

I was asked whether I would always open the newsletter with the girls hitting on me. I was going to say probably not – that is until I received a texted message from Kerry Ward on Thursday evening. The message read “Kim (Kim Lowe) and I would like to rub with you on Saturday morning, what are your plans”? Well, whatever plans I had, were quickly being altered with much excitement, i.e. until a follow up message arrived stating “that should have read run not rub”. These girls then proceeded to talk about pregnancies and breast feeding for an entire run of 22kms. Talk about let downs!

On the subject of pregnancies, congratulations to Karen and Garry Shea on the birth of their little boy, Matthew Conner Shea last Saturday. Matthew arrived 5 weeks prematurely but is doing well. We wish them well with their new bundle of joy, and;

**HOT OF THE PRESS:** Sarah and Ryno welcomed little Hannah Penelope Eksteen into the world at 8.28am this morning weighing in at 2.8kg. We wish them all the best.

### **CHAIRMANS JOURNEY**

Okay, been told to keep it very short this week by the Ed, so will only say well done to all those that ran Bergville over the weekend and good luck to those that are braving Chatsworth this weekend - all the best for a great run.

We are hoping to have our Team Comrades shirts very soon and will distribute once we have them in hand. Thanks so much to African bank for their generous sponsorship.

To all our members, may your training or recovery be going well and please remember to keep letting us know what's happening out there and any comments you may have!.

Have a great week and be safe on the roads.

### **“Get to know your committee”**

**Name:** Lauren Calenborne (Ladies captain)

**Age:** We know it is somewhere in the thirties

**Married To:** Giles Calenborne

**Children:** 3 boys – Rhys, Liam and Finn

**Favorite Athletic Discipline:** Ultras

**Least favorite Athletic Discipline:** Track and short races

**Favourite Race/s:** 3Cranes marathon and the Mt Snowdon marathon in Wales.

**Personal Bests:** **Marathon 3hrs 10min – Comrades marathon 7hrs 31min**

### **Athletic History:**

Lauren started running in 1991 when she had to complete a half marathon to achieve an award in her Post matric class finishing in 2hrs 12min.

This set her heart on achieving her dream of one day completing the Comrades marathon and she followed this up with her first marathon, the Sappi Saiccor marathon posting 4hrs 12min. (*"I loved the race and the sense of achievement that came with finishing a race I had trained for"*).

Just over a year ago Lauren moved back to Durban with her family and her running has blossomed achieving personal bests in the marathon and Comrades marathon. (*"Moving back to Durban and training with JP Chelin as well as running in the red & white stripes of Westville has been very good for my running"*)

Comment from Lauren: As a stay at home Mom; my running gives me a focus, and some time out each day for me. It gives me a social each morning, and it keeps me balanced and sane.

My decision to be the Ladies Captain this year is so that I can give back something to a sport that has given me so much over the years. I hope that I can help make the new runners feel really welcome at our club, and encourage the not so new runners. Westville is a fantastic club and I feel very strongly that all our members feel included and as proud to run for Westville as I do.

### **RESULTS:**

Congratulations and well done to all members who raced this past weekend. By all accounts Bergville was extremely hot but it didn't deter a few of our runners who had fairly decent runs.

#### **Queensburgh Mineshaft**

Les Smith	1 <sup>st</sup> Grand Master Man	1:53:54
Gill Tregenna	1 <sup>st</sup> Grand Master Lady	2:12:56

#### **Bergville to Ladysmith 52km**

Sandy Aiken	5 <sup>th</sup> Lady home	4:17:00
<b>Paul Rose achieved a PB</b>		<b>4hrs 27min</b> ( <i>chasing his lady all the way home</i> )

#### **Bergville to Ladysmith 21.1km**

Sandile Lembetha	6 <sup>th</sup> man overall	1:14:31
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For Comrades runners we are now into the **PEAK** training month, the month of **BIG MILEAGE**. With Comrades and Two Oceans in mind please diarize and remember the following dates:

- Sunday 10 April @5.30am - Chatsworth Ultra and 25km run  
*(Entries for the 52km close on Saturday 9/4)*
- Saturday 16 April @5am - Club long run (starting at Stokers)
- Saturday 23 April @6.25am - Two Oceans marathon
- Tuesday 24 May @ 7pm - Pasta party (Clubhouse)
- Sunday 29 May @5am - COMRADES MARATHON
- Tuesday 31 May @7pm - Aches and pains (Clubhouse)

Other important dates to diarize and remember:

- Tuesday 12 April @6pm - Men's TT League (Savages AC)
- Wednesday 13 April @6pm - Ladies TT League (Forest Hills AC)
- Saturday 30 April - Savages XC League (Savages AC)

## SUNFLOWER FUND

Sue Smith has agreed to help Tenley Cummings from the Sunflower Fund with the miles4marrow campaign (*Those of you that were at the Comrades talk will remember her as one of the speakers*) This is such a wonderfully rewarding campaign whereby you the athlete get yourself sponsored for every mile run. Sue is trying to get a group together from WAC who are doing Comrades 2011. I would really like to encourage you all to get involved in this wonderful initiative and if you are keen Sue will be at the Club on a Tuesday evening to give you more information.

## RUGBY

The club will be open from 5pm on Saturday for the Sharks vs Lions game at 7pm. Braai's can be done and completed by the time the game starts.

## COMRADES TRAINING

There has been a lot of talk about training or lack of it as well as the mental side of doing Comrades. It reminds me of the story (*and I steal this from an article by Norrie Williamson*).

*How is it possible that a mother who struggles to lift a 10kg bag of potatoes from a shopping trolley was able to lift the rear end of a car with one hand whilst pulling her son out from underneath the car with the other? Same woman, same muscular strength and physical condition, but staggeringly different results.*

***Whether in sport or in life we need to acknowledge the link between physical capacity and emotional desire. We are what we believe we can be - we do what we believe we can or need to achieve.***

Our chairman was a 10hour Comrades runner but he believed he could be faster and with this emotional desire within him set out to achieve that. I have cut and pasted an article from him into this newsletter and am sure that you will find it useful as you head into the last 8 weeks of training. It is rather long but an enjoyable and interesting read.

Remember to keep those stories coming and have a great week ahead of training and chat with you all soon.

## **My Comrades Journey from 10hrs to 6hrs**

Cramping in any race is not fun but when you still have 45km's to go your sense of humour failure can be sudden! Passing out through blood sugar imbalance and losing your big toe nails is also not part of the plan but they happen. It makes you wonder why you would want to do it all over again and again, but once the pain disappears that little voice comes into your head saying "if I train a bit harder next year, or indeed *train*, I can be faster". My first comrades is as fresh on my mind as my last, and equally as memorable.

This communication is not to tell you what to do, I'm not qualified to do that, but just to tell you what I have been through and to share with you the common problems faced by the first timer up or down the route and ways which may alleviate some of the training hardships and psychological torment you go through leading up to the race.

So what is your potential? One thing is for sure when I ran my first I didn't think I would ever run it again and I was absolutely finished and didn't believe at the time I would ever get much better than the time I did. I finished in 10:20mins, most of the second half was a run/walk, between massive cramping in the calves. I unfortunately through injury could not run for last 3 months leading into the 1999 down run, hence with minimal kilometres under the belt I was destined to a long and painful day...and that it was.

Our potential is often something we 'lock' up internally and hence never really fully explore. We listen to the advice of others, most of which may not be appropriate for you personally and mostly relates to what has worked for them (or not). So the point is nobody can tell you what you are capable of, often you won't even know this yourself. The key though is to believe in yourself and know that you can always improve. You may not necessarily have the resources to hand that the professionals have i.e. time, money, coaching etc etc, but if you did, you could be much better, and that you must believe. A significant part of running is psychological, if we can see it or believe it, we can do it. Just like comrades with the right mental and physical conditioning Comrades becomes a long and enjoyable jog!

When I first arrived in South Africa in 1999 for my first comrades I was just a “jogger”. Not really serious about times just keen to compete. I certainly didn’t appreciate what I was just about to attempt; all I knew was that I wasn’t going to bail. That year all international runners were seeded in A batch, daunting when I had only run a 3:17 marathon a few years earlier, now of course you must cut 3 hours for that pleasure. The ego trip of standing at the front was very short lived when I got swamped by thousands of runners obviously significantly faster than me or perhaps more ignorant than me. I became so nervous that I started asking guys around me how I should run this race, obviously a little late by then! Now it has become a source of amusement when I get C, D & E batch runners screaming past me for the first 10km destined only to destroy themselves just up the road. *Comrades are about 89km’s*. The race both *physically* and *mentally* starts at 60km! In either direction if you run the first half too quick the second will be extremely painful and slow!

I ran my 10<sup>th</sup> Comrades in 2009 in a time of 6:49, so over 10 years I have brought my time down by over 3 hours and it feels great. This is not without sacrifice and lots of dedication to your training. However the good news is if you are aiming at silver you don’t have to run 10 weeks of 160km per week. I was told this by one of the “old school” runners, which obviously had a huge impact on what I considered to be my potential best time. How could I run a quick time when all I could manage without injury or getting sick was about 100km’s per week? Believe me I tried the distance route and suffered as a consequence and my times did not improve. Irrespective of your goal don’t be burdened by others views on how good you are or what they expect of you. Set your own goals and train accordingly, stay focused on these.

With training the speed vs. distance argument is interesting and what works for one person may not work for the next. However, generally what has worked for me is to concentrate on speed with some longer runs worked in. I run a maximum of 105km in a big week leading up to comrades and that’s for a sub 7 time. My weekly program would include a track session and a time trail and the rest of week would be both shorter recovery runs and a longer weekend run. I restrict races as I prefer to run hard at races and tend not to be disciplined enough to run them as training runs, although this is useful if you are disciplined. You have to accept being passed and beaten by people that you would normally beat on any other day. If you can cope with this then go for it. It is further more unnecessary (in my opinion) to run more than 1 standard marathon and 1 ultra marathon in your build up. The damage incurred during these runs is extremely difficult to fully recover from and you do not ideally want to carry any damage into comrades. You will not be aware of the damage and may feel perfect; however at 60km you will be reminded that your legs are damaged goods and then it’s too late. So select races carefully and don’t over extend yourself with many longer runs, it simply is not necessary (in my opinion of course!!).

I often get asked when my last race should be before comrades. This is a tough one normally I would suggest running a quick 21km about a month out. You are carrying the distance so 21km should feel easy and you still have lots of time to recover. However I have retested and blown my theory of not racing too close and I pushed a 21km 2 weeks before comrades with exceptional results at comrades. I guess it was the fact that it was only a 21km. I wouldn’t recommend going any further than that so close and certainly not pushing it! Once you run past 25km on any run I understand that the damage becomes exponential so any temptation to sneak another last minute long run in will be detrimental to your comrades experience.

Given the only point of contact with the road (you hope) is with your feet and that you will spend many hours running in your training and on race day it is important you have the correct footwear. That doesn’t mean that you have to have the most expensive running shoes that you can buy. In fact many of the features on the shoes are probably extras that are not necessary and just add cost to the product. I ran in one particular brand (very happily) for about 8 years before they simply out priced themselves with extra features I never needed. So I downscaled to another brand at 60% of the cost without any detrimental effect to my feet. What I do recommend however is to get the right advice from the start and see a podiatrist and let them assess your feet and the correct shoe you should run in. You may find you need a soft orthotic especially if you have high arches and tend to over pronate. This once off cost will save you thousands (literally) in physio bills and the pain of not just the injury but the psychological pain and frustration of being off the road (which is often worse than the injury).

Let’s now consider strength work (gym) and diet/weight. I love going to the gym but simply never get the time as running takes up this time and only when injured would I have time (by then contract is normally expired as well!!). There is nothing better for running than running itself, obviously if you can build leg strength with working out then this is first prize but get some good advice on the correct exercises as you want strength not mass. That leads me nicely into diet and weight. I tend to eat a lot. I do however naturally have a pretty good diet but don’t get anal about my food

intake. However one little tip that can help reduce those unnecessary kg's is to eat most of your carbs by 2-3pm. In the evening if you are hungry after dinner try eating small amounts of protein. Please bear in mind I am not a sports scientist I just know what works for me and I lost 8 kg's in 4 months by training and watching the time I ate, not what I ate. Obviously with a race like comrades the lighter the better, again it doesn't matter which way you go, up or down. I have run comrades at 83kgs and at 75kgs and believe me I know which one was better! The good news is that when training for comrades the weight tends to roll off with the extra mileage.

Your mental preparation for the race is extremely important. Visualisation is one of my favourite past times. With a few months to go you should start imagining yourself running the race and running into the finish feeling strong and also seeing people who are important to you (also makes a huge difference). It's all about readying your mind for the challenge it is soon to take on and believe me don't underestimate the way the mind will play around with you on the day. So get yourself mentally prepared for what you will endure well before the day. Practice whenever you have a negative thought turning it into a positive one. It's amazing how easy it becomes when you practice. I remember very well during my last run feeling the pain within the last 14km and thinking and telling myself I was a machine whenever I started doubting myself. It works; remember your mind can be your biggest barrier on the day.

Finally with race day in sight be aware of the virtual colds and virtual injuries that pop up. This is often around tapering time and happens to us all. Your mind loves to play tricks on you at this time and there is nothing anybody can tell you to stop this but you will get through it and be on that start line ready to go. Your anal behaviour around people sneezing is also pretty normal as is your reluctance to go to shopping centres and the local Spar!

It is further important at this time not to listen critically to any armchair critic telling you that you haven't done enough mileage or are not eating the right foods or drinking enough etc. Follow your plan and stick to it. With 2 weeks to go don't play catch up on your mileage; if you haven't quite achieved what you had hoped as per your log then don't get hung up about it. Rather get to the start line slightly undertrained than overtrained. Don't start eating new foods or trying new sports drinks the week before. This is a recipe for disaster on the day. Once you lose your stomach during the race, your race is done and so is your goal time! Try to stick to as natural foods/drinks as possible.

Well that's pretty much it, just remember that we are all unique and what has worked for me may not work for you. One thing is for sure if you are mentally and physically conditioned irrespective of your goal time then Comrades will be the most wonderful experience and one you will never forget.

Good luck with your preparations and be safe out there on the roads, happy running.

Paul Eichert (9739)