


THE RUNDOWN

AN INITIATIVE OF THE CHENNAI RUNNERS

JANUARY 2021

For private circulation only

**Physical
Activities**
during 
Covid-19
era

Dr. Rajat Chauhan

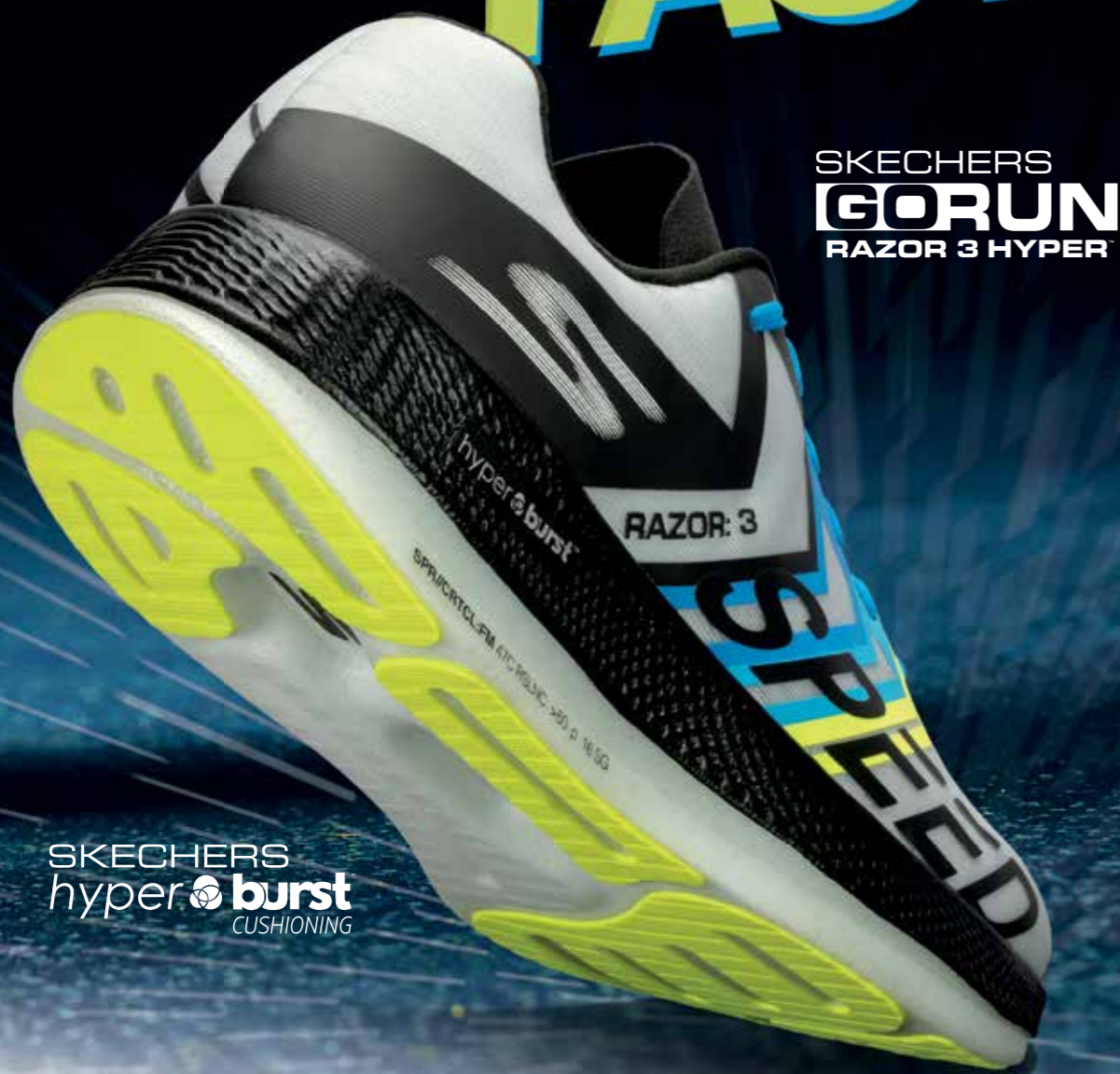
கழிப்பட்டுர் ஏரி

ஷான் கருப்பசாமி

Running
against
all odds

Geeta Viswanath

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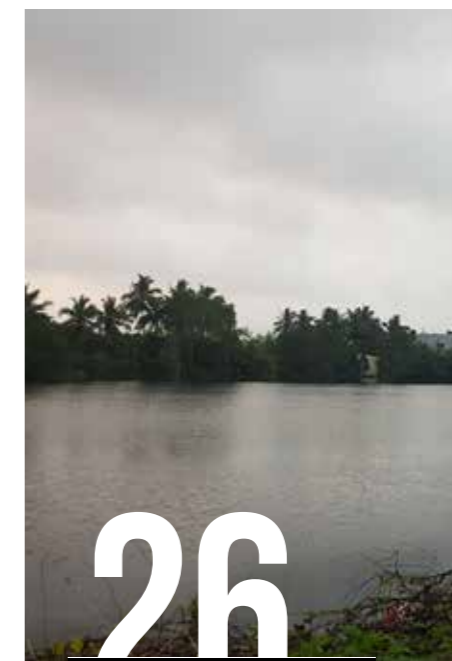
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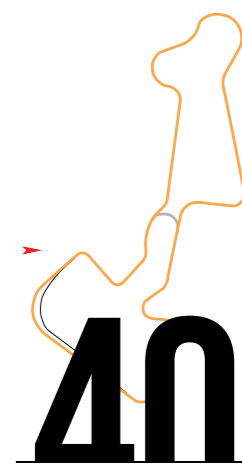
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Hello Runners,

It is time for The Skechers Performance Chennai Marathon (SPCM) 2021 and as always, we are delighted to bring you our annual issue of Rundown Magazine.

The year that has gone by has been tumultuous, to say the least. I am sure that none of us, in our wildest dreams, would have even imagined the kind of impact that the Corona pandemic has had on all our lives. And as we struggle to make sense of the resultant chaos and toll that the pandemic has taken on all of us, we are forced to introspect - perhaps this is Nature's way of showing us who is the Boss. Or maybe this is a sign for us to slow down and not get so caught up in the rat-race and day-to-day business of living, that we lose sight of our humanity and values.

Not surprisingly, many articles featuring in this edition of Rundown are centred on the pandemic, including one by Dr.Rajat Chauhan, in which, he gives a personal account of how he managed to beat Covid/Covid-like symptoms. Dr. Chauhan also shares tips on how to get back to your pre-Covid exercise routine, post-recovery.

This issue also features an article by Usha Rani where she weighs the pros and cons of conventional vis-à-vis virtual runs. The jury is still out on which run is better, but the fact remains that virtual runs are here to stay and have become the norm for many running events post-March 2020.

Running has obviously benefitted different people in different ways. While Sanjay Kulkarni, Uttam Khatri and Sundararajan have all, in their articles, recounted their experiences and process of self-discovery through running, Aravindh A. has a slightly different take and feels that apart from the obvious stated benefits of running, he has also been able to contribute to social causes through this activity.

It is indeed heartwarming to see that despite the restrictions imposed by lockdown, many of you have been sticking to some schedule of physical activity or the other. In order to sustain any habit and get long-term results, a consistent approach is required. Raja Priya, in her article, gives valuable lessons for sustainable running. For those of you who are in the process of chalking up a running plan, the write-up by Vivek Misra in this issue would be really helpful, as it gives good insights on different types of training that a runner can choose to follow.

Also included in this issue is another very informative article by Aravind Kumar who gives us suggestions on functional breathing or breathing right, which will help in improving our running performance.

I particularly liked the piece on Thiru, a young and promising runner being mentored under the Star Runners' programme of Chennai Runners. Life is all about overcoming adversities and following our passion despite all odds and this is a lesson learnt from him.

Last year, Chennai Runners had partnered with the Environmentalist Foundation of India to restore the Kazhipattur Lake. Corona notwithstanding, there has been considerable progress made in this project and the pictures accompanying the write up tell the tale.

Before I sign off, I would like to thank all those who have contributed with their articles. A big shout out to Ramya, Aditi and Dr.Lakshmi, for helping me put together this issue. As always, suggestions and feedback for improvements are most welcome.

Meanwhile, happy running and do stay safe, because remember - we are not out of the woods yet!

Cheers,
Geeta Viswanath



Dear Runners,

In a year that has been challenging for us all, the running metaphor of putting one foot in front of the other has never had more meaning. So in the truest sense of showing up and giving our best, Chennai Runners continues to work on delivering a quality marathon event.

SPCM 2021 was all set to be a smooth affair, with our energies high after the resounding success of the last year's marathon. And then the pandemic set in. What we expected to be a short run turned out to be a never ending ultra.

Chennai Runners, being as resilient as we are, did not want to go the virtual marathon way. With the strong support system developed year-after-year and the ever-enthusiastic volunteers backing us, we made a well thought-out decision in organising a proper real event for SPCM 2021.

The venue for this year's SPCM 2021 is The Madras Motor Race Track, Irungattukottai. And while we are super excited about the new venue because we do not have to contend with traffic woes or inconvenience the general public in any manner, due to governmental regulations and giving due respect to the prevailing situation, a conscious decision was taken to restrict registrations. Chennai Runners, thanks to the expertise gained in putting together such events over the years, is sure of delivering a highly secure Marathon without compromising on any aspect of the running experience. Safety and protocol precautions are our utmost priority, for which, we have worked closely with the District Administration.

With a new route and new rules in place, we are confident of adhering to all Covid-safety measures. To all the runners who are participating, we wish you luck. To all the runners who are unable to participate this year, we assure you that we will more than make up for it next year!

Finally, we thank our various Chapter members, sponsors, support partners, police and District Administration, without whose support, conducting an event, especially in testing times like these, would be practically impossible.

Wishing you all happy and safe running.

Regards,
V P Senthil Kumar



Dear Runners,

When I took on the role as President of Chennai Runners in early March this year, there was no inkling of the testing times ahead. With the lockdown underway, our primary goal was to keep our running community in good spirits. From terrace running to staircase running to inside-the-house running - we noticed that our runners had resorted to innovative ways to keep things moving. We helped address some of the concerns arising from these unconventional methods of running by periodically organizing live interviews and workshops with prominent runners like Krish Natesan, Dr.Poornima Rajan and Manivannan Vangalur on various related topics, viz., nutrition during Covid times, taking preventive measures and managing injuries, managing mental health, etc. We also had guest speakers like Dr. Kannan Pugazhendi, Dr. Ramakrishnan and Prof. Nachi Chockalingam speak on various topics related to running. The response to these online sessions from our running fraternity was extremely encouraging.

We also put together strength training sessions, Zumba and yoga on Zoom platform, led by our runners with expertise in these fields. We would like to thank Mr. Anil Sharma, Mr. Aravind Kumar, Mr. Deepan Francis Edwin, Mrs. Sudha Chandrasekar, Mrs. Garima, Mr. Siva Subramaniam and Mrs. Sundarambal Sairamesh for coming forward to hold these sessions for our runners.

Post-relaxation of lockdown, Chennai Runners organized a 2 day virtual running event- "Chennai Runs together". This was done to encourage our chapter members to embrace the new normal and to help them reunite with our passion. The team events - 6-hour team run, 3-hour international medley and the Plank Challenge - saw enthusiastic participation from runners across the city and we managed to cover a distance of 7000+ kms. running virtually.

Chennai Runners also did their bit to the society. We contributed masks and water bottles to the police force and also to migrant workers during lockdown. Various chapters of Chennai Runners also pitched in with contributions to the migrant workers in their own ways.

Come January and we are all set to usher in the New Year with The Skechers Performance Chennai Marathon (SPCM) 2021, the flagship event of Chennai Runners. Held on the 1st Sunday of every year, Chennai Marathon is in its 9th year now and has grown by leaps and bounds. The SPCM 2020 - had seen massive participation all these years. Unfortunately, due to prevailing pandemic conditions, we have been forced to limit the number of participants and move the venue to The Madras Motor Race Track, Irungattukottai, so that we can conduct an event that would put to practice all safety guidelines.

I would like to thank my chapter coordinators and chapter runners who have supported me during these difficult times.

A big thank you to the police, District administration and the sponsors without whose support, it wouldn't have been possible to organize the SPCM.

We promise you that the 10th edition of Chennai Marathon will be a grand one.

To all my fellow runners, keep up the good work, do more and continue running....

Regards,

Dr. Lakshmi Sundar



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A Year Of Experience With Chennai Runners

Sundarrajan N

“Anything is possible if you try” said Terry Fox who is still inspiring millions across the globe. A year ago, I was just an ordinary person who regularly ran short distances, without any goals in mind. But that was then ... today, I am proud to say that I have become a regular and consistent runner and the reason for this is Chennai Runners.



I happened to meet a team from Chennai Runners during an event near Ashok Pillar and I was surprised to know that there are many active runners' chapters in and around Chennai, where runners assemble at a common place and train as a group, to participate in running events conducted across the nation. I immediately decided to join and became a member of Pillar Pacers, one of the local chapters of Chennai Runners within a week. After joining the group, I realized that the runners not only trained for themselves, but also helped and supported the newbies to improve their stamina, posture and consistency.

I was super excited to be part of that enthusiastic team and attended the weekly training programs regularly. I participated in Chennai Marathon – 2020 and successfully completed my first ever Half Marathon under 2 hours and 30 minutes.

Being a part of a running group has many advantages. Obviously, you will get guidance, training and knowledge on running. But can you guess what are the other advantages of being a part of the group? Here are a few -

- The team has people in varied age groups from 20 to 60 years and interactions with them gives you lot of wisdom and knowledge from their life experience.

- The team not only trains and motivates people to run, it also takes up many social activities which benefits the needy, thereby leaving a better environment for the future generations.
- The team treats you as a part of family and occasions like birthdays of team members are celebrated with lots of energy and enthusiasm.
- Training in crucial life skills like giving first aid in an emergency situation are organised.
- Last, but not the least, the sense of togetherness that a team gives, brings a smile to your face whenever you run.

Fact – check:

- Are you thinking of choosing a healthy habit? Then choose running.
- Want to run but do not know where to start? Join Chennai Runners.
- Not sure whether you can run or not? Read it again and again - “Anything is possible if you try”.

A journey of thousand miles begins with a single step, so take your first step to make your life's journey a healthy one. This maiden year of experience with Chennai Runners has certainly added some good values in my journey and will certainly add more in the years to come.

Running & Self discovery

Sanjay Kulkarni
& Uttam Khatri

We might begin running for health reasons, but we continue it for quite different ones. Running has added meaning and purpose to our lives, most runners will say. It is the very purpose of life – some others will add. And these are just some of the discoveries one makes through running. Read two of our runners share their experiences and outlook.

Sanjay Kulkarni

Everyone runs in this world. There are two types of runners - Type-1 run away from running and Type-2 adopt running as the daily lifestyle. I belonged to the Type-1 category for almost 49 years of my life and am now transforming myself into Type-2. I am 50 now and having adopted a new lifestyle centered around running in the last one year of running, I can say I still have 50 more years to run (should I say a minimum of 50 ☺).

I always thought running was about winning the race. But now, I have learnt that more than winning, it is about completing the race in good health and spirit and feeling proud of one's efforts and helping the others through it.

Running has humbled me and taught me that I need to learn and achieve more. It has shown me how others have put efforts and achieved great heights with their sheer dedication and discipline. Running has also made me realize my potential and made me proud of my achievements till date.



Running has not only had a positive impact on my overall health, but it has also permeated into every aspect of my life. After a morning run, I feel energized throughout the day. It has taught me how to take up new challenges, have the patience to learn, persevere and not give up before completion.

I personally thank all the mentors, coaches and friends of my running group in Chennai. I had wings but they taught me "How to not only Run but also to Fly."

Uttam Khatri

If there is one sport I have played consistently over the years, it has been cricket. And the 'over-pitch delivery' has been the only form of delivery that I could deliver best. Hence, it shouldn't surprise you much when I tell you that when I played Badminton, the shuttlecock always landed on the edge of the racket, the tip of the cue always missed to hit the ball in snooker (see picture), and I am likely to get into depression if you opened up a chessboard :)). You see, I just didn't get it and the dents on my car would shout out loud to tell you that.

Yet, I gave a shot at running last year and ran my first 10k marathon in sub 60.

Crossing the finish line within 60 min was the turning point in my life with regard to sports. I changed from someone who entered competitions hopelessly to someone who entered competitions to perform. I discovered I had - potential.

You know, my grandfather wasn't just frugal, my family believed, he was a miser. They always said he was reborn in me, for they could literally see a film of sweat on my forehead when I had to cough up my money even on essentials. I would take forever to let my money go out of my hands. The Hindi proverb Chamdi jaaye par damdi na jaaye fitted so well with me.

However, running changed me completely. I started making investments in running- memberships, shoes, shorts, bands, and books on running and breathing. Not to mention that expensive Garmin watch. I was spending. I was spending because I discovered I lied when I said I wasn't ambitious. I discovered the investment on health was a sort of insurance. But as I see it, there will come a day when even these things won't



matter to me any longer, and with my long beard, wearing a langot, I will run without any accessories... barefoot.

The body that was a stranger to me, the body that was completely detached from my mind and soul, the body that behaved like a rebellious child, soon started yielding to my mind as I started running. Running started helping me discover my body. The connect was more significant during runs - I could close my eyes and feel every grain of my body in ecstasy. I could feel the reverberations, and I could feel the flow of blood.

Running has also made me patient towards my goals, organized in thoughts, a better listener, and a better learner. I hope I continue running and discover more about myself.

And now, allow me to let you into my little secret. 30 minutes into running, I turn my head to the right and return smile to God. If you too want to see Him pacing you,

"Do More....Start Running".

LESSONS IN SUSTAINABLE RUNNING



Why we give up running & how we can avoid that

Rajapriya S

Running, is metaphoric to life, in more than one way! And sustainability is perhaps its largest link.

For anything to be sustainable there has to be a larger purpose beyond a short-term goal and this is the factor that keeps the sustainability index high and healthy.

In the context of running, especially long distances, the intent and the big picture can sometimes be hazy.

If the larger goal is unclear even after having spent some time running, there is merit in stopping short and analyzing it. Else, there is a chance that while the journey will start with a bang, it will die a natural death.

So in order to run consistently, to begin with, ask yourself the following questions:

- » Why did I start running?
- » What in my mind, are some elements that go through a change because I have started to run?
- » Am I seeking to improve overall wellbeing? If not, shouldn't I be?

Most runners just blindly follow what fellow runners do and find themselves getting into the vicious circle of peer pressure! Then one fine day everything comes down crashing with injuries, sickness and lack of drive.

The second aspect of sustainable running is the additional things we do - if we are already running and enjoy doing it but want to have some achievable targets, like running a faster 10k, a faster half marathon, attempting a full marathon or maybe even an ultra-marathon.

A ready reckoner is as under:

- » Commitment to keep anxiety, stress and an excellent sleep cycle (Trust me, this is a fundamental requirement) – If this is simply not in your control, then rework your schedule first.
- » Next is your ability to eat right – And this is a million-dollar question: What is the right amount and combination of carbs, proteins, and fats that one should consume? Should our diet be milk, gluten and sugar free? How much of complex carbs should we intake? While the questions can be endless, I recommend a simple STEP D approach - Sizeable Target for an Enriched Progressive Diet This simply means that we target a measurable intake of proteins, carbohydrates, minerals for a week and make sure we balance it out. So, when you plan a pizza party on Saturday, your preceding Thursday and Friday should be mindful eating.
- » Training Plan that works on all aspects of fitness holistically – Mind and Body.
- » Finally, the time that you dedicate – this can be anywhere between 10-20 hours in a week depending on the training plan you follow and the event you are chasing.

So, the above 4 pillars, in my view, should excite you in itself, notwithstanding what the outcomes are to be!

Clearly, you ought to be or aspire to become a process-driven rather than a result-driven person!

That will be the beginning of your sustainable long-distance running journey 😊.

The last and final part about sustainable running is how we evaluate and review our workouts and runs – More often than not, we don't credit ourselves enough for all the gradual progress we make. To name a few, taking the stairs that were once formidable, being able to train 6 days a week, run a mileage at least 10% more than that you were earlier on, not being injured, not falling sick often and finally able to make healthier choices consistently are all positive signs of becoming better runners that we should pat our backs for.

I recommend that you create a simple tracker which measures the above 4 pillars tracked over a period of time and access the outcomes every 6 months. And how do you do that? Either run a race or, better still, race against yourself 😊.

LOCKDOWN BLUES NO MORE A VIRTUAL RUNNER'S HIGH

Usha Rani



“Running is the greatest Metaphor for life, because you get out of it what you have put into it.”

- Oprah Winfrey

I am now running the fourth version of Republic Day to Independence day, everyday from 26th January to 15th August.- Having completed 202 days, I am now continuing it, by running from Independence day to Republic Day - that is 366 days of daily runs. By the time this article comes out, I may have crossed the 270/366 mark. I have been fortunate to run in the most beautiful places during these times.

Now what is it that drives me to do this consistently? I am neither a great runner, nor do I aspire to increase my pace. I do not fret about people running ahead of me during runs. I only do what is needed of me, within my limits and capabilities. Well, that is what is expected, right? I am only a recreational runner and my only aim is to finish the event. I have always approached running and running

events with an open mind, expecting nothing other than the sheer joy derived from it. The challenges that come along with the runs have taught me commitment and discipline, which translates to all my other activities too. Running has taught me the importance of maintaining proper diet, to listen to my body and to allow time for rest and recovery. That is one form of discipline. The change in the lifestyle is inevitable, when you want to pursue this passion burning inside you. Passion is a driving force behind every achievement. Doing anything just for the sake of doing it, yields no result other than boredom setting in soon and quitting early.

Be it the 39 or more half marathons and other distances that I have completed or the Master's athletic events or the Republic Day to Independence day runs, I have met with many challenges – some respiratory issues, knee injuries, mental issues etc. But I could overcome all of this because of passion, constant motivation by friends and the mental strength that was derived as a byproduct of physical fitness. No doubt, practicing Yoga and doing regular strengthening workouts to build core, abs and cardio, helped in attaining the physical strength and flexibility.

Up until the lockdown, there were no issues with running anywhere. But post lockdown, how do we sustain the passion? Along came “VIRTUAL RUNS” - a boon for many runners who could not resist running even during the lockdown period and were running on their building terraces, balconies and even their living rooms!

What is a virtual run? How did it originate? A small research done on Google shows that years ago, before the National Championship meets started, high school runners mailed their timings to a national postal competition and a champion was selected. Though it is unclear when these virtual runs expanded to mass audience, in the days of lockdown, virtual runs have become a popular mode to satiate the needs of those runners who just cannot stop themselves from running. This is also a boon to many runners who are otherwise unable to participate in many running events owing to the demands of travel, time and other issues.

How do these virtual runs work? You register for an event, run at your own place, comfort and time. You need to log on to some running app or watch to submit the time, based on which e-certificates, medals, tee shirts are couriered to your address.

With virtual runs, one does not have to deal with traffic hassles and there is no need to wake up at the crack of dawn to get ready and travel to the race venue. There are no parking hassles or unexpected schedules and conflicts or injuries that might cause you to miss the race, according to Mark Petrillo, owner of Virtual Strides. You have the flexibility of time, place, nutrition, hydration, comfort etc.

Alex Anastasiadis, owner of Running Wall says “For us virtual racing is not a replacement, but an addition to the conventional race. Both should be a part of our training plans and training methods that we can use to become a better runner.”

I, for one, have benefitted a lot by having participated in more than 20 virtual runs during the lockdown period. Besides giving a meaning to my runs, they inspired and motivated me to complete my quota of runs for the day. Our own DRHM was conducted as a virtual run and saw healthy participation, almost like a conventional marathon. Coimbatore Marathon is going the virtual way. These virtual runs bring back memories of places you had visited some time, like the 26 virtual runs which take you globally across to all countries. The Temple Run adds divinity to your runs, also

a visualization of all those wonderful temples which you had visited earlier. Then there was this Global Climbing Challenge which required you to climb a minimum of 111 stairs for 111 days. These virtual runs and events do keep you challenged and give you an opportunity to understand your limitations and strengths and make you perform better.

On the pros and cons of Virtual Running events, I am of the view that unlike a traditional running event where the organizers provide us with clear traffic-less routes, fully loaded aid stations and post-run nutrition besides medals and breakfast, for virtual runs, an e- certificate will suffice to inspire the runner. E-certificates are cost-effective and there is no need for organizers hosting virtual events to charge high amounts for e certificates.

In the ultimate analysis, I feel that Virtual Runs are here to stay. Tata Mumbai Marathon showed the way. It is up to the people to choose what they want. I have personally come across many people who have stopped registering for the traditional running events in their city arguing that they do not wish to pay for running in their own city. But eventually, Virtual Runs or not, the ambience of the traditional marathon, the crowd, the mind blowing

music and dance, meeting friends from other running groups, the heart beat while waiting for the flag-off, the countdown to the start, the roar of the crowd, the innumerable selfies, thronging the Aid Stations, ecstasy of touching the finish line and proceeding to gobble down the Idli, pongal, Chutney-sambar and coffee and gloating over the medals, will definitely be sorely missed.

“You were born to run, maybe not that fast, maybe not that far, maybe not as efficiently as others. But to get up and move, to fire up that entire energy-producing, oxygen-delivering, bone-strengthening process, we call Running.”

- Florence Griffith Joyner.

Functional Breathing – Stairway to Better Performance

Aravind Kumar

Humans can stay without water for 2-3 days and without food for 1-2 months, however the world record for a breath hold is only 24 minutes and yet, as athletes, we spend a lot of time on hydration and nutrition but largely ignore working on our breathing abilities. With respect to the human body, irregular sleeping and breathing can cause adverse effects to all bodily functions. Both functions fall right under the basic physiological needs of Maslow's hierarchy and yet, we spend very little time on understanding how our breathing and sleep works. Proper Functional breathing often is the missing link in terms of better fitness and even better quality of life. Despite this, functional breathing training has always taken a backseat, when compared to mainstream fitness trends.

Symptoms of Dysfunctional Breathing

- Breathing through mouth
- Regular Sleep Apnea
- Snoring
- Chronic Hyperventilation – Heavy breathing (audible-mostly through upper chest)
- Nasal Congestion
- Breathlessness during activity, to state a few

What is the Correct Way to Breathe?

Chronic breathing issues can be detrimental to your athletic performance and your life, in general. Proper functional breathing can be practiced by Nasal diaphragmatic breathing. Whenever you are stressed, have you ever observed that the first visible change in your body is your breathing? It is also pretty common for a lot of yoga instructors instructing to take slow deep breaths. Slow deep breaths does not refer to the volume of air-intake. It refers to diaphragmatic breathing. While there is a huge debate on breathing through nose or mouth, there is ample research to prove that nasal breathing has a lot of benefits compared to mouth breathing, which can cause a lot of chronic breathing problems. The ideal way to breathe is 6-8 breaths per minute through nose & diaphragm, which essentially means that a single breath inhale & exhale spans for close to 10 seconds.

Exercise: To understand how you breathe, keep one hand on your chest and one hand on your tummy/diaphragm. Observe your hand movement as you take your breath.



Have you ever wondered why you become breathless, when you do an intense workout and try to push your limits? It is due to bad tolerance of Co2 build-up in your body, more than processing oxygen. Let me break it down into simpler terms. When you hold your breath, Co2 builds up in your body. If your tolerance levels are less, you will most likely have a lower Body Oxygen Level Test (BOLT) score (ability to hold your breath). When you have a higher BOLT score, you can hold your breath for a longer time and your tolerance levels to Co2 build-up in your body is high and your performance improves.

BODY OXYGEN LEVEL TEST (BOLT)

To understand your current status of breathing, I recommend everyone to do the BOLT test. BOLT is a very accurate tool to determine your breathing volume. The greater the breathing volume, the lesser the bolt score and vice-versa. Our goal is to increase our BOLT score and reduce the number of breaths every minute and reach 6-8 breaths per minute, as mentioned above.

This test has to be done immediately after you wake up, without any physical activity.

- Breathe in and out normally, through your nose
- Hold your nose with your fingers & prevent air entering into your lungs (keep your mouth closed as well. This is to be done after breathing out and not breathing in)
- Time the number of seconds until you feel the first definite desire to breathe. This sensation includes constriction of airways/contraction of your breathing muscles and abdomen
- Release your nose and breathe in through your nose. By the 2nd or 3rd breath, your breath should be normal

Rest for 2-3 mins and repeat 2-3 times to arrive at the right score to avoid any errors.

BOLT score is not a measurement of how long you can hold your breath. It's a measure of the time until you find the first desire to breathe. If you are unable to resume normal breathing within 2-3 breaths and you are still struggling to breathe, you have held your breath too much. Repeat the exercise.

It is most likely that all of us will fall under any of the 3 categories below

BEGINNER
BOLT SCORE < 15 SECONDS
BREATHLESS DURING HARD WORKOUTS
BREATHING AUDIBLE TO OTHERS
More than 14 breaths per min
SLEEP APNEA, NASAL CONGESTION, SNORING etc.

INTERMEDIATE
BOLT SCORE b/w 15-30 SECONDS
CAN MANAGE HARD WORKOUTS BUT CAN BREATHE ONLY THROUGH MOUTH
AUDIBLE TO SELF
10-14 Breaths per min
Intermittent lifestyle issues

ADVANCED
BOLT SCORE >30 SECONDS
CAN SEAMLESSLY BREATHE THROUGH NOSE DURING HARD WORKOUTS WITHOUT BEING BREATHLESS
NOT AUDIBLE. CAN FEEL THE BREATH TO BE VERY GENTLE
6-10 Breaths per min
No Lifestyle Issues

With regular practice of nasal diaphragmatic breathing, we can slowly eliminate dysfunctional breathing patterns and thereby -

- Reduce/eliminate sleep apnea and snoring
- Sleep less and feel more rested and relaxed
- Reduce breathlessness and improve quality of life
- Improve athletic performance

Recommendations

Our goal is to improve our functional breathing by incorporating

- Nasal Diaphragmatic Breathing
- Incorporating regular breath holds to improve tolerance to Co2 build-up

BEGINNER
BOLT SCORE < 15 SECONDS
Tape your mouth for shorter segments during sleep to train your body gradually for nasal breathing
Incorporate regular nasal breathing throughout the day

INTERMEDIATE
BOLT SCORE b/w 15-30 SECONDS
Tape your mouth everyday during sleep to train your body gradually for nasal breathing
Incorporate regular nasal breathing throughout the day
Slowly add breath holds in your daily routine

ADVANCED
BOLT SCORE >30 SECONDS
Incorporate regular nasal breathing throughout the day
Slowly add breath holds in your daily routine and training

Disclaimer – If you have diabetes, asthma or any other health complications, please do not practice breath holds. Pregnant women are also advised not to do any breath holds. Please consult your physician, if you have any health complications before incorporating any kind of training.

The Author of this article is a certified breathing expert and India's first Oxygen advantage breathing Coach.





Running against all odds

Geeta Viswanath

As runners, we applaud the professional achievements and lives of hugely successful runners in the international arena and follow their careers with a great deal of interest, hoping to get inspired by them. But very often, inspiration comes from closer home, from ordinary people coming from different backgrounds, working on themselves to achieve something extraordinary, through sheer talent and hard work.

The **'Star Runners'** programme of Chennai Runners focuses on identifying such talented young runners who hail mostly from the interior parts of Tamil Nadu. The goal of the programme is to provide these runners with an opportunity to benefit from holistic and free structured training and support them to compete at least till the National level. This includes providing them with appropriate running gear, facilitating their coaching, travel, stay and registration for participation in events like the Chennai Marathon, getting them treated from injuries and eventual rehabilitation, giving them a chance to interact with eminent sports persons and providing counselling with Sports Psychiatrists and guidance for career opportunities.

Every year, around 50 runners are supported in this manner during the Chennai Marathon, of which around half of the runners are female runners. In its 7th year now, the Star Runners programme has seen remarkable success, with almost 40% of these runners finishing at the podium every year.

Team Rundown spoke to one of the young runners – **Thirunavukkarasu Kannan**, to understand the challenges faced by him and what motivates him to continue with running, despite facing obstacles.

Originally hailing from Periya Pillayarkuppam, a small village near Panruti, Thiru is painfully shy and unassuming. His first reaction when we wanted to speak with him was "I have not done anything exceptional". It took some time for us to coax Thiru to open up and share his story.

Thiru comes from a family comprising of a father who is physically disadvantaged and mother who is a daily wage earner and the main breadwinner at home. His elder sister holds a Diploma in Nursing and was working at one of the city hospitals but lost her job during the Corona Pandemic and lockdown.

His first brush with running was when he was around 13 years old. Studying at the Government School in Pondicherry, he initially took up running to spend more time with his classmates. His first run in a local event at Pondicherry was when he was 16 years old, where he came in 3rd place.

Having won the 3rd prize and with some encouragement from his Handball Coach, he decided to pursue running more seriously and subsequently went on to bag the 3rd place in a 12 kms run at Pondicherry. By the time he turned 17, he held the record for running 5 kms in Pondicherry. Has his record been broken till date? Thiru says he is not aware.

In his initial running years, Thiru focused on running shorter distances but gradually moved on to running long distance. His efforts bore fruit and he came in 3rd and 2nd position in 5 and 10 kms. category respectively, at the Madras University Games.

To pursue running more professionally, Thiru is pursuing his college studies in Chennai. A student of A.M. Jain College in Meenambakkam, he has represented his College in many running events. He is currently being coached by Abraham Rajan, a former 800 m gold medallist at the 1981 Asian Athletics Championships, at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.

Thiru's day begins at 5 a.m. when he, along with fellow runners, assemble at the Stadium for practice. Coach Rajan, a task master, then puts the runners through their paces (stretching, running, weight training etc.) for about 3 hours. It is college-time then, followed by another round of practice for 3 hours from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

At 21 years of age, his achievements thus far have been impressive (see inbox), but Thiru is aware that he has a long way to go before he makes his mark in the running arena. Running 10 Kms with a timing of 32.07 minutes at the All India Level Inter University Athletics Meet was enviable, but only secured him the 6th place at the event and hence, his constant refrain is that he needs to improve his timing to sub-30 minute level, for a podium finish at the National level.

With a family which looks up to him to become the main earning member, Thiru is determined to train hard and break into the National level at the earliest, as he knows that this will help him get a job under the sports quota and ensure a better life for him and his family. Here's wishing Thiru all the best!

Thiru's list of achievements

2nd place

at University of Madras Cross Country Race – 12.5 kms.
@ 42.30 minutes

2nd place

at University of Madras Athletics Meet 2019 – 10000 mtrs.
@ 34.25 minutes

3rd place

at University of Madras Athletics Meet 2019 – 5000 mtrs.
@ 16.07 minutes

2nd place

at Tamil Nadu Inter University Meet – 5000 mtrs.
@ 16.01 minutes

6th place

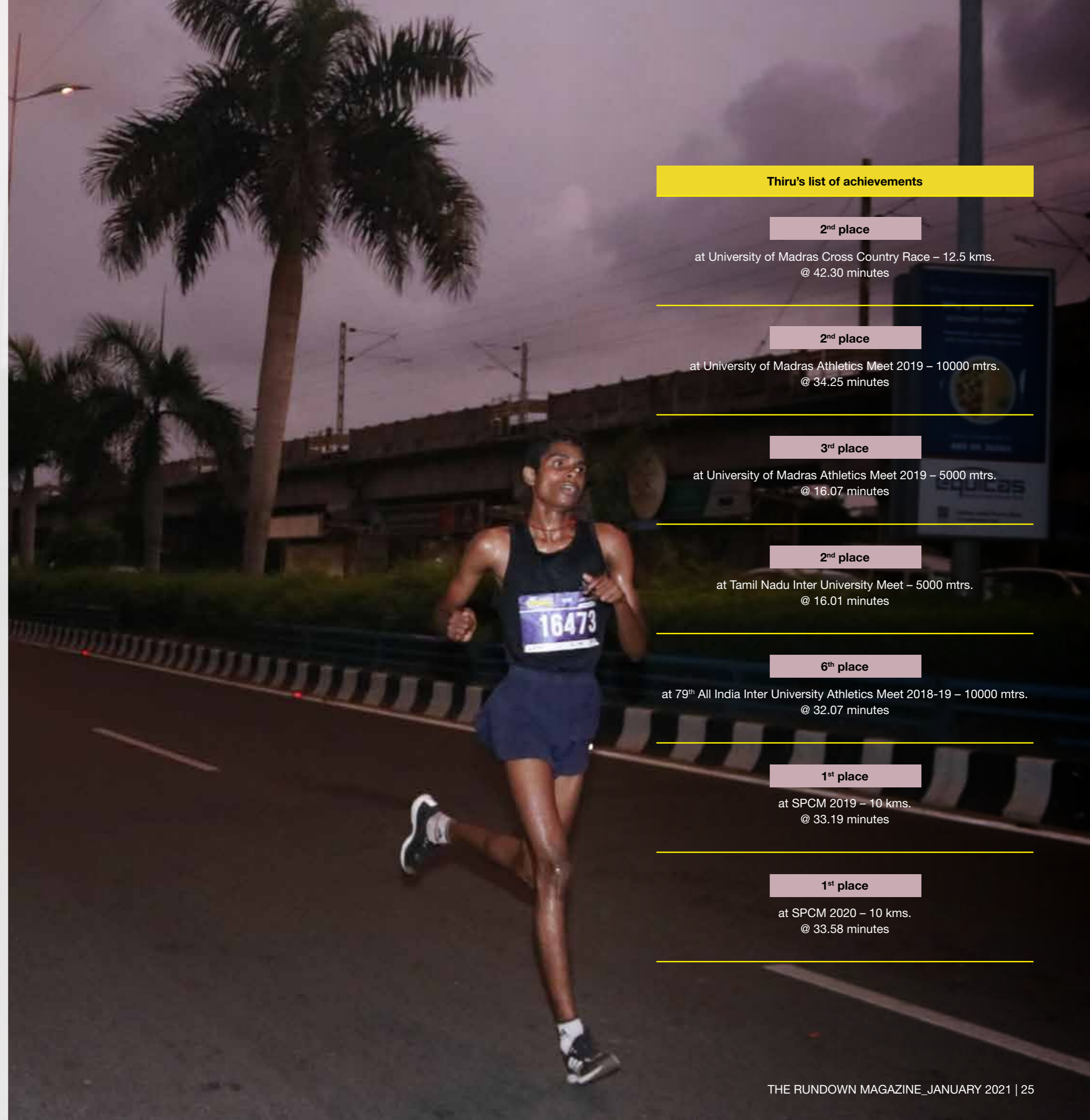
at 79th All India Inter University Athletics Meet 2018-19 – 10000 mtrs.
@ 32.07 minutes

1st place

at SPCM 2019 – 10 kms.
@ 33.19 minutes

1st place

at SPCM 2020 – 10 kms.
@ 33.58 minutes



கழிப்பட்டு ஏரி

ஷான் கருப்பசாமி

“ இந்த மாநகர வாழ்க்கையில் ஒரு ஏரியிலோ அல்லது குளத்திலோ இருக்கும் நீரை கையால் அள்ளி கடைசியாக எப்போது சுவைத்துக் குடித்தீர்கள்? ”

ஈ.எ.பி. அமைப்பின் நிறுவனரான அருண் கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி கேட்ட இந்தக் கேள்வி இன்னும் என் காதுகளில் ஒலித்துக் கொண்டே இருக்கிறது.

இங்கிலாந்தின் லேக் டிஸ்ட்ரிக்ட் எனப்படும் இடத்தில் 20 பெரிய ஏரிகள் உள்ளனவாம். அதனால் அந்தப் பகுதிக்கு அந்தப் பெயரை வைத்துப் பெருமைப் பட்டுக் கொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள். ஆனால் தமிழகத்தின் ஏரி மாவட்டமான காஞ்சிபுரம் மாவட்டத்தில் பெரிய அளவில் மட்டும் 80 ஏரிகள் உள்ளன. சிறிய ஏரிகளோ நூற்றுக் கணக்கில். எப்போதும் வறண்டே காணப்படும் பாலாறுதான் இந்த மாவட்டத்தின் ஒரே ஜீவநதி. ஆனால் ஏரிகள், குளங்களை செம்மையாக நிர்வகிப்பதன் மூலம் பல நூறு ஆண்டுகளாகத் தனது செழிப்பைத் தக்கவைத்துக் கொண்டிருக்கும் மாவட்டம் இது. ஆனால் நகர்மயமாக்கலின் பெரும் பசி இந்த மாவட்டத்தின் பசுமையையும் அதன் ஏரிகளையும் அதிவேகத்தில் உண்டு செரித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறது.

ஓஎம்ஆர் சாலையில் சில நூறு முறைகள் தெற்கு வடக்காக சைக்கிளிலும் காரிலும் கடந்திருந்தாலும் சிறுசேரி தாண்டியதும் கழிப்பட்டுர் என்ற பெயரைப் பல முறை பார்த்திருந்தாலும் அந்த இடத்தில் ஒரு ஏரி இருக்கிறது என்பதே பலருக்குத் தெரியாது. நகர் மயமாக்கப்பட்ட பகுதிகளின் நடுவே சிக்கிக் கொண்ட பல ஏரிகளின் நிலை இதுதான். தீவிர சிகிச்சைப் பிரிவில் இருக்கும் ஒரு நோயாளி மெல்ல மெல்ல உடல் மெலிந்து அடையாளம் இழந்து மூச்சுத் திணறி ஒவ்வொரு பாகமாக செயலிழந்து உயிரிழப்பது போல் அந்த ஏரிகள் நலிவடைந்து வறண்டு தூர்ந்து ஒரு காலத்தில் இறந்து விடுகின்றன. இறந்து போனவரை நினைவில் கொண்டிருப்பவர்களும் மறைந்த

பிறகு இந்த உலகிலிருந்து அவர் பெயர் முற்றாக மறைந்து போகும். அதுபோல இந்த ஏரிகள் அங்கே இருந்தன என்ற தகவலும் பின்னாட்களில் மறைந்து போய்விடும். நமது வீடோ அல்லது அருகிலுள்ள ஒரு பூங்காவோ அல்லது ஒரு பரபரப்பான பேருந்து நிலையமோ என்றோ ஒரு நாள் நீர் நிரம்பித் ததும்பிக் கொண்டிருந்த ஏரியின் மீது அமைந்திருப்பது நமக்குத் தெரியாமலே கூட இருக்கும். உதாரணத்துக்கு, பெரிய ஏரி (The Long Tank) என்ற ஒரு மாபெரும் ஏரி சென்னையில் 1921 வரை இருந்திருக்கிறது. அந்தப் பகுதியின் பல உயிர்களுக்கு ஆதாரமாக இருந்திருக்கிறது. அதெல்லாம் அதை மூடி அதன் மீது தியாகராய நகர் என்ற குடியிருப்புப் பகுதியை உருவாக்கலாம் என்ற மகா

சிந்தனை அப்போதைய ஆங்கிலேய அரசாங்கத்துக்கு உதிக்கும் வரைதான். இன்றைய நுங்கம்பாக்கம், தியாகராய நகர் என்று அனைத்துமே இந்த ஏரியின் சமாதானம் நிற்பவை தான். அந்த லாங் டேங்க் என்ற சாகரத்தின் எஞ்சி நின்ற சிறிய பாகத்தின் கடைசி துண்டுதான் வள்ளுவர் கோட்டமாக மாறியது. வள்ளுவர் கோட்டத்தைச் சுற்றிலும் உள்ள லேக் வியூ சாலைகளின் பூர்வீகம் இதுதான். ஆனால் அப்படி ஒரு பெரிய ஏரி அரசாங்கத்தின் பழைய பழுப்படைந்த வரைபடங்களில் மட்டுமே இன்று மிச்சம் இருக்கிறது. யோசித்துப் பார்த்தால் ஒரு மாபெரும் ஏரியின் மீதுதான் பிளாஸ்டிக் குடங்களுடன் தண்ணீர் லாரிகளின் பின் ஓடிக் கொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள் அப்பகுதி மக்கள்.

கழிப்பட்டுர் ஏரி காஞ்சிபுரம் மாவட்டத்தின் திருப்போரூர் தாலுக்காவில் அமைந்துள்ளது. சிறுசேரிக்கு அருகே பழைய மகாபலிபுரம் சாலையின் கிழக்குப் பகுதியில் 5 ஏக்கர் பரப்பளவில் அமைந்துள்ளது. பழைய மகாபலிபுரம் சாலையில் உள்ள பல அடுக்குமாடிக் குடியிருப்புகளுக்கு அரசு தண்ணீர் விநியோகிப்பதில்லை. அங்கே நிலத்தடி நீர் கிடைத்தாலும் பெரும் விலை கொடுத்து லாரிகளில் தண்ணீரை வாங்குகிறார்கள். ஏனென்றால் நிலத்தடி நீரின் உப்புத்தன்மை உயர்ந்து வருகிறது. கழிப்பட்டுர் போன்ற ஏரிகள்தான் முட்டுக்காடு ஏரியின் உப்புத்தன்மை நிலத்தடி நீருடன் கலந்துவிடாமல் பாதுகாக்கும் ஒரு அரணாக இருந்திருக்கின்றன.. அதிவேக

கட்டுமானங்களால் நீர் வழிகள் அடைபட்டு கரைகள் சேதமடைந்திருந்த அந்த ஏரியில் ஆக்கிரமிப்புகளும் குப்பைகளைக் கொட்டுவதும் தொடர்ந்து நடந்து வந்ததைக் காண முடிந்தது. இந்த ஏரியை அறிவியலரீதியாக மீட்டெடுப்பதன் மூலம் இப்பகுதியின் சூழல் சமநிலையை ஓரளவு காப்பாற்றி வைக்க முடியும். ஓஎம்ஆர் பகுதியின் தண்ணீர் பிரச்சனையையும் தீர்க்க முடியும். இந்த வேலையைத்தான் சென்னை ரன்னர்ஸ் அமைப்பு ஈ.எ.ஃப்.ஐ (Environmental Foundation of India) அமைப்புடன் சேர்ந்து 2019ம் ஆண்டில் முன்னெடுத்தது. இதற்காக சென்னை ரன்னர்ஸ் அமைப்பினர் பலரும் நிதி திரட்டி உதவினோம்.



ஏரியை மீட்டெடுக்க கீழ்க்கண்ட வேலைகள் முடிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. அவற்றின் இன்றைய நிலை இதுதான்:

1. ஏரியை அளப்பது, எல்லைகளைக் குறிப்பது - முடிவடைந்தது
2. ஏரியில் வளர்ந்திருக்கும் தேவையற்ற செடி கொடிகளை அகற்றுவது - முடிவடைந்தது
3. குப்பைகளையும் கட்டிட இடிபாடுகளையும் நீக்குதல் - நடந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறது
4. ஏரியைத் தூர் வாருதல் - நடந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறது
5. ஏரியின் கரைகளை வலிமைப்படுத்துதல் - நடந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறது
6. ஏரிக்கு நீர் வரும் வழியையும் வெளியேறும் வழியையும் முறைப்படுத்துதல் - இன்னும் தொடங்கவில்லை
7. பறவைகள் கூடுகட்ட தீவுகள் அமைத்தல் - இன்னும் தொடங்கவில்லை

2019ம் ஆண்டில் அடிப்படை வேலைகள் முடிந்தபோது பருவமழை வந்ததால் ஏரி நிறைந்துவிட்டது. நீண்ட நாட்களுக்குப் பிறகு நிரம்பி வழிந்த ஏரி அந்த வழியில் செல்வோருக்கு ஒரு அழகிய காட்சியாக இருந்தது. கோடையில் நீர் வற்றிய பிறகு வேலையைத் தொடரலாம் என்று முடிவு செய்யப்பட்டது. அதன் பிறகு கோவிட் தொற்று காரணமாக மொத்த உலகமும் முடங்கிப் போனது. ஆனால் நாம் முன்னெடுத்த பணிகளின் காரணமாக கழிப்பட்டு ஏரியின் நீர் இந்தக் கோடையிலும் முழுதாக வற்றவில்லை. அதன் பிறகு இப்போது தொடர்ந்து பெய்து வரும் பருவ மழையின் காரணமாக ஏரி இப்போது முழுதாக நிரம்பித் தளும்புகிறது. அந்தக் காட்சி சொல்லும் செய்தி ஒன்றே ஒன்றுதான். இயற்கைக்கு நாம் பெரிய அளவில் உதவிகள் செய்யத் தேவையில்லை. அடிப்படையில்

சில மாறுதல்களைச் செய்தாலே அது தன்னைத்தானே மீட்டெடுத்துக் கொள்ளும் என்பதுதான்.

காஞ்சிபுரம் மாவட்டம் ஒரு ஏரி மாவட்டம் என்ற பெயரை நம் முன்னோர்கள் பல நூறு ஆண்டுகள் கடுமையாக உழைத்து உருவாக்கியிருப்பார்கள். ஒரு அழகிய பூமியை நமக்கு விட்டுச் சென்றார்கள். அந்தப் பெயரைத் தொடர்ந்து தக்கவைத்து அடுத்த தலைமுறைக்குத் தந்து செல்வதுதான் நமது குறைந்தபட்சக் கடமையாக இருக்கும். சென்னை ரன்னர்ஸ் அமைப்பின் இந்தப் பணி இதற்கான ஒரு தொடக்கமாக இருக்கட்டும்.

ஒடுவது என்பது உடல் சார்ந்தது மட்டுமல்ல. பல நேரங்களில் மனம் சார்ந்ததும் கூட. ஆனால் அதற்கு

இன்னொரு பரிமாணமும் இருக்கிறது. நம் கால்களை அது பூமியோடு இன்னும் நெருக்கமாக உரையாடச் செய்கிறது. நம் சுவாசத்தில் அது வெளிக்காற்றை அள்ளி நிரப்பிப் போகிறது.

இயற்கைக்கு இன்னும் நெருக்கமாக நம்மைக் கொண்டு செல்கிறது. இந்த இயற்கை மட்டும் இல்லாவிட்டால் நாம் என்ன ஆவோம் என்ற எண்ணம் கட்டிடங்களுக்குள்ளும் கார்களுக்குள்ளும் இருக்கும் போது நமக்குத் தெரிவதில்லை. கழிப்பட்டு என்ற ஏரி தெரியாதது போல. நாம் இன்னும் இன்னும் நிலத்தில் இறங்கவேண்டும். கால்களை உணரவேண்டும். ஏரிகளின் அருகே நிற்கவேண்டும். அந்த நீரை அள்ளிக் குடிக்க வேண்டும். அந்த நீர் தூய்மையானது என்ற நம்பிக்கை நம் குழந்தைகளுக்கு வரவேண்டும்.

Physical Activities during Covid-19 era

Dr. Rajat Chauhan



**'If you seek peace,
be still.'**

**'If you seek wisdom,
be silent.'**

**'If you seek love,
be yourself.'**

- Becca Lee

That was the big lesson that Covid-19 reinforced on me. To be still, silent, and myself.

For the last seven-eight months, I was at the lowest of my psychological abyss. To make matters more interesting, the same happened to me physically courtesy COVID-19. Death doesn't bother me much. I couldn't have possibly prepared for the topspin life served to me. More than physical, it further broke me psychologically and then shredded me into the tiniest of pieces. Kintsugi, the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery, even if applied to humans, would have failed to fix anything because emotionally, I had been disintegrated into the smallest of particles, as if Thanos had just snapped his fingers.

All of this was necessary, though. I've been saying that I needed to restart in life for a while, but for that, I first needed to become one with nature dust. The Vipassana that I had always wanted to do but couldn't because of my supposed busy schedule was now totally on. I was connecting with myself like never before. I was free-falling like no one's business, expecting to hit rock bottom so I could bounce back. But I learned, what I had been preaching wasn't too off the mark. I had been resisting too much, fighting to get back up, forgetting that the whole mind-body gets engaged when one resists something, stopping you from being your natural self. But when you let go, not fighting, you start to float, levitating, letting go of your ego. And nothing seems to matter.

It started with an altered smell for the first 3-4 days. I learned that it was a symptom of Covid-19, but I also realised how powerful the mind can be and the games it can play with you. I thought I was a hypochondriac because I knew too much. A severe headache followed this. Now my antennae went up, and I immediately sought help. I reached out to a friend who specializes in Internal Medicine. He told me that it looked like Covid-19 even though my test came out negative.

That is one lesson we all need to keep in our minds. False-positive refers to when you test positive, but it is not. The same applies to a false negative. These happen because of

poor specimen collection by untrained technicians, improper transport of the specimen, labs with poor testing equipment and procedures. If you have the symptoms, treat yourself as positive and then take all the precautions. If you don't have the symptoms, but you think you were exposed to someone with Covid-19, yet treat yourself as positive and again, be careful.

For the same reason, even though I tested negative, but because I had the symptoms, I voluntarily self quarantined in my home-office, so my family wouldn't be affected by the dreaded viral infection. For a month, I just locked myself in. For the first week, my whole body hurt. I had a fever that would not settle down. I was vomiting all the time, not able to keep anything down. I was miserable. But unlike earlier times when I had fallen sick, I now had no one sitting next to me pampering me.

The second week I felt fragile. I just wanted to quit on all the medication, but then I knew how this disease could take a turn for the worse. Luckily I again tested negative. For the next two weeks, I was being super cautious and still stayed quarantined. It wasn't easy.

Throughout this time, I realized that I am insignificant, but at the same time, the most significant. Some friends randomly asked how I was, but most didn't even know, not that they would have messaged and called me every

day. I would have been and am the same with others too. The ones who were the most affected were my immediate family. That realization was crucial because we end up paying attention in the wrong places. It reminded me of Rocky V, where Rocky spends a lot of his time on the upcoming boxer at his son's expense, who ends up getting ignored. If you haven't watched that movie, you've got to.

Please don't get me wrong. I have some fantastic friends. I have no hard feelings against any friends because they didn't do anything differently from the way I would have been. I am just stating facts without being emotional here. If I were to die then, friends would have posted on Facebook that I was a decent guy or some such thing. And on the same day shared some joke and other random things too. That's how we all have become. But to my family, life would have been affected majorly. And to me, I wouldn't have mattered at all because I would just be gone. No clue where. If anywhere.

It helped me to put into practice something I had been preaching to my patients and friends for the last few years, be your best friend. For way too long, I had been searching for that elusive best friend outside. I should have been looking inside. If you think about it, if you don't value yourself enough, why would anyone else oblige? It starts with you. And then it all comes together.



For that, I needed to get up and reclaim myself. Before I fell sick, I put together online squats and fitness challenges to move folks from all walks of life and all kinds of fitness levels. As part of the Squat Squad and Squats Uni-V-Arse challenge, I had managed to do a thousand of them. I was in top shape. And now I was scared and unable to do even two. Leave alone proper squats; it was a challenge to sit down on a chair and get up immediately.

By now, stories of long Covid and cardiac impact were coming out. Even though I was lucky to have mild symptoms, that was playing on my mind too. I felt fragile climbing even a single flight of stairs. In February, I ran 20 km on ten consecutive days, each time in under 100 minutes.

How was I going to get to my previous fitness levels before motivating others to get moving?

I realized that it was going to be a slow and steady journey. There was no other way around it. Now, you would not expect this coming from the man who has been putting together arguably the world's most challenging and cruelest race for the last decade, La Ultra - The High. You need to understand that the reason for our success in Ladakh has been keeping the basics in place and at all times keeping safety first.

Being a Sports-Exercise Medicine doctor who is an advocate of Get Off

Your Arse, I recognize that physical activity, exercises, and sports will play a vital role in addressing Covid. But that doesn't mean that we become oblivious to the pandemic. Then how do we go about it?

I want you all to stay active, do your exercises and run or maybe even cycle, but at all times, maintain these three basics precautions. At all times in public, please wear your face masks, wash your hands with water and soap repeatedly, and maintain social distancing. When you are running in groups, please maintain 6 feet gap between each other, avoid group photos, and definitely no handshakes.

You might want to argue with me, but let me be brutally honest with you. No, we don't know enough about this virus, the infection it causes, and how it spreads. But I would rather be cautious and wrong than someone who, in his bravado and trying to prove himself right, gets hundreds and thousands of people killed.

Being active is important for both mental and physical well-being, to improve your immunity, and more so when you have co-morbid conditions like chronic diseases - Diabetes, heart diseases, cancer, etc. This recommendation comes with a word of caution. I would suggest that if you have had symptoms of Covid, please get back slowly to your exercises but slowly. Don't be in a rush to get back

your pre-Covid fitness levels. Keep the intensity of your speed workouts low and your running sessions not as long as you were earlier doing. The same applies to your strength training and other exercise sessions. Please keep the intensity low. Please don't look for your personal bests during these times. When your intensity of exercise is high, and you haven't rested enough, your immunity will be lower. This could lead to higher chances of you getting infected with Covid and its symptoms



appearing. At times not following this simple advice could be the difference between life and death.

It is a good time to pick up exercises for people who have previously been inactive but keep the progression slow. When you exercise, your rest in between sessions is important to recover fully and gain the most. I have been organizing 33 days **Run & Bee** camps where I try to get beginners or even season runners to connect with themselves. It is important for us all to realize that running is barely about running the way most people look at it. It is about getting to know yourself better, becoming better than what you were yesterday. In this Covid era, it is more important than ever to do this. A good by-product is that people become better at running too. But again, it is important to keep focusing on one baby step at a time, working on the foundation, something today's instant gratification society doesn't have enough time for.

The most important thing to understand is that you need to take **'care'** but not **'scared.'** There needs to be that delicate balance. Humans generally suffer from **'immortal-till-I-die'** syndrome, but during these times, we need to be immensely careful as our bravado can kill our loved ones too. But then again, we need to get our loved ones to move too. So let's all pledge to spread our healthy infectious habit of being active, but with caution.

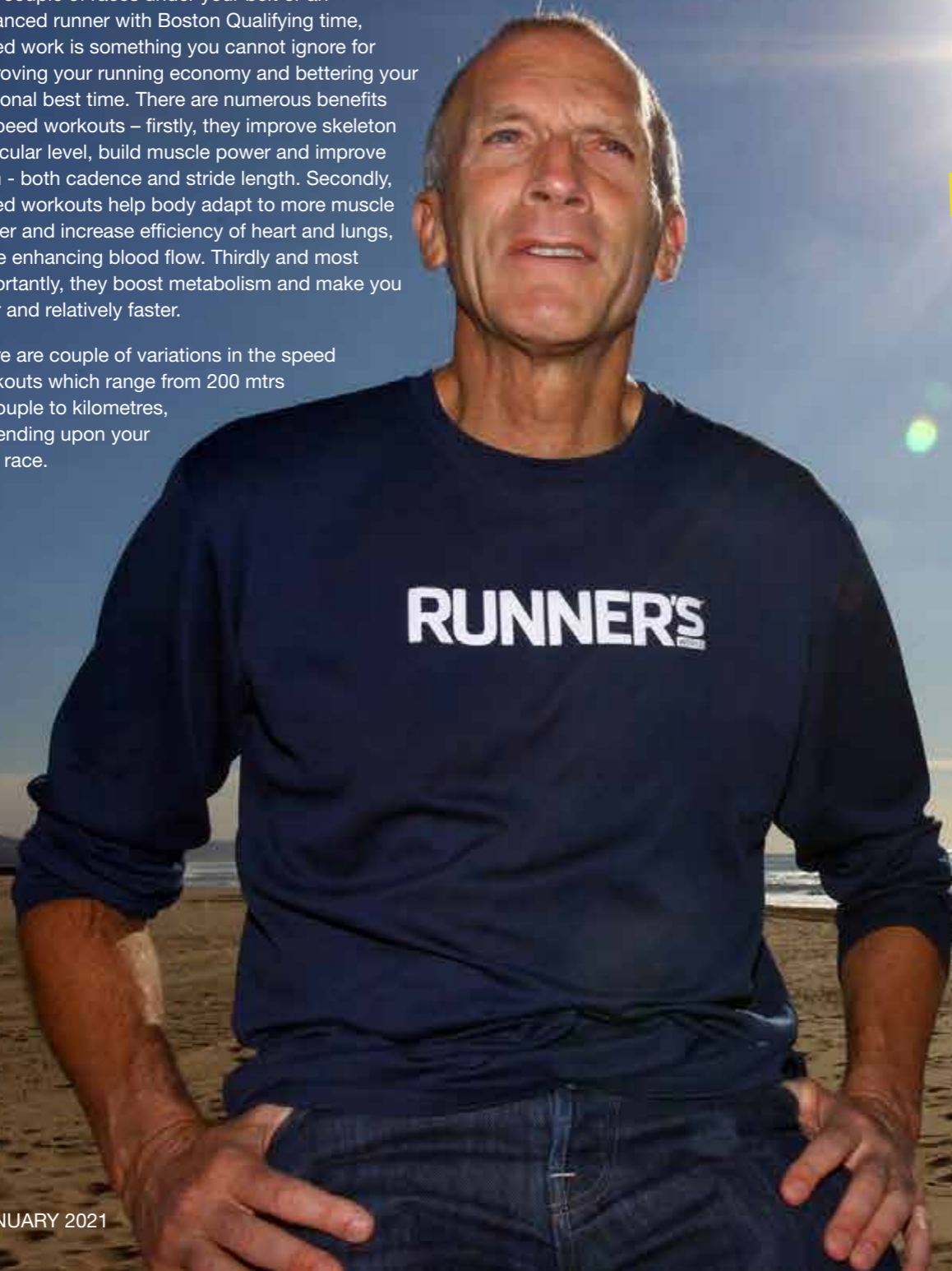
Need for Speed?

Essentials Speed Workouts for Runners

Vivek Misra

Speed is an essential ingredient even in distance running. Whether you are an intermediate runner with couple of races under your belt or an advanced runner with Boston Qualifying time, speed work is something you cannot ignore for improving your running economy and bettering your personal best time. There are numerous benefits of speed workouts – firstly, they improve skeleton muscular level, build muscle power and improve form - both cadence and stride length. Secondly, speed workouts help body adapt to more muscle power and increase efficiency of heart and lungs, while enhancing blood flow. Thirdly and most importantly, they boost metabolism and make you fitter and relatively faster.

There are couple of variations in the speed workouts which range from 200 mtrs to couple to kilometres, depending upon your goal race.



1. Short - Interval Workouts

These are 200mtr / 400mtr repeats that have stood the test of time and are one of the staples in the running plan of every amateur or elite. These interval workouts are basically high-intensity interval training (HIIT). When we do a high intensity cardio workout, our metabolism gets a boost which can help us lose some unwanted body fat. This is because HIIT workouts cause excess post-exercise oxygen consumption (EPOC). After you're done with your 400-meter repeat workout, your body will keep burning calories for hours because your body is doing work to bring it back into a resting state. Also, while doing such workout, you are increasing your force production - muscle size and motor recruitment are the two major factors when trying to improve force production.

2. Yasso 800s

Yasso 800s are an invention of Runner's World Magazine staffer Bart Yasso, who has run more than 50 marathons and ultramarathons. Because of their simplicity, Yasso 800s have proven popular and useful for marathoners worldwide. Basically, Bart says that if you want to run a marathon in 2:45, 3:29 or 4:11, you should train to the point where you can run 10 repeats of 800 mtrs in the same time - 2:45, 3:29 or 4:11. The only difference is that your marathon time is hours:minutes and your 800 mtrs time is minutes:seconds. Bart suggests doing Yasso 800s once a week as part of your marathon training. Start with perhaps 4 x 800 and build up to 10 x 800. Between the 800s, take a recovery jog that lasts as long as your 800s.

Additional hint: Yasso 800s are a great workout for any runner. Because they

are "strong but controlled", they are basically a form of tempo training. A good Yasso 800 workout: 6 x 800 at Yasso pace with recovery jogs between the 800s. On a personal note, Yasso 800 is my favourite workout - be it Half-Marathon or Marathon Training.

3. Tempo Running

Tempo runs, threshold runs, T-runs, anaerobic threshold or lactate-threshold run, etc. are at a tempo that's "comfortably hard," corresponding to about 85 to 90 percent of your maximum heart rate. In amateur terms, a tempo run is a pace about 20 to 30 seconds per km slower than your current 5K race pace.

Scientifically, the concept stems from a June 1982 paper in the European Journal of Applied Physiology and Occupational Physiology by a team led by Bertil Sjödín of Sweden's National Defense Research Institute. Study found that over a period of 14 weeks, the performance improved by 4% just by adding 20 minutes of tempo session. Tempo Workouts help build your lactate threshold : Your lactate threshold pace is the maximum speed at which you can run while still allowing your body to promote "lactate clearance." Lactate is what causes that burning sensation and fatigue during a hard effort, due to the lactic acid that builds up in your muscles during an intense workout. The more you practice running at faster paces, the longer you can go before you feel that burn.

One of my favourite tempo workout sessions which relies on the modified classic version starts with dynamic warm-up, which includes a 15 minute warm-up run, followed by 30 minutes of tempo / steady state running with 80% effort and ends with 15 minutes of cool down run and stretches.

4. Progression Runs

Progression run a.k.a Predator runs are the variation of tempo runs, first described by Scott Simmons, then coach of the American Distance Project, and Cory Ihmels, head coach at Boise State University. The idea of Progression runs was further developed by Greg McMillan of McMillan running who classified the same into three further categories.

The idea is to start at warm-up pace, then speed up slowly and steadily like a predator drawing ever closer to its prey. These can be longer than the classic 20-minute tempo (perhaps 10 to 16 kms., depending on your weekly volume), because you are starting slowly, then increasing pace, km-by-km or even every 2 kms. Progression runs are beneficial, but this does not mean that "all" of your runs should be progressions. Progression runs are just one component of a well-balanced training program and can be used to temper any tendencies to start runs too fast.

Final thoughts

Although the speed workouts are essential in a running plan and have number of beneficial effects on your running form, economy and power, the same should not be incorporated in the plan, if you are a beginner attempting your couch-to-5K or even your first 10K. One should at least make some aerobic base which can be upto 6-8 weeks to start with, in order to best execute these speed workouts. And most importantly, the key to injury-free training - while in a group session, neither compete with faster runners nor run with runners slower than you.

Have fun with Speed Work in next season!!



HOW I DISCOVERED AND CONTRIBUTED TO SOCIAL CAUSES THROUGH RUNNING

*Run!!! The world needs
more of it!!!*

Aravindhannamalai

I kick-started my first marathon in Bengaluru way back in 2007. Those were days, where I ran only on the marathon days without any training. After moving to Chennai, I started with the TWCM 2013 and have been taking part until the last edition. I joined the local chapter of Chennai Runners in the year 2018. One of the greatest joys of the sport is belonging to that sports community which empowers us to do more. Even though everyone runs at a different pace as we do in our life, we drive each other to be the best version of ourselves. This got me into a regular run and core session schedule, which made me fit to participate in many other marathons and half marathons.

The goal of the Chennai Marathon year-on-year is aligned towards contributing to a social cause, be it Education, Wellness, Environmental awareness or any such motive. I always look forward to giving back to society and would like to take up

that kind of opportunity. It is important to create awareness about a variety of these causes. Beyond the sense of achievement that you will get from finishing a race, running for a social cause will give you further purpose for completing the event and accomplishing a good deed. If you can achieve your personal goals as well as raising valuable funds for a social cause of your choice, this can add another level of effort to the challenge. On race day, the contentment of a day well-spent matters the most.

Visiting the stalls from the NGOs at running events draws you towards the cause. It also helps you to know more about it. I would like to recollect Tsunami stall (Fundraiser for Tsunami victims) in Auroville Marathon. If you also notice the Chennai Runners events, the way things are organized with social responsibility, the participants also invariably begin to think and act accordingly. Be it

Volunteering, Discipline in the BIB distributions, or Waste management, these activities transform us into a socially responsible citizen.

I had an enlightening experience while participating in a wheelchair marathon, where I assisted a wheelchair runner in the last kilometer. I experienced the difficulties of steering a wheelchair and understood their pain of doing it daily. Now, when I see persons with disabilities, I try to put a smile on their face.

The company that I work for, has a charity campaign known as "**Move your feet**" which encourages its worldwide employees to take part in running, cycling & swimming. Each KM of an employee's activity translates to a euro which is then donated towards a social cause. The company donated a huge amount to "Clarke School for The Deaf & Mentally Retarded – Chennai". We can

see that, how a bit of sport combined with a lot of passion can influence people's lives in need.

Very recently, our local chapter donated rations to over 100 families who were stranded due to the lockdown. This is a standing proof that wonders do happen when like minds come together as a community.

So, taking part in the running events not only helped me in imbibing the culture of health and living an active lifestyle, but also contributing to a social cause through this.

The very apt tag line of our Chennai Runners goes well with this motto :)

Do more... Start running!!!

RACE DAY

03 - 01 - 2021

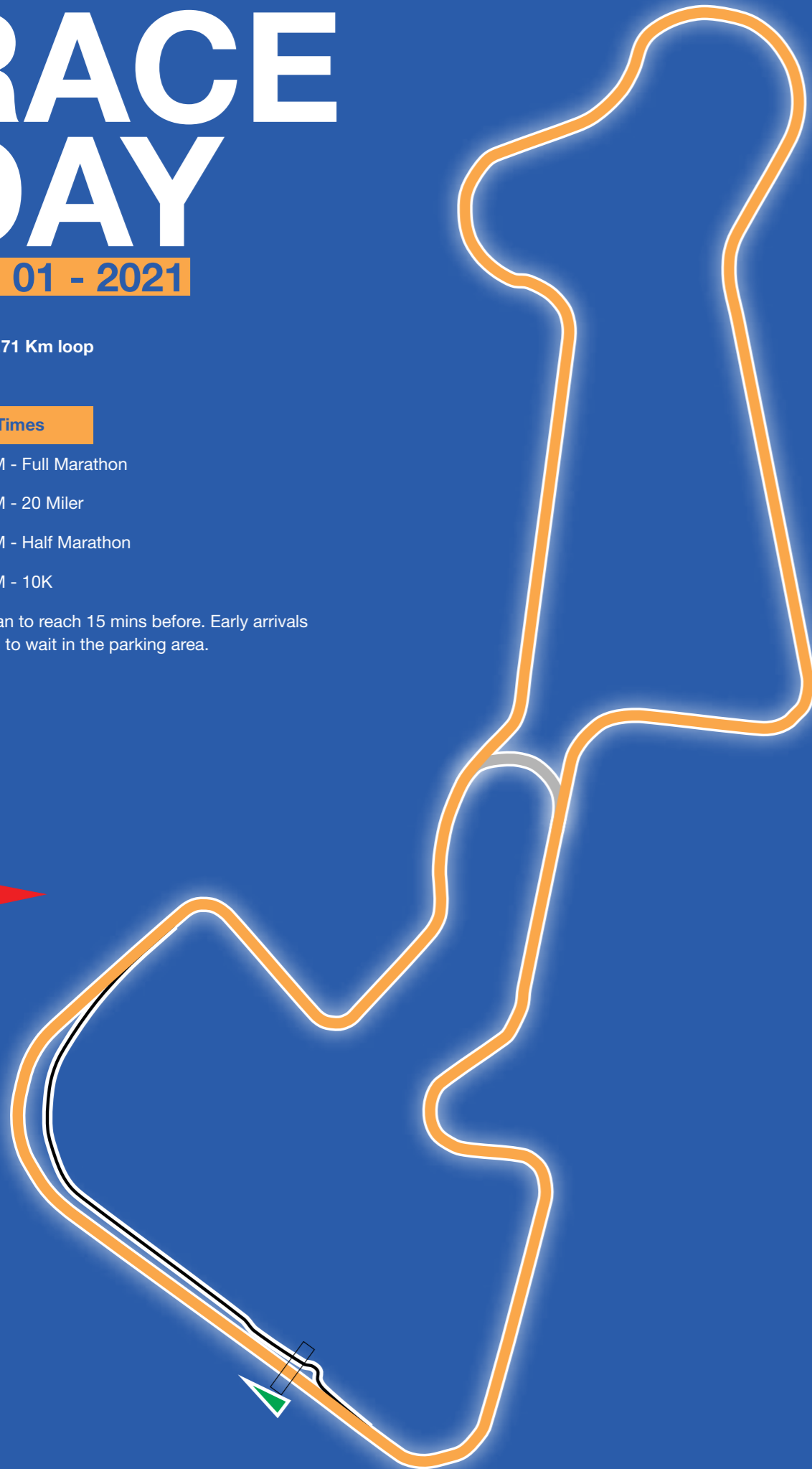
Track - 3.71 Km loop

Starting Times

- » 4.30 AM - Full Marathon
- » 5.30 AM - 20 Miler
- » 6.15 AM - Half Marathon
- » 7.00 AM - 10K

Please plan to reach 15 mins before. Early arrivals may need to wait in the parking area.

N



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Aid Station 2 - Water and Fast & Up, Banana, Chikki, Lemon/Salt

Breakfast

A2B packed breakfast

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Medical tent by Apollo Team

First responders - Alert

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- » Baggage counter available at the venue
- » Mobile toilets available @ 2 locations (start point & about 2 Km from there on track)



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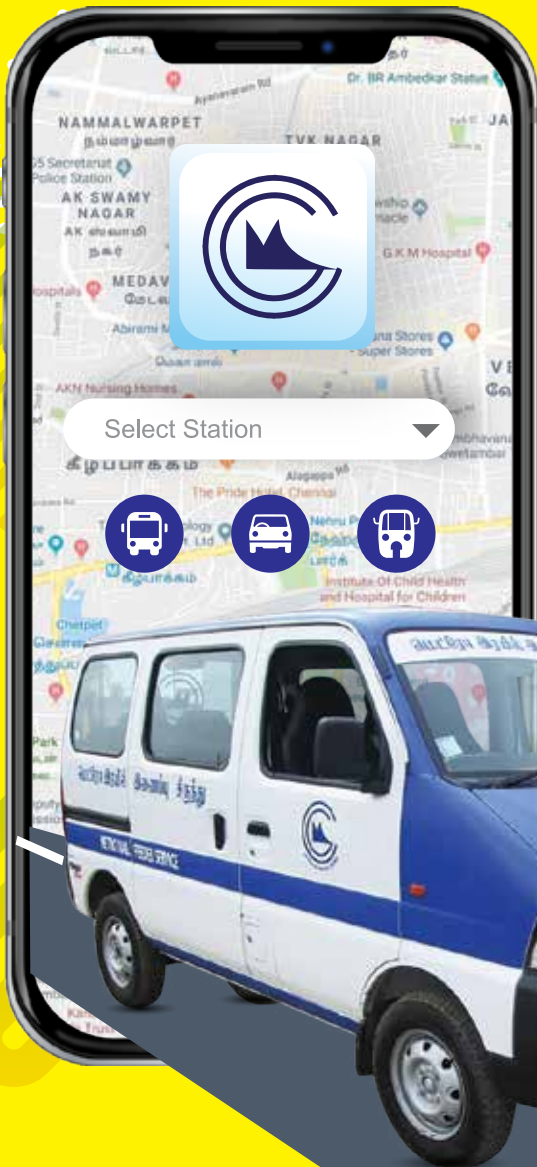
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