

THE RUNDOWN

AN INITIATIVE OF THE CHENNAI RUNNERS

ISSUE #2

Where
Women
didn't Dare

Run:
Faster
and Longer



Quit
Smoking
Movement

Marathon
Musings

Charity
Matters

2013
TWCM
Landmarks



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Runners



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A Mantra called Inclusive

In 2007, sometime in August, as a young journalist from the India Today Group, I trotted my way, well before the break of dawn, to meet with and chronicle the genesis of a motley group of boys who liked to run (long distance) and simply called themselves Chennai Runners. I met them, post-their run, at the Anna University campus grounds; in the context of the group that spot, is sacrosanct! It is a space where they assemble and run from and run back to – for a scrumptious breakfast – every Sunday! And for years now!

I was enthused not merely by their commitment towards running but also their enthusiasm and energy in being inclusive and wanting the (running) community to grow. I attempted to capture that very spirit in a 600 words' piece that appeared in the pages of the magazine with a small group – sweaty tees, and the burst of happy hormones - flashing smiles and funny poses for the camera.

In the course of my journalistic career, I have bumped into them, time and again, noting and letting the city and the country know of their slow but steady growth, over the years. More runners, more runs, more chapters, more women... More, everything! I have also grown – older and as a runner – with them, wondering, over and over, about their sincerity and earnestness to keep at the road, rain or shine, and welcome one and all into their crew!

Last year, when the run assumed a gigantic status, both in terms of size, quality and numbers, the group very kindly invited me to curate and produce a magazine leading up to the run! I had a very informed and knowledgeable team that filled in facts and gaps and allowed me to launch what, we are hoping, will become India's first runners' magazine!

In a way, inclusion is at the core of this year's edition. Our editorial team, for one, had more heads than the last; in terms of content, we envisaged an editorial framework that is more than merely the story of the particular run in question or of the runners who meticulously craft it together. This edition is about looking at running with a new pair of lens – it's about entering the minds and mind-sets of runners who are crazy, it's about allowing people to share their personal stories on how running changed their lives, and habits; it's about exploring the social side of running; it's about unravelling stories of women who dare to run, despite the odds and challenges; it's about soaking in the sights that we pass by and enabling a run to be more than a mere personal experience... just to give you a hint!

Our cover photo – that features Deepa Bharathkumar, who has emerged as a key woman runner in the group – is reflective of how a marathon is a group experience and yet running, in a sense, is deeply personal. Spiritual, meditative... You get the picture, no?

Happy Reading
Editor

Edit Note

A Way of Life

This year, 2013, has been a very exciting year for us. Last year, after much deliberation, we bit the bullet and hosted our first full marathon. The Wipro Chennai Marathon 2012 brought us unimaginable accolades and opened our eyes to the immense running talent and enthusiasm in Chennai.

We, the Chennai Runners, are a small but closely-knit group. We are runners and friends and family, first of all. Putting together an event on the scale of TWCM 2012 was no mean task and we are grateful to our various partners for their help in making it a grand success.

Running is not a "sport". It isn't even a hobby. I think it is a way of life. We live, breathe and eat running – to use a cliché. Our team is so excited that we, yet again, have the opportunity of bringing that unique exhilaration of running to Chennai.

TWCM 2013 is going to bigger and better than TWCM 2012. We have learnt a lot of lessons from our past experiences in organising running events and will spare no effort in ensuring that December 1, 2013 will be a fantastic day in your life.

We'd like to thank our core committee members, our sponsors and all our participants for making this year's event an even bigger success.

Happy Reading and Running
Race Director



Akhila Krishnamurthy



Shahid Kandrikar

Race
Director's
Note

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Core
Focus

Marathon Musings

Over the last six months, a focussed team of runners has dedicated itself to realising The Wipro Chennai Marathon (TWCM) 2013. Akhila Krishnamurthy meets a few key members for an insight into its genesis and journey

On a rainy afternoon two weeks ago, with a cyclone alert looming large over their shoulders, the core committee of The Wipro Chennai Marathon (TWCM), Edition 2, huddled around a large table at a coffee shop. The committee, essentially comprising founding and recognizable members of the Chennai Runners, was there to take stock of the big day and all its related and rather complicated paraphernalia. As an outsider, an observer, you know things are heating up, and in a sense, the countdown has begun!

In reality though, the countdown began many months ago. Race Director Shahid Kandrikar, Managing Director of a footwear company based in Chennai, admits planning for TWCM began as early as April. In July, TWCM began calling for registrations – and in a manner, that was as interesting as it was inventive. In addition to a host of marketing collaterals – bus backs, flyers and posters at vantage locations and newspaper ads – the official website and the Facebook page garnered attention not only from an already existing running fraternity but also from an all-new set of people, both men and women, who were curious but not entirely confident about their ability to run! As of date, the Facebook page has about 3,856 likes!

If numbers are indicative of success, then the committee's consistent and collaborative efforts are indeed commendable. On November 6, the last day for registrations,



Collage of stills from a series called Chennai Express used to promote TWCM 13 on Facebook; Photos Courtesy: RV Ramani

the scoreboard (of the number of participants who had gone through a registration process and officially signed up for the run) was 10,000. Last year, the opening edition of TWCM, witnessed a whopping 6,000 runners from across the country, and a few from the world, congregate at the verdant IIT campus and run across various categories, including a full marathon – 42.195km – a first for the organising team of the Chennai Runners.

Needless to say, that number is the realisation of one of the most significant goals for TWCM – “to get more people to share in the experience of running, and running a marathon that is curated and organized with adherence to quality, standards and experience,” says Kandrikar.

The other important goal was to realise more individual rather than corporate participation. Interestingly, all the publicity, promotion and the sustained efforts at fostering a running community has also resulted in a 20% increase in the number of women runners!



Running groups have mushroomed over eight years in Chennai. Training plans, daily schedules are more systematic and organized. In fact, a number of folks who ran the 10k last year have graduated to either a half or a full marathon this year

Ram Viswanathan, one of Chennai Runners' founding members, and revered both for his running and contribution to said cause, says, “What we are seeing now, is really the result of many years of awareness; running has steadily grown over the years. I went for a run this morning to Elliott's beach and it was heart-warming to see so many folks run on the road.”

Even though Chennai Runners can take credit for being pioneers in creating a running community, over the years, other forums and groups have partnered and nurtured that fraternity. “Running groups,” Krishna Kumar, a core committee member, says, “have mushroomed over eight years in Chennai. Training plans, daily schedules are more systematic and organised. In fact, a number of folks who ran the 10k last year have graduated to either a half or a full marathon this year.”

It is therefore probably fitting that the TWCM will be the crowning glory of a year packed with a host of running events – the Dream Runners, YMCA and the Terry Fox Run, to name just a few.

Even if it is not so, this event will mark the high point of 2013. It is, after all, an international marathon! VP Senthil Kumar, who was last year's Race Director (and when he is not busy running or organising marathons he sells computers), says logistical challenges pertaining to realising a run of this standard are huge.



Praveen Giriya, an active member of the Chennai Runners' KK Nagar Chapter; Photo Courtesy: Flashbulz Photography

“That has happened organically,” comments Preeti Aghalayam, a professor at IIT, a runner and someone who has been avidly rooting for the cause of women runners, “We used to have girls-only runs a few years ago. It was annoying to do that and anyway, people hardly showed up. This year, we started organising area-based group runs and entire families began to show up and now, we have lots of women who are regular and dedicated about running. In fact, there have been many days when training runs have featured more women than men.”

Obviously things did not change overnight, in the last six months or merely because of an active and aggressive presence on social media. Over the last seven years, a small but growing group of runners has been religiously campaigning and championing the cause of running.

"We needed to ensure," he explains, drawing on last year's experiences, "that we maintained standards. We were looking to be rated; we had to ensure proper aid stations, medical support, procure police permission, ensure road closure and thereby safety of the

runners. For the first time, we also had a timing chip for all runners; so in a sense, it was the birth of a truly international marathon. And we couldn't have done it, without the tireless efforts of the team."

If you ran TWCM last year, things are only going to get better!

The writer is the founder of a Chennai-based performing arts initiative called Aalaap and a journalist who loves running as much as she enjoys writing about it



Brand Quotient

Rahul Kadavakolu (Head, Global Field Marketing & Branding, Wipro Technologies) reveals the depth of association between TWCM and Wipro

Q: What was the trigger for Wipro's association with the Chennai Runners?

Sport has always had the ability to transcend language and cultural barriers to inspire a universal connection. We believe The Wipro Chennai Marathon (TWCM) will bring together people from different communities and diverse backgrounds on both professional and personal levels. We also believe the marathon is a great opportunity to engage with customers and employees, in a more direct way and give back to the community.

Q: The Wipro Chennai Marathon is in its second edition now; what is your take on the growth and journey of the marathon, per se?

The growth of a marathon can be gauged in two ways- number of registrations and conversations taking place on the marathon.

If we go by the former, the second edition of TWCM is poised to surpass the success of the inaugural edition. Last year we had over 5,000 runners but this year the numbers have doubled.

By conversations we mean the buzz created on social media, the coverage the event gets from regional and

national press and, of course, the word-of-mouth from our employees, customers and partner communities. If we look at these, we can say the growth has been phenomenal. We foresee TWCM becoming one of the landmark marathons in this country.

Q: From a brand perspective, how does an association like this benefit Wipro? How does conducting and supporting a marathon help the brand?

The Wipro brand has benefited from several quarters. First, from a larger community perspective, this marathon is a good vehicle to bring different communities together. Second, runners who have registered for the race will directly experience the brand in a close and personal way. We are proud to say that as technology partners we have introduced new aspects to the event. Third, as a property, we were able to cross-leverage our consumer care brand Glucovita, who are now Hydration Partners. Overall, this is a great brand fit.

Q: Is this a long-term association?

Wipro always looks at long-term partnerships to build a property and the same applies here. We hope to continue this partnership going forward as it allows for deeper engagement with the

community, including our employees and clients.

Q: Do you think running in Chennai is set to grow?

Running is becoming important for several reasons. I see three kinds of runners - a growing community of serious marathoners who run competitively. Then there are people who aspire to be part of a community and hope to leave a mark at an event. Finally there are those who leverage marathons as a platform to promote causes. I am sure there are many more groups but these are among the most prominent.

These are the reasons running is growing as a phenomenon globally and not just in Chennai. We have also experienced this with the Spirit of Wipro Run (a Wipro-owned run) held across 97 cities globally with over 50,000 participants; a marked increase from last year. Even with TWCM, this year's registrations and conversations are the proof of this phenomenon.

Q: How involved is the brand in the marathon itself?

We are 100% involved in The Wipro Chennai Marathon 2013.



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Good Samaritans

Charity Matters

Ashwin Prabhu argues that running is more than a way to stay fit. It is a community-building activity that inspires us to look at those less fortunate and think about how we can help them

The year was 1978. Dave McGillivray (now the Boston Marathon race director) ran across the United States in 45 days and raised \$150,000 for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

This simple but original gesture of support soon found emotional resonance in Canada two years later. Terry Fox, who was suffering from bone cancer and had a leg amputated, ran the Marathon of Hope with an artificial leg; he too ran from coast to coast. Fox raised both money and awareness for this deadly disease but, tragically, the condition forced him to end his quest mid-way and eventually claimed his life. However, his memory and efforts live on to this day – the annual Terry Fox Run is held across 60 countries, including India. The local edition has been held by the Indian Institute of Technology (Madras) over the past five years.

Photo Courtesy: United Way of Chennai / The Wipro Chennai Marathon



Marathon (TWCM) started last year and has partnered with United Way of Chennai this year too. Together, they raise funds and awareness for work being done by non-profit community service organisations in Tamil Nadu, in the fields of education and health. The event raised Rs25 lakhs last year and hopes to at least double that amount this year.

Outside of large professional events and big-ticket sponsors, the Chennai Runners – a band of die-hard runners – believe in giving back to the society through their sport. The Runners started Deepam – a Chennai-based NGO that empowers underprivileged children by enabling access to information and opportunity through the Internet. Proceeds from various running events conducted by the club have been used to nurture Deepam since 2006. It is important to know that raising money for social causes is not restricted to large events and clubs – passionate and committed citizens rally every day for causes they about.

So, why would you put yourself through the rigours of a demanding and frequently punishing 16-week training program for a full marathon, if the end goal is to solicit contributions towards a social cause?

As a people, we have an innate desire to do good and inspire others on similar paths. Running gives us one way of doing this. Long distance runners serve as inspiration to millions of people and are beacons of hope in a society in constant need of role models. Research shows that when a person is willing to challenge his own boundaries and push himself over and beyond a perceived threshold of physical capability, all for a cause he/she believes in, society at large opens both its wallet and heart.

Every one of us can find a way to run and support a worthy cause. Crossing the finish line knowing that you have done something to benefit someone in need, while at the same time achieving a personal milestone, makes distance running a uniquely gratifying experience.

The writer is an Internet professional during the week and a passionate distance runner over the weekend

Is running as big in India? Well, distance running has a far more recent history here, as does the concept of running for charity. However, thanks to the efforts of marquee running events this is changing

Over the last three decades, running and charity have become unlikely partners, relentlessly fuelling each other's growth. For example, research from Running USA says that in 2012 close to 5,00,000 runners completed a full marathon (42.2km) in that country. A large number of these were "charity runners". The same year, the top 30 road races in that country raised \$1.68bn.

Is running as big in India? Well, distance running has a far more recent history here, as does the concept of running for charity. However, thanks to the efforts of marquee running events this is changing. The Wipro Chennai



Ram Viswanathan's (Founder, Chennai Runners) mother; Photo Courtesy: Flashbulbz Photography

Girl
Power!

Where Women Didn't Dare

Harry Belafonte had the right idea when he sang "Man Smart, Woman Smarter". But even he couldn't settle the debate. These women might. Preeti Aghalayam meets three women runners who've taken the bull by the horns

Everybody needs inspiration, especially runners. For us women, there is the DailyMile – the runner's Facebook and our network of friends, family and colleagues, encouraging us to keep moving forward. And then there are tons of books, blogs and newspaper articles about somebody somewhere who ran faster or longer or stronger than we have so far and we think, "Can I do that?"

But there are some women among us who don't just think; they do. There are some women who do not need approbation and just go out there and achieve things we can only read or hear about. There are some women who stand shoulder-to-shoulder with men and routinely demonstrate that we are stronger.

Endurance running is a strange love. It seduces and traps you. One day you are a couch potato. The next day you are running a local 10km race and have re-discovered yourself, you think. Before you know it you are running half marathons and marathons and have bought a garmin, a fuel belt and sports bras in multiple colours. Race medals and used bibs litter your house. But it is not enough. You need more.

The Comrades Ultramarathon is a runner's Mecca. Runners from all over the world – serious runners, the kind that believe in the purity of the sport, the ones who run for the joy of it, ignoring everything else – show up in hordes year after year to celebrate the only way they know how – by enduring 90kms of tough South African terrain, pretty much all alone. The chance you will meet an Indian girl somewhere along the way, is, well, pretty slim.



From L to R: Shanaz Shacoor, Jayanthi Gunasekaran, Gauthamy Trishul and Amritha Bhalla; Photos Courtesy: Chennai Runners

The entry read K V Switzer and so the race officials just allotted the number 261 to this faceless entry and moved on. It was only when Katherine was already on the road that the race director realised what happened. That the world-famous Boston Marathon had officially flagged off a woman runner, for the first time in its 70-year history. And despite Jock Semple's efforts to waylay her and prevent her from proceeding further, captured for eternity in video, she would finish, the first woman to run the prestigious race (at least with a bib, as opposed to the several that would jump out of the bushes and just run it anyway).

Fifty years later, our barriers to entry are not as horrid. No one dares to prevent women from participating officially. Nobody insists (at least not loudly enough for us to hear) that 26.2 miles is 'too long a distance' for ladies to run. But it is still no cake-walk! The time cut-offs for the Boston Marathon mean that the casual runner, the kind that stops mid-way to take selfies and trains desultorily, cannot even dream of making it to the start line. This is perhaps particularly so in our country, where the words 'woman runner' are



Gauthamy Trishul

Before you know it you are running half marathons and marathons and have bought a garmin, a fuel belt and sports bras in multiple colours. Race medals and used bibs litter your house. But it is not enough. You need more

say 'Boston Qualifier' and people will probably fall off their chairs!

So there you have it – home-grown inspiration! So look beyond your privileges and run for passion. Run to explore vistas and distances and paces beyond your wildest imagination. Run to train, to be an athlete, to be you, to find health and happiness. Run to be that drop in the ocean. Run to hold your head high and say you are an Indian Woman Runner and to say it with pride.

The writer is a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Technology (Madras) and an avid runner and blogger

still said with a mix of admiration, surprise, and, frankly, disbelief. Now

A Tough Cookie

The year is 1997 and it is a cold November day in Allahabad. A diminutive lady in blue and white breasts the tape at the National Open Championship's full marathon event in 2:57:15. She is Indresh Dhiraj. There is not too much known about this 35-year-old. She seldom speaks. Her needs are few. She has been running since she was four and is a veteran of over 100 marathons. Indresh just runs, every single day. No matter what.

Having set several national and tournament records in various track events, she has, in recent years emerged as a formidable challenger for podium spots in full marathons in India. Winning The Wipro Chennai Marathon (TWCM) 2012, miles ahead of the rest of the field, Indresh looked cool. The humidity seemed to have not affected her at all. Her eyes searched the stadium and found her brother, coach,

and mentor – all rolled into one- and she bent down and touched his feet, as she does after every race.

"I don't look to win. That doesn't matter to me. I want to do my best. Improve my previous times. Set records," says Indresh. She travels widely, struggling through second-class train journeys and unfamiliar cities but always running and usually winning, while her face remains an impassive mask. She is so child-like in her looks and speech it is hard for us to believe she has been running for almost three decades now.

Coming back to defend her title at The Wipro Chennai Marathon (TWCM) 2013, Indresh sounds excited. Because the Chennai Runners are like family, apparently. Tears well up when we remember how in her life, running these races is everything – and no

hardship is too much. "I slept in a bus-stop near the start line last year but I still won. We are athletes, we don't seek luxuries, and surely cannot afford them," she says. We don't understand. She doesn't say it with any pride – just as a matter of fact. What is her motivation, we wonder. How does she endure it all? Why does she, we lament.

"Because running is my prayer," she says, her voice suddenly confident. And that is all she will say, letting her speedy feet do the rest of the talking.



Indresh Dhiraj



Ultra Focussed

Meet Vineeta Singh. This remarkable young lady is one of three Indian women who have successfully completed the Comrades marathon. Twice. In consecutive years - 2012 & 2013.



Vineeta Singh

“An Indian woman who runs has already broken so many barriers,” says this alumna from two of India’s super prestigious institutions – IIT Madras and IIM Ahmedabad. She is also a hugely successful business woman, with her own internet company started recently.

In 2012, Vineeta ran her first Comrades. Imagine running for almost 12 hours at a stretch! The wonderful atmosphere at the Comrades, the aid stations, the people, the beauty of the course itself and the mental strength from her husband’s support of her passion pulled her through for a finish in 11 hours and 56 minutes, just in time to earn the coveted finisher’s medal.

‘Casualties’ at the Comrades refers to people who drop out – either due to injury or hitting an unbeatable wall or maybe a mental block. They are more common than ‘finishers’ who have to meet cut-off times at various points along the course or else are yanked

by the organisers from the race. The atmosphere as the time nears the 12-hour overall cut-off time, is electric, poignant, emotional and full of tears. Sometimes of joy, sometimes of pain.

Back for more in 2013, Vineeta tackled the Comrades Ultramarathon again, which she says was much more difficult mostly due to the conditions. She pulled in once more in 11:56, thankful for her family, her support system, the people who drove behind her in the early mornings so she could train and live her dream and get these phenomenal achievements.

“Make a commitment. Choose yourself, your health and well-being. That’s the best gift you can give your family,” is Vineeta’s message to us women. Vineeta made the choice back in 2007, as a student, and hasn’t looked back since. She “dreams of covering every corner of the world, running”. We sit around and hope to live vicariously by reading her stories on her blog.

Super woman

Vaishali Kasture is not an unknown name. Ask Google. Her running achievements, her stellar career as an investment banker, her family and, heck, even her dogs, are famous. She also has the reputation of being a speedy runner, a force to contend with, having won multiple medals across the country, including Gold at the coveted Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon in 2012. This “super mommy” surely seems to balance it all – work, running, family - superbly!

“Beat the shorter distances first,” is Vaishali’s advice. She practices what she preaches. While getting her body and mind ready for the full marathon, she dominated half marathon distance events in all the races for several years. And we could see that she got faster and faster, destroying her own personal records, and the opposition, with ease and grace.

Under the mentorship of her coach Ashok Nath, she built up to the full marathon distance slowly and with restraint. Following a personalised programme involving just two or three runs every week – to build strength and endurance – and relying on her natural speed, this lady has achieved a phenomenal feat. That thing we all sit around and dream of. In her very first serious full marathon, she ran fast enough (3:31) to qualify for the Boston Marathon, with 14 minutes to spare!

The support of her coach, friends and even office colleagues has been wonderful for this lady, who admits

ruefully that her “BQ” post on Facebook garnered an incredible number of likes! Running is a big passion and she loves it for all the things it does for her – mental and physical. And being one of very few Indian women that perform at this level, she believes firmly that women are the stronger sex. And that it is vital that women avoid compromises on health and happiness.

“Focus, organise, de-clutter, don’t sweat the small stuff, call your mom, count your blessings, work on your nutrition, hug your loved ones, and most of all, remember, You are worth it,” she stresses. And, again, she leads by example and the results are there to see. We gaze disbelievingly at this slightly built lady, admire her inner strength and feel a twinge or two of jealousy as we think about her achievements and the fact that she will be conquering Heartbreak Hill few short months from now...



Vaishali Kasture

Who will you trust in case of an emergency?

BE SURE. CALL THE EMERGENCY SPECIALIST.



In an emergency, time is life and every decision can be life changing. Therefore, one has to be absolutely sure in handling such a situation. At Apollo Hospitals, we have a thorough and systematic approach to treating even the most complex emergency cases. Our internal alert protocol gets into action as soon as any emergency call is received. All acute care teams and support units are kept on standby for the quickest and most effective response. Once the patient arrives, all laboratory and imaging test results are made available without delay leading to quick diagnosis and rapid treatment. All this because, every second saved, is a life saved. As pioneers of emergency services in India, we understand this better than anybody else.



Doc Talk

A Guide to Niggles and Aches

Dr Kannan Pugazhendi offers some tips on caring for your body and your muscles, so you can run to your heart's content without breaking down

As our body and mind drift from sleep into a semi-awake state, intermittent flashes of running, sweetened by a fresh and invigorating morning breeze and the cheery chirps of birds create a dream-like daze. The day dawns with an open invitation from the unending road.

Running is a fun and smart way to stay healthy. However, if you do not take care of your body and treat it as the well-oiled machine it should be, all the running in the world won't save you from injuries and illness.

Beware. Remember you cannot simply roll out of bed and hit the road. Muscles shortened during sleep need to be stretched – these include the calf, the front and rear thigh muscles, the lower back and the chest. This need not be an intensive/vigorous stretching session but it is vital nevertheless.

If you wish to run with ease and comfort, you need to restore the elasticity of those muscles. These stretches need take no longer than five minutes of your time; remember to hold each stretch for up to 20 seconds.

The novice may, at this point, be worried of the aches and pains to come once the run actually starts. Let me assure you that proper stretching before and after a run minimises muscle soreness; the latter usually occurs within 24 to 48 hours of the run and proper stretching can help differentiate between that and a general soreness of muscles from pain due to other causes.



The most frequent injuries are to your bones – this could be periostitis or the inflammation of the periosteum covering the bone. In other words, shin pain leading to a stress fracture

If you experience pain despite proper stretching, you may need to seek medical attention. Pain that persists during the run or appears after can usually be avoided if factors like running surface, shoes, frequency of runs and improper pre-run stretches are properly coordinated.

If you find injuries occurring increasingly frequently, then look to your lifestyle off the road. For example, most modern jobs are sedentary – they require us to be sitting in one position for long hours and most offices do not have ergonomically designed furniture. Indeed, even poor driving postures can contribute to stress injuries or a general weakening of muscles. Either way, failure to identify these factors can prevent an early recovery or, worse still, indicate a failure to recover.

The most frequent injuries are to your bones – this could be periostitis or the inflammation of the periosteum covering the bone. In other words, shin pain leading to a stress fracture. In addition, sprains could lead to injured ligaments – an ankle sprain is the best example. Overall, injuries to muscles and tendons usually result in strains and tendinopathies respectively.

The problem with running injuries is that they are chronic and insidious in onset, except of course for acute ones like an ankle sprain and or a bone fracture. Chronic injuries start at the microscopic level, where healing of the tissue needs time and is often overwhelmed and unable to keep pace with the repeated assault made by the running.

On a final note, if people tell you of a connection between age and increasingly frequent injuries - do not believe them. Any link between the two has long since been discredited by a slew of veteran athletes and senior citizens, some of whom unintentionally put their younger competitors to shame.

Older people run to live longer. Younger people run down their tissue, inviting premature diseases, by failing to run.

The writer is a sports physician and Director of the Sparrc Institute, Chennai

Listen Up!

- Don't suddenly increase running distances
- Run on safe and level running surfaces
- Rest well between runs
- Wear proper running shoes
- Invest time in strength training
- Learn running mechanics
- Ensure you spend enough time warming-up and down after runs
- Eat healthy! And remember to replenish body fluids before and after a run



Fitness First

Run: Faster and Longer

Raj Ganpath says running is an awesome and fun way to get and stay fit. But, like everything else in life, it comes with fine print

Runners and fitness enthusiasts will agree – Running is a splendid activity! It keeps you fit, aids in weight loss, develops endurance and promotes cardiovascular health.

We're all aware of this. What we should, however, also be aware of is the idea of 'optimal running'. It is simple enough – running, when used optimally and safely, as a part of a training programme, is extremely beneficial.

But what is optimal running? How does one run safely? And why should it be a part of a training programme? Read on to find out.

Learn to Run

Ability and capability are two different things. Yes, you, as a human being, have the ability to run. However, this doesn't mean you should just cut to the chase and start clocking the miles. Most of us don't know how to run. We run with bad posture, inefficient cadence, suboptimal foot strike, excessive stomp and much more. If you enjoy running and plan on continuing to run for a long time to come, take the time to learn how to run. Your running form will improve, which will help you run not just faster and longer but better, safer and for longer.



Respect your Body

Your friend may be capable of clocking in 20k this morning, followed by a crazy day at work, belt out some intervals in the evening and wake up refreshed for another 20k the next morning. But that in no way means you are. Everybody is different and every body is different. Understand what your body is capable of given your current fitness levels and lifestyle. If you find yourself suffering from small but frequent aches or niggles, not recovering from runs quickly enough and not progressing in spite of consistent training, consider these a clear sign that you, given your body's capability, are forcing the issue. Your body is always talking to you. You just need to listen.

Attend to Injuries

Folks who take to running tend to injure themselves often. This is a fact that is both anecdotal and scientific. Now while the activity has nothing wrong with it, injuries are a result of abuse. Abusing here could mean running too much or running wrong and in most cases it is bit of both. As a runner training for an event it is understandable that you are driven and motivated to train and compete no matter what. But this is dangerous when such bad decisions of training through pain become a habit. Understand that running, or any form of training for that matter, should help build a better you every day and injuries are not the way to do that.

If you find yourself nursing niggles, dull aches or a pain, be it in any of your muscles or joints, put in the time and effort that is necessary for rehab. The smallest niggle could be a sign of a larger issue under the hood and it is best attended to as and when it happens. Taking time to rest, rehab and recover may cost you a couple of weeks of training time. But this is an infinitely better long-term solution. For someone interested in keeping running a part his/her life forever, two weeks is a just sliver of time, one you can well afford to surrender.

Plan Well

Showing up on race day with insufficient training may sound cool but, I can assure you, is asinine. The



Photos Courtesy: The Quad

Remember that anything more than 5k demands structured training for both runners who need guidance and for serious consistent runners

Good and legitimate training plans for five to 50k runs are easily available these days. Find one that matches your goals, lifestyle and personality and train per the plan. And no, you don't know better than the expert. Follow the plan.

Choose Better at the Dining Table

Since you run, you can eat whatever you want. Wouldn't it be great if that line were true?

Well, it's not. I understand you run many miles every day and that burns a lot of calories and hence creates a deficit but that doesn't justify using your mouth like a vacuum cleaner. Why? Well, because it is not just about quantity but also about quality. While how much you eat matters from an energy in-and-out perspective, what you eat (from a nutritional perspective) dictates recovery capabilities, muscle contraction-relaxation balance, electrolyte levels, fat loss, muscle gain, progress, immunity and more.

So as a part of training for your race, make an effort to eat well. Don't trouble yourself with diets or cleanses. A wholesome nutrient-rich diet filled with real foods that are abundant in both macro (carbs, protein and fat) and micro (vitamins and minerals) nutrients is all that you really need.

The writer is a certified fitness and nutrition coach and co-founder of The Quad Fitness



words 21k, marathon, 10-miler, distance running, etc, may be commonly used in everyday conversations among running groups. However, remember that anything more than 5k demands structured training for both runners who need guidance and for serious consistent runners, who want to run for many years to come.

Run for a Better You

ADVT

A disciplined fitness enthusiast, Shrikant Wakharkar, General Manager at The Westin Chennai in Velachery, has been a running aficionado for years. What started as a fitness routine soon turned into his passion, with Shrikant developing a keen interest in marathons. Although only a novice in the running space, Shrikant has remained focused on building his running threshold and participating in more fitness events.

In this, the second year of the Westin Chennai's association with The Wipro Chennai Marathon, Shrikant believes the hotel's wellness-inspired programs and values are one of the key reasons hotel associates and he can live up to the brand's promise – Wellness for a Better You.

A regulated diet, daily exercises and determination are key, Shrikant believes, for a successful marathoner. As he continues to plan for life as a competitive long-distance runner, regular consultation with Heavenly Spa at The Westin (an in-house wellness studio) has helped him improve his reflexes.



Here are a few tips to help you make a splash at the 2013 Wipro Chennai Marathon:

1. Practice regularly: Practice makes perfect. Remember there are people who have been training for months together. You need to match the general pace of the event. Regular practice will ease muscle tension and improve flexibility in your joints
2. Take it easy: During basic training, concentrate on running easy routes and avoid steep climbs or rapid descents. Try to run in pleasant and populated areas, to give you something to watch while you run, and see if you can run as a group. Do not strain yourself; try and combine running and walking
3. Eat a healthy breakfast: The brain is active all through the day and night. It uses glycogen from your liver while you asleep. A healthy breakfast restocks the lost glycogen; you will be less likely to run out of fuel. Add a few hundred calories with bananas and toast or a sports/energy bar
4. Sleep well: A good night's sleep during your training period will keep your body and mind fresh for early morning training sessions
5. Proper training plan: An unplanned training/running program can lead to disaster. Ensure you cover between 3km and 15km at least, to improve your endurance levels and prepare you for a full marathon
6. Warm Up: Just before the event starts walk around for a few minutes and stretch your muscles. Some 20 minutes before the event starts, stretch your body and concentrate on the muscles in your calves, hamstrings and lower back
7. Clothing: Never run a marathon wearing cotton. Try a material like nylon or CoolMax. Run a few trials to make sure you are comfortable and your skin is not irritated
8. Drink early and often: Start drinking fluids from the very first aid station. A regular intake of fluids and carbohydrates will reduce the risk of early dehydration
9. Keep moving: Do not stop at water stations. If you feel you need to slow down, speed walk or jog while passing the station. Once you stop running it is difficult to start
10. Take it easy at the start: Pace yourself in the initial stages and try not to get aggressive until at least the mid-point. And wait till you are significantly closer to the finish line before racing/sprinting
11. Select shoes carefully: When selecting footwear, make sure it is light and has good grip. Choose a pair of socks that go well with the shoes. Carry out trial runs in these shoes so you don't end up with blisters in the race itself
12. Mock runs: A few days before the event practice running with all your gear. You should be able to identify inconveniences and change your gear if necessary.

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Glam Gul

A Bollywood star and a former Miss Universe competitor, the inimitable Gul Panag offers an insight into her tryst with the open road. Akhila Krishnamurthy meets her

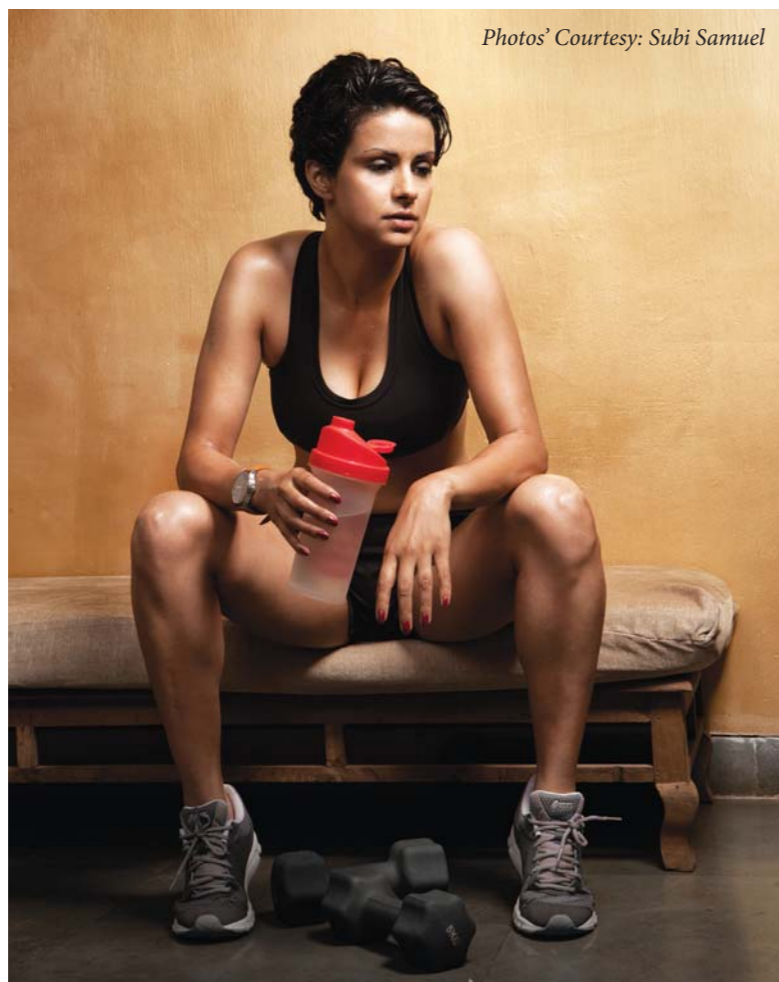
Q: When did you start running and do you remember why you started?

I was 15. We were living in Lusaka in Zambia. My father, a regular runner himself, started taking me along for his evening run. I didn't like it one bit and considered it a drudgery. Other kids my age would be chilling and here I was being forced to run! Even though I was already lean! My father explained to me that exercising and running was not only about trying to lose weight but also to be mentally fit. A few weeks later I began enjoying the runs and it now a habit.

Q: Have you been running regularly since or have you had to take breaks? What do you enjoy most about running?

I've been running regularly since – at least three times a week. And what I love most is that I get a high! The endorphins keep me happy all day long.

Photos' Courtesy: Subi Samuel



Q: Are you a morning runner? Where and what is your favourite running route?

I can run at any time. I prefer the morning but that is not always possible, particularly after a late night. When I travel I usually do morning runs. My favourite running routes include along the lake in Chandigarh and Hyde Park in London.

Q: How many kilometres do you run in a week?

Over the past few years I have supplemented the cardio benefit of running with strength training (two to three times a week). I also do yoga once a week. I now target two runs a week – an interval run and a distance run, usually eight to ten kilometres. And the appropriate stretching exercises before and after.

Q: What is your Personal Best? And how many half and full marathons have you completed?

A half marathon in 1:54 and 10k in 56 minutes. I've run 16 half marathons and haven't gotten around to doing a full yet.

Q: Your most memorable race?

The first Mumbai Marathon. It was our first – Mumbai's and mine. And till the day I ran, I had only ever managed 15k at a stretch. I was a little uncertain about my ability to finish. However, once I finished, I felt a tremendous sense of achievement and felt there wasn't anything in the world that I couldn't do. I have the same feeling after every run... big or small.

Q: What is on your iPod while you run?

Rock usually – Goo Goo Dolls, Foo Fighters, Good Charlotte

Q: What do you normally wear when you are running? What is your favourite running gear?

Shorts, if the weather is hot, and a high-impact absorbing sports bra. Favourite running gear – my shoes and my iPod.

Q: People say road running damages your knees; do you agree?

There are a lot of things that are said to damage us. I'm not sure how many of them are backed by conclusive research.

Q: Do you normally run alone?

I mostly run with my long-time running partner, my husband.

Q: How are you before a race? And do you race to win or run?

Excited and edgy. Not being a competitive and elite runner who runs for a living, for me it's all about running.

Q: Is running safe for women in India? Would you encourage more women to run?

Depends entirely on where they are running. Broadly



When I ran my first run, I was happy. I was really happy and I couldn't wait to lace up my shoes and hit the road once again. So the next day, I was out there and then the next and the next and the next and so on

speaking I don't believe we are a nation friendly to women runners. But I think more women should run. Running boosts immunity and is one of the best ways to fight lifestyle diseases.

Q: Do you watch your diet?

I eat with consciousness, keeping in mind my energy requirements.

Q: The best run outside Mumbai? And would you like to run in Chennai?

Chandigarh, and of course!

Q: Your running mantra?

There may come a day I can no longer run. Today is not that day.

The writer is the founder of a Chennai-based performing arts initiative called Aalaap and a journalist who loves running as much as she enjoys writing about it

Re-Imagining Chennai

Same City, Different Runs

Preeti Aghalayam finds out that mock 'mini-marathons' are the new kids in town, with runners finding interesting ways of making weekend long runs in preparation for the city's biggest event, The Wipro Chennai Marathon

Over the past year, groups of runners have blossomed everywhere, from Velachery to Anna Nagar. Even as recently as last year, people ran on Marina or Elliot's beach or in Boat Club. An occasional foray into the IIT campus and a weekend run starting at Anna University were the only things you could look forward to.

Today? Bajjanai, Chikkubukku, AlwarpettaiRap, Kutcheri, Gandhi Vanakkam, Peru Hill Run, CR Classic, Forest Run, Flyover Run - with creative names ascribed to various routes in the city, it seems like everywhere we turn people are running! The running fever has spread far and wide in Chennai and a virtual movement of sweaty, smiling runners is taking over the landscape.

"You guys are crazy," say unsuspecting strangers who don't live in the city and because they are our guests we bite our tongues and don't give them a piece of our mind. "How on earth can you run here, with this weather?" some others may ask, looking skeptical.

Well, we can. And we do. Not just one or two or three of us but hundreds of people, every single day of the week. The Marina beach is the haunt of the Marina Minnals - who start at the Lighthouse and cut a straight path all the way down past Napiers Bridge for an enjoyable 5km run. Or beyond. This stretch is great, especially before sunrise - the statues, the laughter club and roller-skating children offering much entertainment even as the miles are consumed.

Meanwhile, further down the coast, Elliot's Beach is home to not one but two elite running groups - the Dream Runners and the Bessie Flyers - and is a favourite route among all the runners in Chennai.



Working the Sands at Marina Beach;
Photos' Courtesy: Chennai Runners



Running High: On the Cathedral Road Flyover

Across town, 100+ runners meet at the Ashoka Pillar for their shot of euphoria. Up and down flyovers, along train tracks for the Chikku Bukku run (with an occasional gathering in Sivan Park in KK Nagar for a yoga session) the locals here are a very active and enthusiastic running community! This group recently hosted a run on East Coast Road - and overnight the informal event transformed into a big, enjoyable party for runners!

Recently, the running bug also bit the Chennai Trekking Club (CTC). This huge group, led by the charismatic Peter Van Geit, is taking the city by storm. And with their trekking experience at hand, the CTC folks are opening up new vistas for us runners - pristine forest, hills and trails we didn't even know existed are now part of our regular running routes thanks to them!

Of course, the Chennai Runners' nucleus lies in Alwarpet, where it all began one sunny morning in 2006 as Ram, Vidyuth and Hari ran into each other and founded this informal group. The Chennai Runners have grown massively in size and reach since then and, today, beginners and veterans alike rub shoulders across the city on various roads, flyovers, beaches and parks, paying homage to Ram's

The Marina beach is the haunt of the Marina Minnals - who start at the Lighthouse and run all the way down past Napiers Bridge for an enjoyable 5km run

2.5km loop that is quiet and beautiful, with proximity to the 400m track for speed workouts; the IIT campus (if you can acquire a pass) is a pleasant break from city traffic; bemused security personnel at Poes Garden have learnt to tolerate us while on our Kutcheri Run (past Narada Gana Sabha and Music Academy and onto the Cathedral Road flyover). So... take your pick.

favourite saying: "Running is better with company."

On Sundays, while the rest of the world sleeps in, whole crowds of us meet at the Anna University parking lot at 5am. By 5:15 the parking lot is empty, our steps echoing in the distance as we tick off the miles on the route we have named the Chennai Runners Classic. Passing through Boat Club, heading towards Elliot's Beach via the quiet lanes of the Theosophical Society, it is an ode to Singara Chennai, the city we love. This 10-16km (depending on where you turn back) running route brings us back to Anna University, from where we head directly to the canteen for breakfast; this is a must-do item on our weekend list.

We are often asked: "What's your favourite place to run in Chennai?" Well, there is Anna University - a shady

On a concluding note, for hill workouts, people congregate on St Thomas Mount (on Fridays, typically) or on the hills near Perungalathur and run up and down for a tough yet satisfying session. The beautiful straight route near the ICF stadium is almost perfect for longer runs. And if you are more in the mood for a short 5km casual run-and-chat kind of morning, try the Bajjanai run in Nungambakkam.

The options, as you can seem are endless and the mind boggles thinking about them! Now, when they ask us, "Where Do you run in Chennai?" we tell them, "Everywhere." And we mean it!

The writer is a faculty member at the Indian Institute of Technology (Madras) and an avid runner and blogger

Run through History

Read on as Ashwin Prabhu tells you more about some of the city landmarks you will run past on December 1, 2013 and remember to doff your runner's cap as you start off on your 42.2km journey through a 400-year old city

Charming Chennai

The Wipro Chennai marathon was conceived to celebrate the spirit of running but it is also meant to be an ode to the city the Chennai Runners live and run in, a city we love and a city which effortlessly marries yesterday with today and tomorrow.

01 Madhya Kailash temple:



Look to your left at the 3km mark and you'll see the graceful, white tower of the Madhya Kailash temple. This place of worship is unique for its presiding deity, which is part Ganesha and part Hanuman. Its eight temple bells representing the eight musical notes – Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, Ni and the recursive Sa. Hindus believe any event blessed by the beloved elephant-faced god will be a success. You couldn't ask for a more auspicious start to this test of endurance and strength.

02 Santhome Church:



Put your head down and swing into an easy rhythm for the next five kilometres and your heart will be gladdened and your legs will feel lighter when you view the whitewashed and restored steeple of the graceful Santhome Basilica on your right. The site originally contained a tomb to the remains of St Thomas, one of 12 apostles of Lord Jesus. The architectural marvel you'll see on Race Day, however, was erected in 1892 by the British in the neo-gothic style. The towering spires of the church, the lovingly restored stained glass windows and the burnished wood in the frames all make this one of the city's best preserved heritage structures.

03 Marina Beach:



The runners will then navigate through a narrow stretch of road for a kilometre or so before the road opens to the massive expanse of the city's marina. Known simply as "the beach" to locals, the Marina promenade is a lasting legacy of former Governor of Madras Sir Grant Duff. It was designed in 1884. The unverifiable fact that it is the world's second longest beach is religiously doled out by local guides to every visiting tourist but what stands the test of time is the awe-inspiring view of an expanse of sand and sea on one side and majestic university and government buildings on the other.

04 Lighthouse:



The red and white ribboned lighthouse is the first structure on the beach. Recently

thrown open to the public (access was controlled after the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi), the tower promises panoramic views of the city and the coast.

Meanwhile, as you run down the nearly four kilometre long marina, you will see an eclectic collection of statues; the more notable are Triumph of Labor and a statue of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the founder of Independent India. Both were sculpted by Debi Prasad Roy Chowdhury, the first Indian principal of the Madras School of Arts & Crafts, the oldest art institution in the country (now known as the Govt College of Fine Arts).

05 Ice House :



Before you reach the Triumph of Labour, rejoice

that you have crossed the 10km mark! And spare a moment for the salmon pink-colored rotunda on your left - the Vivekanandar Illam or Ice House, as it is more popularly known. Built by Frederic Tudor in 1842 to hold massive consignments of ice imported from New England, this memorable structure is today leased by the Ramakrishna Math and houses a museum dedicated to Swami Vivekananda.

07 Indian Institute of Technology (Madras):

You'll know you have entered the final stretch of your run when you reach the verdant, cool sanctuary of IIT Madras. A national treasure for being, perhaps, the only



educational institution with a postal code of its own, IIT (Madras) is

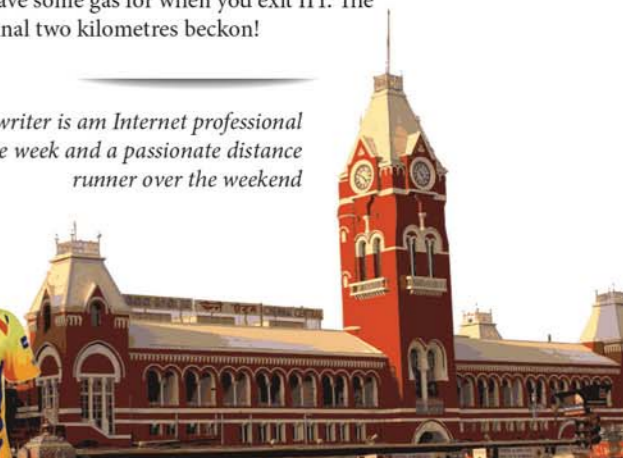
a 600 acre oasis within the bustling metropolis that is modern day Chennai. Abutting the Guindy National park, the institute's campus is home to chital (spotted deer), black bucks, monkeys and many other species of flora and fauna. Revel in the natural splendor of the campus and do not miss the many student hostels you'll run past - they are named for India's great rivers. A couple of loops around this sprawling campus will give you time to steady your heart rate, dig into your energy reserves and save some gas for when you exit IIT. The final two kilometres beckon!

The writer is an Internet professional during the week and a passionate distance runner over the weekend

06 War Memorial:



Even as the sun rises in the eastern sky and makes its presence felt, full marathon runners will reach the turn-around point at the Victory War Memorial. This was originally constructed to commemorate the victory of the Allied forces in World War I (1914-1918) but later re-purposed to recognize the efforts of valiant soldiers who served from the Madras Presidency in World War II and other post-independence wars.



Narrative

Ultra Particular

Paul Bennett narrates the story of how he survived 170km and 10 steep ascents to complete the Ultra Tour Du Mont Blanc

In 2001 a friend and I drove down to Chamonix in France, to hike the famous Tour Du Mont Blanc over six days. The route is considered a classic long-distance walking trail and starts in the town centre of Chamonix, circling clockwise around Mont Blanc (the highest mountain in Europe). It travels through mountain passes, alpine villages and runs from France into Italy, via Switzerland, before returning to the Charmonix valley.

The average time to complete the trail is between a week and 10 days... of good hiking. And if you're looking for fancy hotels along the way, there aren't any. Accommodation is a mix of mountain huts, hostels and camping areas.

My first visit to the Tour did not go to plan; we were far too early in the season and the weather didn't help, which meant we had to carry snow shoes, crampons and ice axes. The additional weight meant we were slower than anticipated and it all ended after in only three days, when snow blocked a high mountain pass.

Despite this, the Tour Du Mont Blanc remains a magical place – the scenery is exquisite and the mountain trails tough enough to leave you wanting more.

In 2003, the Tour du Mont Blanc underwent a change – the classic long-distance hiking path was replaced by the Ultra Tour Du Mont Blanc running route. Or, as it is known to many, the UTMB.



The event is simple – you complete 170km (9,400m of which are positive inclines) within 46 hours. And if you're wondering what that feels like, imagine running four marathons and then climbing Mt Everest, all within two days!

On August 30 this year, some 2,400 runners (me among them) set off from Chamonix to compete in one of the toughest mountain foot races in the world. Race organisation is incredibly professional, with drinks stations every 10km and mountain huts (or villages) serving hot and cold food. There are also fully equipped medi-centres.

For the event, my game plan was to set off nice and steady, try to hold my pace and finish the race; the average finish rate is only 40%! And, as with any ultra, I have always found it best to break the course down to bite-sized chunks and manageable distances. This means I do not see the race as 170km but as 10 x 17km runs.

So, four hours in and everything is going as planned, with the first major climb out of the way. I was moving at an even pace and, as night closed in, the magic of the mountain landscape changed with head torches being switched on. I wound up with a small group of UK runners and we were moving well. One of the highest points on the course (2479m above sea level) is the refuge du Bon Homme.

Running through the first night, the hours passed and the spirits were high. We were enjoying being out in the wilderness of the Alps as we arrived in Italy and Lake Combal. Here we were able to run right along the waterside, with

The event is simple – you complete 170km within 46 hours. And if you're wondering what that feels like, imagine running four marathons and then climbing Mt Everest, all within two days

towering snow-topped mountains on one side. Fatigue was kept at bay by regularly eating and drinking at every mountain checkpoint stop and constant conversation with our group of steady-moving UK ultra runners.

Courmayeur is a major checkpoint on the race and the descent into the Italian mountain resort is very steep. It is regarded as a “quad killer” but that didn't matter after 14 hours of running – our legs were already slightly weary! We had a 15 minute bowl of pasta and a cup of tea for breakfast and dashed out to the next 1,000m climb. There are 10 major climbs in the UTMB and, as you'd expect, the longer you run the harder they feel.

At this point, I felt I needed to change my approach. So I decided to hike uphill for 10 minutes and then rest (to bring down my heart rate). I hoped this would save energy and allow me to keep moving, albeit at a slower pace, than stop or sleep on the side of the trail or in the refuge hut, as many people do!

As we approached midday on the second day, I crossed another big waypoint – the Grand Col Ferrat, the highest point of the Tour. The climb is brutal, with switchback after switchback. And although my new climb-and-rest plan was working, I admit I was relieved to hit the summit and take in the amazing view.

As I left the Col, I felt a new burst of energy and, having run this section before, I decided to push since much of the distance had been covered; as you move into Switzerland there are only four climbs left.

But I reckoned without an ultra event's nasty habit of turning turtle. Just when you feel you can run forever, something comes along and the world caves in around you. For me, as I arrived at a town called Trient, my worst fears were realised. I was stuck in a mental rut and my mind just wanted it to end, particularly when it realised I still had two climbs and 26km to go!

Fortunately, after some good food, a warming drink and a good talking-to (such as those every runner needs in his/her darkest hour) I made the final climb and checkpoint in good time! The run down back to Chamonix could not have gone any smoother and as I approached the finish line I could see my family waiting for me, in the early hours of the morning, some 35 hours after the start.

The whole experience was an incredibly life-affirming journey that could not have gone any better. I am so pleased to now be an UTMB finisher!

The writer is a UK-based runner who visits India often and runs frequently with the Chennai Runners



Photos Courtesy:
Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc

Quirkology

A Few Mad Men

The act of running is always more than just that – it is almost as is a philosophy and a lifestyle. S Chandrashekar meets three Chennai-based Ultra runners who run to live

So, what is the craziest thing you've ever done? Have you ever woken up one morning and decided, "Today I am going to run 50 kilometres"? Was there a time you looked at your running shoes and the empty road and thought, "Could I possibly run up mountains and around European villages for two days straight?"

All of this sounds a little extreme, right? 50k runs and 48 hour monster runs. The truth, however, is that there is a small but immensely passionate running community in Chennai that revels in accomplishing the difficult. They travel the country and the world looking for bigger challenges and harder races. And they firmly believe there is no race too long that it cannot be run... to the finish.

Meet three runners – Neville Bilimoria, Athmananda Perumal and Ashok Daniel. These gentlemen have one thing, above all, in common. They can run for long distances, really long distances. They do that because, well, because they can, and because they are driven to test their spirit and their body and to boldly go where few runners dare.



For the Love of the Game

Why do people run? Well, if you were to say "to lose weight", you'd be right; sort of anyway. People do run because they want to trim the extra kilos or become fitter but you can always tell the true blue running fan apart from the chaff by the way he/she graduates from just running to finding inner peace.

"I essentially wanted to lose weight and that started with the gym. Running was just a hobby. Once I started though, it was so addictive! My running went from thrice a week to every day and it was always for fun! I found was much happier as a long distance runner... the challenge is greater," Ashok Daniel, a lawyer by profession, explains.

Ashok hit the big league in 2012 and did that in style, running the 50k Bangalore Ultra in six hours and 30 minutes. And there was no stopping him after that. The 2012 Wipro Chennai Marathon fell in four hours and 12 minutes. The Shahid Ultra (a 50k Chennai race) was accomplished in five hours and 30 minutes, a full 60 minutes faster than the Bangalore Ultra!

It was while running his first Garden City Ultra that Ashok met his running group – the Cool Runners. Being his first competitive long distance run, Ashok was understandably a little fatigued at the end. What lifted his spirits, he says, was the standing ovation members of the group gave one of their runners. "It was amazing to see people camping out by the finish for just one runner and cheering him home," he remembers.

He began training with them after that and, in the rundown to the 2012 TWCM, he says, "I was running about 160km a week – a half marathon every weekday and a 30km run on Saturday/Sunday. Within two weeks, there was a big change in my physical and mental abilities."

It showed too. Ashok ran the Ultra Tour de Pondicherry (150km) in 20 hours and 41 minutes and then set a new personal best in the UK, where is now, running the Ikano Robin Hood Marathon in three hours and 30 minutes.



Ashok Daniel

Next on his agenda is the 120km Lavaredo Ultra in Italy and the legendary 167km Ultra Tour du Mont Blanc, a foot race through the Alps!

Runner with a Big Heart



Neville Bilimoria

"I think everybody has something within themselves and I really do not know what there is within me," Neville, Senior Partner at a city-based immigration consultants firm, begins, "I always want to do something totally different from everybody else. My target is always something beyond the ordinary."

And he certainly has achieved that! Neville has finished 28 marathons over the last 39 months in six different countries. And that isn't even the impressive bit.

In 2010, Neville set himself the target of completing 12 marathons in as many months. He didn't do 12. He did 14, including an incident-filled Colombo Marathon in Sri Lanka, where he completed the race despite stopping to help a fellow runner and being hit by a scooter!

Neville's runs aren't just for himself. He runs and raises funds for the underprivileged and for children. And he does that in style. Neville's Dawn to Dusk (six hours of running + six hours of cycling) 2012 event raised Rs7,20,000! That wasn't bad at all but he returned next year to raise a whopping Rs50,19,066!

"Children are the future. Whatever I am doing now, I know it won't be enough. I can only do so much and raise a limited amount of money. There is much more that needs to be done. That is another reason why I run – to inspire other people to make an effort," he says.

Dawn to Dusk 2014 is just around the corner too, so if you're interested in participating, head over to www.nevilleendeavours.com for details.

The Fast Learner

Athmanandha Perumal



“I took up running as a challenge, in 2009. At the time I could just about do two or three kilometre runs. My first trigger came soon after, when I ambitiously attempted an eight kilometre run only to find so many people running so much more!” Athmanandha Perumal, a Senior Manger at a city-based telecom company, begins.

A popular name in running circles in Chennai, Atma (as he is called) is quite the inspiration for youngsters. You see, to excel at anything at all you need to not only practice (a cliché, yes, but true) but also commit to the process in its entirety. And Atma did exactly that.

He began competitive running in earnest with the 2011 Auroville Marathon in Pondicherry. That was quickly followed by the 75km Ultra in Bangalore and he returned to Bangalore last year, running the

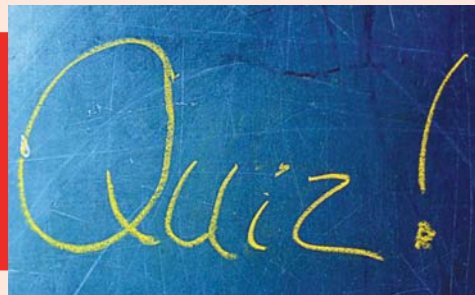
100km event in 12 hours and 25 minutes.

A measure of how determined Atma is about running is related in the injury he suffered in the rundown to the 2012 Ultra. He explains, “During stretching I heard my knee crack. And over the next few days I found it impossible to even walk. At that point I was fairly certain I would not be able to participate. But I really wanted to and every day I applied an ice pack and stayed off the road. In fact, the last five days before the race I did not run at all.”

And he hasn't finished pushing himself. Among the feats he wants to attempt are 24-hour runs and the (in)famous Iron Man event in Phuket, Thailand. If you don't know what that is, it is an extreme triathlon with a 3.8km swim, 180kms of cycling and 42kms of running!

The writer is a Chennai-based performing arts enthusiast and an aspiring novelist

The Maddest of Them All



Running is fun! And so are world records, statistics and pop quizzes! Test your running knowledge against our quiz and see where you finish

- | | |
|--|---|
| Q Who holds the world record for the fastest marathon run by a woman? | Q Who holds the record for fastest marathon on crutches? |
| Q What is the fastest ever one mile time? | Q Who holds the record for the fastest marathon carrying a 40lb pack? |
| Q Who is the oldest ever marathon runner? | Q And now for some weird stuff! Who holds the record for the fastest marathon carrying an egg and spoon?? |
| Q Who holds the world record for most marathons run? | Q Finally, which male runner ran the fastest ever marathon, running backwards!? |
| Q Which female runner holds the record for most marathons run on consecutive days? | |
| Q Who holds the record for completing a marathon and an ultra marathon on every continent? | |

Answers on Page 41



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Straight from
the Heart

Quit Smoking Movement

Kripa Sagar, who is running a marathon in every state, one every month, and is on a mission to spread the anti-smoking message, explains how running helped her beat the habit

I started running in January 2011, with friends who were training for the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon (SCMM). In my head though, I have been running for the longest time – I have dreamt of being strong and running long. I have dreamt of running over hills and in forests and through cities.

Meanwhile, all through those dreamy moments, all I was doing was eating good food, enjoying life and, yes, getting fatter. No exercise at all made my dream seem more and more distant.

Fast forward to today – less than three years since I began running – and I've participated in a number of marathons, a 50km race and am now running all across the country, to spread this one message – quit smoking!

When I ran my first run, I was happy. I was really happy and I couldn't wait to lace up my shoes and hit the road once again. So the next day, I was out there and then the next and the next and the next and so on.

People ask me: "Why do you run?" And I tell them: I run because I can and because I feel powerful at the end of a run. Because I feel so alive when I run, when my heart



Kripa Sagar (C)

I run because it has taught me to smile at random strangers I pass on the road – something I haven't done since I was a child. I run to feel like a child again. I run to feel the pain of my groaning muscles

is pounding and I am breathing so hard it feels my lungs are going to burst. Because every run brings me closer to people – I have met so many people, made so many friends that a middle-aged woman like me would never have met, let alone become friends with. I run because I get to see the sun come up and transform dark shapes into the greens, blues, browns and so many other colors life is filled with.

I say: I run because it has taught me to smile at random strangers I pass on the road – something I haven't done since I was a child. I run to feel like a child again. I run to feel the pain of my groaning muscles after a hard or a long run, to be able to overcome that pain and go out there again the next day and do it all over again. I run to relive the battle between my mind and my body – when my body is crying with exhaustion and saying "stop running now" my mind cajoles the body into doing another kilometre and then another and then another. When the mind wins the battle (sometimes it doesn't) then that feeling of being stronger than yourself – in a sense pushing at the limits of your mental and physical endurance - is indescribable! So, for all this and more, I run.

Importantly, since I started running, apart from losing weight and becoming fitter and having the time of my life, another wonderful thing has happened – I quit smoking, something I was addicted to for 25 years!

The reason for this is that running releases serotonin in the body which gives a feeling of calmness and control to the runner, thus reducing the desire to smoke. Smokers – imagine how invaluable it would be (especially if you have want to quit but have not been able to) to just not feel the desire to smoke?

I have now taken it upon myself to spread this message through runs across the country. This is part of a series of runs called India: Run to Quit. I plan to run one marathon in every state (one marathon a month) to make my point heard. But I cannot do this alone. I need support to pull this off and I do hope people will join me in making this campaign a success.

So, come, start running on this journey to countless sunrises, a lighter body, making new friends and eating most anything you want without feeling guilty.

The writer is a Mumbai-based working woman, a mother, wife, daughter and runner – a regular, ordinary Indian woman

Photos Courtesy: Kripa Sagar



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glam.
BY NATHELLA

Selfie!

Musings of a Mylapore Mid- Packer

Dr Ram Rajagopalan talks about running, life lessons and zero-sum games, while revealing how he managed to give fitness pride of place in his daily schedule

Five years ago, if I appeared to be a plump (to put it mildly) and self-satisfied professional who enjoyed his Belgian beer and languid lifestyle, it was just for external display. As a medical man with a reasonable knowledge of the risks of obesity and uncontrolled blood pressure, I was struggling, internally, to break the inertia and get on track to adopting a healthier lifestyle.

Excuses were abundant and support for an indolent existence was seemingly universal but I was lucky enough to discover running before I was sucked into a quagmire of deteriorating health. A small investment in a home treadmill allowed me to begin the process without making a public spectacle of myself and soon the fat was melting away. After five years of running I realize that the benefits of running are far more than I had anticipated.

Although I didn't know it then, running outshines all other forms of physical activity in promoting and sustaining weight loss. Personally, I lost nearly a quarter of my initial weight and, in five years, have not ping-ponged back into obesity as people often do when they resort to irrational choices such as fad diets. Obviously the benefits persist only by continuing the activity (together with rational control over your diet) but the biggest "runners high"- the ability to brag casually about "being a marathoner"- makes it all worthwhile!

"Watch out for your knees," they all say. The traditional myth that one hastens degenerative joint injury (arthritis) by running has been consistently overstated. It is however clearly refuted in studies of long-distance runners. It seems that being overweight hurts the knees and hips far more than the transient impact that stresses these joints during running. Every runner has more than their share of short-

Photo Courtesy: Rajukmar Raghavan



This was my most significant lesson from running and it is one that I could extrapolate to other aspects of life as well. Life, like running in the mid-pack, need not be a zero-sum game; success need not be achieved by the annihilation of a peer but from doing one's best

term injuries to the muscles, tendons and ligaments but these are easily minimised by disciplined stretching and strengthening exercises and, above all, by not overdoing the activity.

Aah, overuse, the bane of the habitual runner! Irrespective of how we begin, once we discover the joy of the daily jog, we try to set new goals for longer distances and faster pace. Yes, this is a great way to maintain our enthusiasm and the recognition and praise we draw from our family and peers makes us raise the bar further still. We join running groups or interact through online social networks, where the ability to applaud others, boast about our own performances and compare notes is a major positive incentive. But, if pushed a bit, this can also become a strong driver of abuse!

I realized this last year as I kept ramping up my speed and distance,



Photo Courtesy: Dr Ram Rajagopalan

running over 300 kilometres a month just to match my friends on the "Daily Mile". Until I sustained a piriformis injury, that is! I realized, a bit late, that I was competing with individuals who were far stronger and often several years younger, if not half my age! This competition was not only hurting me but was making the run seem more like work and stealing the pleasure the activity would otherwise provide.

Moderation was clearly needed if I was to preserve the enjoyment.

Citius, Altius, Fortius – the Olympic motto – may be ideal for the professional athlete – the outlier with superior skills and physiognomy to move faster, go higher and become stronger. But for many of us, especially older recreational runners (the "middle of the mid-pack"), winning a marathon is never going to be possible! The gratification really comes from a non-competitive furtherance of our own targets within the limits of our capacity and an enjoyment of others' superlative achievements.

This was my most significant lesson from running and it is one that I could extrapolate to other aspects of life as well. Life, like running in the mid-pack, need not be a zero-sum game; success need not be achieved by the annihilation of a peer but from doing one's best and appreciating, even admiring, the accomplishments of "competitors".

The writer is a recreational runner, with a new-found passion for marathons and half-marathons, and the Head of Intensive Care Unit at a city-based hospital

The Maddest of Them All **Answers**

- A The United Kingdom's Paula Radcliffe. She beat Kenyan Catherine Ndereka's world record in 2002 at the Chicago Marathon running 2:17:18 in Chicago. She then bettered that in 2003, running the London Marathon in 2:15:25.
- A Moroccan runner Hicham el Guerrouj ran the mile in 3:43.13 in 1999 in Rome.
- A British runner (of Punjabi Sikh descent) Fauja Singh was five weeks short of his 102nd birthday when he completed a 10k run at the 2013 Hong Kong Marathon. He is also the first 100-year-old to finish a full marathon; he completed the 2011 Toronto Waterfront Marathon in 8:11:06.
- A German runner Christian Hotta has run nearly 2,000 marathons.
- A Iranian-born American runner Parvaneh Moayed ran 17 marathons between December 21, 2012 and January 6, 2013. The races were held across Texas in the US. Her best finish was 4:41.0 in her second race.
- A Romanian Andrei Rosu ran seven marathons and seven ultra marathons between July 31, 2010 and March 4, 2012. His total running time was a year and 217 days. The fastest time to complete only marathons (on each continent) is 21 days, five hours and 33 minutes; set by German Wendelin Lauxen between October 31, 2012 and November 21, 2012.
- A Australian Michael Milton, a six-time Winter Paralympics gold medalist finished the 2013 Gold Coast Marathon in 5:28:59. The previous record was 6:42:47 set in 2008.
- A Mike Ellicock of the UK ran the 2013 Virgin London Marathon in 3:25:21. The fastest time carrying a 60lb pack is held by Japanese runner Toru Sakurai, an army instructor who completed the 2013 Tokyo Marathon in 4:39:09.
- A Another UK runner, Dale Lyons, completed the 1990 London Marathon in 3:47:00 carrying a desert spoon and a fresh egg.
- A Chinese runner Xu Zhenjun ran the 2004 Beijing International Marathon in 3:43:39.

10 km RUN ROUTE

Distance: 10 km
 Reporting Time: 6.30 am
 Run Start Time: 7.00 am
 Race Day: December 01, 2013

Aid Station	Timing Point	Location	Distance in kms
AS	TS	Start OMR - Next to Roja Muthiah Research Library	0
A1		OMR - Kasturba Nagar MRTS	3
A2		Fortis Malar Hospital	5 / 6
	T1	Andhra Mahila Sabha Signal	5.5
A7		OMR - VHS Hospital	8.5
AF	TF	Finish Line - CPT Ground	10

A.: Aid Station | T.: Timing Mat

LEGEND

- Running Route
- Start Point - Next to Roja Muthiah Research Library
- Finish Point - CPT Ground
- Distance (km)
- Route Direction
- Aid Station
- Timing Point



THE WIPRO CHENNAI MARATHON 2013
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HALF MARATHON ROUTE

Distance: 21.1 km
 Reporting Time: 4.45 am
 Run Start Time: 5.15 am
 Race Day: December 01, 2013

Aid Station	Timing Point	Location	Distance in kms
AS	TS	Start OMR - Next to Roja Muthiah Research Library	0
A1		OMR - Kasturba Nagar MRTS	3
A2		Fortis Malar Hospital	5 / 17.9
	T1	Andhra Mahila Sabha Signal	5.5 / 17.5
A3		Mayor Ramanathan Chettiyar Hall	6.8 / 16.2
A4		Santhome Auditorium	8.5 / 14.5
A5		Ice House Bus Stop	10.6 / 12.5
	T2	Kannagi Statue	11.5
A7		VHS Hospital	19.5
AF	TF	Finish Line - CPT Ground	21.1

A.: Aid Station | T.: Timing Mat

LEGEND

- Running Route
- Start Point - Next to Roja Muthiah Research Library
- Finish Point - CPT Ground
- Distance (km)
- Route Direction
- Aid Station
- Timing Point



THE WIPRO CHENNAI MARATHON 2013
 powered by **Chennai Runners**

FULL MARATHON ROUTE

Distance: 42.2km
 Reporting Time: 4.30 am
 Run Start Time: 5.00 am
 Race Day: December 01, 2013

Aid Station	Timing Point	Location	Distance in kms
AS	T5	Start OMR - Next to Roja Muthiah Research Library	0
A1		OMR - Kasturba Nagar MRTS	3
A2		Fortis Malar Hospital	5 / 21.5
	T1	Andhra Mahila Sabha Signal	5.5 / 20.7
A3		Mayor Ramanathan Chettiyar Hall	6.8 / 19.5
A4		Santhome Auditorium	8.5 / 18.8
A5		Ice House Bus stop	10.6 / 16.6
	T2	Kannagi Statue	11.5 / 15.5
A6		Napier Bridge	12.7 / 14.3
	T3	War Memorial	13.5
A7		VHS Hospital	23.5
A8		Ramanujam IT City Road End	25.5 / 41
A9		Taramani Guest House Junction	27 / 39.5
A10		1st Cross Road (Near Hospital)	28.5 / 38
A11		Madras - Bonn Avenue Junction	30.5 / 36
A12		Delhi Avenue	32 / 33.5
	T4	Delhi Avenue Road. (Near 4th Cross Road)	33.5
AF	TF	Finish Line - CPT Ground	42.2

A.: Aid Station | T.: Timing Mat

LEGEND

- Running Route
- Start Point - Next to Roja Muthiah Research Library
- Finish Point - CPT Ground
- Distance (km)
- Route Direction
- Aid Station
- Timing Point



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The Wipro Chennai Marathon (TWCM) 2013, December 1, 2013 – 10KM Route Description

Reporting Time – 6:30 AM / Start Time – 7:00 AM

1. **Start** near the ROJA MUTHIAH RESEARCH LIBRARY on Rajiv Gandhi Salai [OMR], home to some of the biggest IT parks in the city. You will turn right and run towards TIDEL Park
2. **Take a U-turn** at the signal near TIDEL Park. Run down the road past the Indira Nagar and Thiruvannamiyur MRTS stations, which will be on your right, and as you run, you will see the famous MADHYA KAILASH temple on your left
3. **Turn right** on to Sardar Patel Road. You will run to and over the Adyar flyover, which is about half a kilometre long
4. **As you come down** the Adyar flyover, you will see the FORTIS MALAR hospital to your left and the THESOPHICAL SOCIETY to your right
5. **Run on** to the THIRU VI KA Bridge, named after freedom fighter Thiru V Kalyanasundaram and constructed in 1973 to replace the old fashioned Elphinstone Bridge; which is currently not in use
6. **Run** to approach the ANDHRA MAHILA SABHA, which is past the Dr MGR Janaki College of Arts & Science for Women. This was formerly SATHYA STUDIOS, owned by late Bharat Ratna Dr MGR, an actor and former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
7. **Take a U-turn** at the signal and come back down THIRU-VI-KA BRIDGE and reach MADHYA KAILASH
8. **Turn left** onto RAJIV GANDHI SALAI [OMR]. Go down the road and turn right into the MS SWAMINATHAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION ROAD
9. **Turn right** at the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES to reach the Finish line, at the CENTRAL POLYTECHNIC GROUND
10. **Congratulations!** You have completed the 10KM run!

The Wipro Chennai Marathon (TWCM) 2013, December 1, 2013 – Half Marathon Route Description

Reporting Time 4.45AM / Start Time 5:15 AM

1. **Start** near the ROJA MUTHIAH RESEARCH LIBRARY on Rajiv Gandhi Salai [OMR], home to some of the biggest IT parks in the city. You will turn right and run towards TIDEL Park
2. **Take a U-turn** at the signal near TIDEL Park. Run down the road past the Indira Nagar and Thiruvannamiyur MRTS stations, which will be on your right, and as you run, you will see the famous MADHYA KAILASH temple on your left
3. **Turn right** on to Sardar Patel Road. Run to and over the Adyar flyover, which is about half a kilometre long
4. **As you come down** the Adyar flyover, you will see the FORTIS MALAR hospital to your left and the THESOPHICAL SOCIETY to your right
5. **Run on** to the THIRU VI KA Bridge, named after freedom fighter Thiru V Kalyanasundaram and constructed in 1973 to replace the old fashioned Elphinstone Bridge; which is currently not in use
6. **Run** to approach the ANDHRA MAHILA SABHA, which is past the Dr MGR Janaki College of Arts & Science for Women. This was formerly SATHYA STUDIOS, owned by late Bharat Ratna Dr MGR, an actor and former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
7. **Turn right** at the ANDHRA MAHILA SABHA signal and run past the famous THOLKAPIA POONGA also known as the ADYAR ECO PARK, which will be on the opposite side of the road to you
8. **Cross** the MAYOR RAMANATHAN CHETTYAR HALL and go past the SANTHOME AUDITORIUM, heading down Santhome High Road

9. **Continue down** Marina Beach Road, crossing the LIGHTHOUSE, and run towards GANDHI STATUE. This statue which was declared open in 1959 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, a former Prime Minister of India
10. **Continue on** towards VIVEKANANDA HOUSE, a famous landmark building also called ICE HOUSE. This will be followed by the MARINA CRICKET GROUND and the KANNAGI STATUE

11. **U-turn**, and return to MADHYA KAILASH
12. **Turn left** onto RAJIV GANDHI SALAI [OMR]. Go down the road and turn right into the MS SWAMINATHAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION ROAD
13. **Turn right** at the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES to reach the Finish line, at the CENTRAL POLYTECHNIC GROUND
14. **Congratulations!** You have completed the Half Marathon!

The Wipro Chennai Marathon (TWCM) 2013, December 1, 2013 – Full Marathon Route Description

Reporting Time 4.30AM / Start Time 5:00 AM

1. **Start** near the ROJA MUTHIAH RESEARCH LIBRARY on Rajiv Gandhi Salai [OMR], home to some of the biggest IT parks in the city. You will turn right and run towards TIDEL Park
2. **Take a U-turn** at the signal near TIDEL Park. Run down the road past the Indira Nagar and Thiruvannamiyur MRTS stations, which will be on your right, and as you run, you will see the famous MADHYA KAILASH temple on your left
3. **Turn right** on to Sardar Patel Road. You will run to and over the Adyar flyover, which is about half a kilometre long
4. **As you come down** the Adyar flyover, you will see the FORTIS MALAR hospital to your left and the THESOPHICAL SOCIETY to your right
5. **Run on** to the THIRU VI KA Bridge, named after freedom fighter Thiru V Kalyanasundaram and constructed in 1973 to replace the old fashioned Elphinstone Bridge; which is currently not in use
6. **Run** to approach the ANDHRA MAHILA SABHA, which is past the Dr MGR Janaki College of Arts & Science for Women. This was formerly SATHYA STUDIOS, owned by late Bharat Ratna Dr MGR, an actor and former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
7. **Turn right** at the ANDHRA MAHILA SABHA signal and run past the famous THOLKAPIA POONGA also known as the ADYAR ECO PARK, which will be on the opposite side of the road to you
8. **Cross** the MAYOR RAMANATHAN CHETTYAR HALL and go past the SANTHOME AUDITORIUM, heading down Santhome High Road
9. **Continue down** Marina Beach Road, crossing the LIGHTHOUSE, and run towards GANDHI STATUE. This statue which was declared open in 1959 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, a former Prime

Minister of India

10. **Continue on** towards VIVEKANANDA HOUSE, a famous landmark building also called ICE HOUSE. This will be followed by the MARINA CRICKET GROUND and the KANNAGI STATUE
11. **Continue** towards the next landmark - NAPIER BRIDGE. This is one of the city's oldest bridges and was built in 1869 by Francis Napier, who was Governor of Madras from 1866 to 1872
12. **Run** towards the WAR MEMORIAL. Originally constructed to commemorate the victory of allied armies during World War I (1914–1918), it later became the Victory War Memorial for World War II (1939–1945), in the memory of those from the Madras Presidency
13. **Take a U-turn** and retrace your steps to MADHYA KAILASH
14. **Turn left** onto RAJIV GANDHI SALAI [OMR] service lane, running past VHS NURSING HOME
15. **Run straight down and turn right** onto MGR FILM CITY ROAD, entering IIT RESEARCH PARK
16. **Continue on** MANDAK RESEARCH ROAD turning right at MANDAKINI HOSTEL. You will see the TIDEL PARK GUEST HOUSE JUNCTION, after which you turn left and continue running past the IIT HOCKEY GROUND
17. **Turn right** onto ALUMNI AVE and turn left again to reach FIRST CROSS ROAD
18. **Run past** KENDRIYA VIDYALA SCHOOL and turn left into MADRAS AVENUE
19. **Head straight** to the start of BONNE AVE, the long stretch with lush greenery on either side
20. **Turn right** here and head down BONNE AVE and then turn left onto BANYAN AVE

21. **Turn left** onto ADYAR AVE running straight down the road
22. **Take a sharp right** at the end of ADYAR AVE to get onto DELHI AVE. Run along the road towards GAJENDRA CIRCLE. This is the main landmark on campus
23. **Retrace your steps** towards TARAMANI GUEST HOUSE JUNCTION
24. **Turn left** going past MANDAKINI HOSTEL towards the MANDAK RESEARCH ROAD.

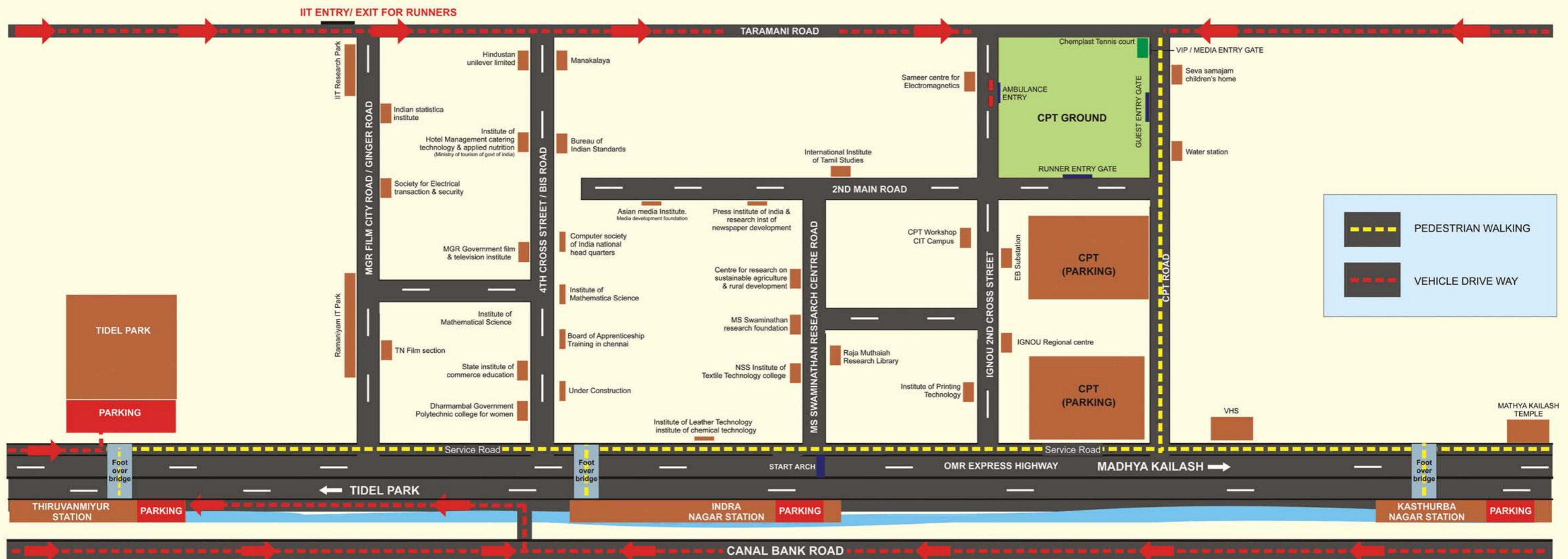
25. **Turn right** and enter the MGR FILM CITY ROAD to reach the main road - OMR EXPRESSWAY.
26. **Take a left** onto the main road and another left onto MS SWAMINATHAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION ROAD
27. **Turn right** at the INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES to reach the Finish line, at the CENTRAL POLYTECHNIC GROUND
28. **Congratulations!** You have completed the Full Marathon!



I always loved running...it was something you could do by yourself, and under your own power. You could go in any direction, fast or slow as you wanted, fighting the wind if you felt like it, seeking out new sights just on the strength of your feet and the courage of your lungs

- Jesse Owens

LAYOUT OF CPT / OMR / START FINISH AREA OF TWCM





THE WIPRO CHENNAI MARATHON 2013

THE WIPRO CHENNAI MARATHON 2013 FINAL SET OF INSTRUCTIONS

- We take this opportunity to share few vital instructions that will help you have a trouble free Race Day on Sunday 1st December 2013. Check your email [check spam folder and for those using Gmail, check the Social and promotions tab as well] and website [thewiprochennaiarathon.com] for the latest in Race updates

THE MARATHON GUIDELINES

THE BIB

- Remember to carry your BIB to the race. The timing chip will be on the BIB and so we request you not to fold the BIB. Do not tamper with it in any way, cut or alter the BIB. There is no way a duplicate number or BIB can be issued in the last minute.

RACE DAY

BEFORE LEAVING HOME

- It would be best to pack your bags the previous night. Remember to carry your BIB number with a few safety pins, the timing device, any other gear you use, water bottle and of course the Marathon Kit bag. Carry only your essentials- BIB, Cap, pocket money, sunscreen and any other essentials you need. We also recommend you carry a baggage tag with your details printed on it.

BEFORE THE EVENT

- Before you get on the track, make sure to pin the BIB on your T-shirt in the front, so it is clearly visible. Put a pin on all four corners to ensure it does not fall off half way down the race. Do not use someone else's number or BIB.
- If you require any additional help or support, approach the help desk well ahead of time and get the issues sorted out. Do remember, there will be security screening from 4 am. Arrive early to avoid any delays.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT:

- We encourage you to use Public transport on the day of the race. Infact, there are likely to be additional MRTS trains plying that morning. Alight at the Indira

Nagar MRTS Station to reach the venue, a short 550mts walk.

- When commuting by trains pick up a ticket at the counter for a nominal fee and retain the stub through the journey. Same applies for buses, except tickets are sold in the bus. You can also hail an auto [easily available across the city]. If you are looking at cabs, make sure to do a booking early on.

BAGGAGE STORAGE

- If you have any baggage with you on race day, it can be handed over to us at the start area and will be returned to you at the finish area once you are done with the race. All bags will be screened for security reasons. Please do not leave any valuables or fragile items in your bags. The organizers cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to the contents of the bag. We will not supply the bag for storage, bring your own please. Make sure the bags are securely locked and zipped. Open bags will not be accepted. Similarly, unclaimed baggage will be stored at the finish line till 12 noon after which they will be handed over to the police.

THE COURSE

- The different categories of the Marathon start at different timings but the route is not very different. The routes all start and finish at the same point. When you are running, make sure to follow the route so that your timing is recorded. Traffic will be restricted along the route, but only up to 10.30 am.

THE FINISHERS

- All the finishers get a medal and an online certificate, if they finish the race before 11am. The medal and certificate are also subject to adherence of rules and regulations laid down by The Wipro Chennai Marathon 2013. Race organizers will have the final say in the matter.

SLOW RUNNERS

- The cut off time to complete all the categories is 11 am, after which traffic restrictions will be eased and only minimum aid stations and support will be available.
- Since assistance becomes less available, slow runners are requested to make alternative arrangements for drinks and other necessities.

WALKING

- At some point during the race, maybe due to fatigue or blisters, some of you may be forced to walk. If this happens, make sure to move to the farthest corner of the road so you do not obstruct the path for other runners. And when you are ready to resume running, slowly get back into the road making sure you do not crash into others.

THE FINISH AREA

- All the runners will receive a medal on completing the race. Subsequently, the Chief Guest will preside over the prize distribution ceremony in the stadium from 9.00 am. Certificates will be available on the website [http://www.thewiprochennaiarathon.com/] 48 - 72 hours after race completion. Certificates will not be issued to any runner who does not cross the timing mats as instructed or who does not get their timing recorded. There will also be an area where you can meet fellow runners and exchange updates. Move away from the main path as there would be runners who are still coming to the finish point.
- Do request your family and friends to meet you at one of these areas and not to crowd the Finishing line. This could lead to confusion and security issues. Both the police and our personnel will be there guarding the place preventing outsiders from entering the zone. A little forward planning will make things easy if you wish to meet your family or friends right after completing the race.
- Since the number of people is high, there could be mobile signal issues. So make arrangements for an alternative number to leave a message.
- Share your BIB number with your friends and family, it is the easiest way to track you or obtain information about your position.

BREAKFAST

- You must be ravenous after the run. Worry not, our hospitality partner Westin is providing breakfast for all the runners post race completion.

BAGGAGE PICK UP

- Checked-in baggage may be picked up from the Finish area. Kindly produce your BIB to collect the same. Any unclaimed baggage will be handed over to the police after 12 noon.

AID STATIONS

- Adequate aid station support is provided en route (every 2 km) stocked with water, Glucovita, bananas, biscuits and so on.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

- Adequate medical assistance has been provided through the route. Medical professionals from Apollo Hospitals (Ambulances, Paramedics and a Physio) will be present at the aid stations. There will also be a fully equipped medical tent at the finish point.

TOILETS

- There are toilets in place at the start and finish areas. Public Toilets are available at various locations through the marathon route.

PARKING

TRAFFIC CHANGES

- The roads from Tidel Park to War Memorial through Sardar Patel Road and Madhya Kailash will remain closed up to 9.30am. However, vehicles will be allowed at the discretion of the Chennai Police.
- We recommend you make provisional arrangements to be dropped off near the start point, and reach the area as early as possible. For friends and family travelling with the participants or later, the same guidelines for parking apply.
- It is suggested that vehicles coming from Kotturpuram, turn left on Sardar Patel Road and get dropped at Madhya Kailash Signal. From there, it is a short walk of 1.1kms to the starting point at Roja Muthiah Research Library. Limited parking space is available inside CLRI. An alternative would be to park in the service lane outside ELCOT. To get there, from Kotturpuram turn right towards Velachery, drive down on Taramani Road that will lead you to Rajiv Gandhi Salai [OMR].
- For those coming from Thiruvanniyur, cross Tidel park junction and park either at CSIR road or in the service lane near TIDEL Park. Alternatively go through Indira Nagar and park on the service road near the Indira Nagar station and inside the MRTS stations of Kasturba Nagar, Indira Nagar and Thiruvanniyur. The distance from Indira Nagar MRTS to the start point is about 550mts, while it is 1.3kms from Kasturba Nagar and just about 850mts from Thiruvanniyur MRTS. When travelling from Velachery/OMR, you can park on the CSIR Road, 2 kms away. Limited parking space is also available inside TIDEL Park.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Please remember it is a good 10 - 20 minute walk to the start point from parking areas that are beyond Madhya Kailash or Tidel Park. However, keeping the size of the crowd, we request you to car pool/use two wheelers as much as possible to avoid parking issues or delays. Ensure you lock your vehicles and keep the keys safely. Also, do remember where you parked your vehicle. Those using cab services, kindly instruct the cab driver to drop you off at the nearest point or as mentioned above. Vehicle parking is at your own risk.

CANCELLATION

- In case of cancellation of the event, there will be no refund.

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