherbourg soon after he led the D-Day landing. I talked to Reckord's personal driver, Amos "Jeep" Johnson, a 6'3" Wisconsin farmer and Distinguished Service Cross recipient, at a 4ID national reunion soon after my father passed away. He knew my father very well and began to tell me about a specific incident that had affected all the men of L Company, but most profoundly affected my father. As Amos started to relate the story to me he choked up and could no longer speak. He told me that he would soon write me a letter about it. A couple of weeks later I received Amos' letter. He wrote that my father had been very close to everyone in L Company, "Your father, as Mess Sergeant, was a mother image to us because he had to ensure that the men were fed three times a day, I am sure when men were killed and wounded it was like losing one of his family." Amos went on to describe the incident that he had referred to earlier. The men of L Company had been totally surrounded by the Germans for two days and were pinned down without food during this time. After they finally fought their way out and got free of the enemy my father arranged to have meals prepared and brought to them. A jeep pulling a trailer with the food drove into an open field where the men were to be fed. It hit a tank mine that killed the jeep's

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driver and First Sergeant as well as destroyed the food my father's cooks had prepared. My father had been close to both men. Amos told me that this tragic incident was extremely hard on my father. Dad had never told me or anyone else I know about this incident.

Amos also told me the names of my dad's closest friends who were killed during the war. Several years ago I visited the Normandy American Cemetery and paid my respects at their gravesites, including that of Capt. John Reckord. Back in 2000, I did a one-week 215-mile remote hut-to-hut mountain bike trip from Telluride, CO to Moab, UT and used it as a pledge drive to raise funds for a 4ID monument in Arlington National Cemetery. I was present for the monument's dedication in July 2001. I dedicated my 2015 Army 10 Miler race in Washington, DC to the men of L Company.

I finished in second place out of 344 men in the 60–64 age group. My father would have been pleased to know about that.

I am very proud of my father's small but significant role in the last world war. The fact that Americans have enjoyed relative domestic tranquility and been absent a world war since 1945 is a testament to many soldiers like Dad. May they all rest in peace.

[Note from Jeff: My father was the fire control officer for the "big guns" on the battleship USS Arkansas on D-Day. Later that month he jumped ship to attend flight school. By August 1945 he was flying aboard a carrier task force anchored in Ulithi Atoll—waiting for Bruce's father to join up for the invasion of the Japanese main islands. Clearly, they both were worthy representatives of the Greatest Generation ever!]

ALL THESE RECURRING CLUB EVENTS ARE CANCELED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Date, Time	Event	Location	Sponsorship
Recurring Club Events			
1st Mondays, 5:30 pm	BRR Club Social	Avery Brewing	BRR, FREE
3rd Wednesdays, 5:30 pm	BRR Board Meeting	Boulder Insurance Office 800 Jefferson Ave., Louisville	BRR
Sundays, 9:00 am (8:00 am June-Sept.)	BRR Social Run	Bolder Boulder Offices, 5500 Central at 55th, Boulder	BRR, FREE/OPEN
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 7:45 am	Group Training Run/Walk	Colorado Athletic Club, 505 Thunderbird Drive, Boulder	BRR, FREE/OPEN
Saturdays, 7:45 am	Group Run (location depends on weather)	Eagle Trailhead or Left Hand Canyon Trailhead	BRR, FREE/OPEN
Club Races			
November 26, 2020	Boulder Thanksgiving Day 5K	Flatiron Park, Boulder	TEAM, BRR

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