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TuksSport



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from the CEO'S OFFICE



In 1944 Rita Mae Brown said the following, 'Sport strips away personality, letting the white bone of character shine through.' Well if ever we are going to see if this is true then it will be in the next few weeks during the Beijing Olympic Games where the true character of the Worlds top athletes will be put to the severest test in their respective sporting careers.

Having visited Beijing in September last year I can certainly say that the Beijing Olympic Games will be remembered for the magnificent facilities that they have built to host all the events. From the Birds Nest (the main Olympic stadium) to the magnificent aquatic centre and to the huge multi functional Athletes village, one can see that no expense has been spared to ensure that all the Olympic events will take place in the most modern of facilities.

The Chinese certainly think of everything and with the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Games on 8 August, and if it's not already the case, you can expect to see the game's iconography on just about everything in the coming weeks. With such a massive global audience guaranteed, the job of communicating the event is no small task and one of the people taking responsibility for this is Min Wang, design director for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. Wang and his team have been the creative force behind everything from street banners to the Olympic medals and have come up with a very unique method of communicating the respective events of the Olympics without the thousands of International tourists having to learn the Chinese alphabet and language. Visitors will now be able to follow the signs to their event of choice by following the signs that have been designed specifically for the Beijing Games. Below is a chart showing these respective signs.



The Beijing Olympics pictograms comprise of 35 sport icons, namely those of athletics, rowing, badminton, baseball, basketball, boxing, canoe / kayak flatwater, canoe / kayak slalom, cycling, equestrian, fencing, football, artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, trampoline, weightlifting, handball, hockey, judo, wrestling, swimming, synchronized swimming, diving, water polo, modern pentathlon, softball, taekwondo, tennis, table tennis, shooting, archery, triathlon, sailing, volleyball and beach volleyball.

Good luck to Team South Africa and more specifically to all those athletes that the hpc has been involved with in their build up and preparation for their day in the sun, a day that will linger long in their memories long after the Games are done 🌈

Toby Sutcliffe



Tuks Athletes are Beijing bound

Text: Manfred Seidler Images: Doctor Jaco Joubert

The Olympic Games. They come around once every four years and the World comes to a standstill for 3 weeks in August. The Olympic Games are a clearly the pinnacle of an athletes success. Just qualifying is for many the biggest accomplishment they can dream of. How many people can say the words "I am an Olympian". But a handful.

So to be able to boast that 35 athletes who are under the care of TUKS Sport and the High Performance Centre will be jetting off to Beijing is a huge accomplishment.

SASCOC, the South African Olympic body is sending a team of around 150 athletes to Beijing and of those 26 are based in Pretoria at Tukkies and the hpc. The other 9 represent other countries, including Switzerland.

For some it will be the first time, for others it may well be the last time. Emile Smith competed for South Africa in the 2004 Games in Athens. The 30 year old Sales Manager at the High Performance Centre has ironically just come back from a training camp in Beijing and will be going back there 28 July. "It has been quite a challenge to master both the hard training and working. Were it not for the support of the members of Staff at the hpc and the University there is no way I would have been able to work fulltime and train/ compete the way I did."

As for their chances? "It is a very tricky situation. If a few opportunities go our way, we could end up top 4.

Having said that, we could also have torrid time and not do well at all. Our training camp in Beijing was the first time the coach had the squad of 16 together that he will be using at the Olympics. We tried different formations and ideas so we will have to see just how they pan out."

An impressive statistics is that SASCOC and Judo South Africa are sending a team of 4, 3 Judokas and 1 coach. All three Judokas ply their trade for the TUKS Club. Coach Nikola Filipov has been nurturing Patrick Trezise, Marion August and Matthew Jago for the last 4 years and is hoping they end in the top 7. "That would be for them a fantastic performance. They will need to go through 7 fights in a day and that is hard, so if they do get into the top 7, well that would be just amazing," says Filipov, himself an Olympian, having represented Bulgaria at the 1992 Games.

South Africa will once again be looking to Roland Schoeman and Lyndon Ferns to bring back a medal in the 4x100m freestyle relay. Although both train in the United States, they are members of the TUKS Swimming Club. For the rest of the Swimming Squad, William Diering, Lisa Mari Retief, Cameron van Den Burgh and Suzaan Van Biljon it will be first time they have reached these lofty heights.

One of South Africa's brightest medal hopes is in the Athletics Squad. LJ Van Zyl, after what for him was a disastrous start to the year, has made a serious challenge to medal at the Olympic Games in the 400mh. At the Tsiklitiria Athina Meeting in Athens LJ



ran his third best time ever and with that moved into the top three in the World. His time of 48.22sec has certainly made the rest of the World sit up and take notice. The manner in which he won the race in Athens also raised some eyebrows. He was moving away from the field when crossed the line and had he been pushed, a time of under 48sec would not have been a surprise.

Elizna Naude will be going into her second Olympics and is relishing the opportunity. "All I am focusing on is getting in the final. There I won't have any pressure and can just throw so I am hoping for a big throw."



Elizna Naudé



LJ van Zyl



Emile Smith



Patrick Trezise



Matthew Jago



Marlon August



Given Maduma



Adele du Plooy



Elvira Wood





Suzaan van Biljon



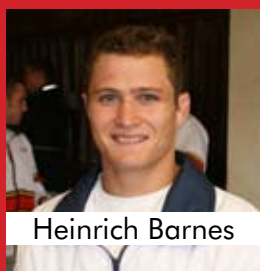
Lize Mari Retief



Cameron vd Burgh



William Diering



Heinrich Barnes



Elana Hill



Racheal Nachula



Stephan Louw

Athletics

- Elizna Naudé
- Isabel le Roux
- LJ van Zyl
- Hannes Dreyer
- Nico van Heerden (coach)

Hockey

- Lungile Tsolekile
- Emile Smith
- Sanani Mangisa

Judo

- Patrick Trezise
- Marlon August
- Matthew Jago
- Nikola Filipov (coach)

Canoeing

- Bridgitte Hartley

Rowing

- Shaun Keeling

Fencing

- Given Maduma
- Adele du Plooy
- Elvira Wood

Swimming

- Suzaan van Biljon
- Lize Mari Retief
- Cameron van den Burgh
- William Diering
- Jasper Venter (with TuksSwimming when qualified)

Tuks athletes based in the USA

- Roland Schoeman (Swimming)
- Lyndon Ferns (Swimming)
- Heinrich Barnes (Wrestling)

Official traveling reserve

- George Harrop-Allin (Fencing)

Tuks athletes representing other countries

- Stephan Louw Namibia (Athletics)
- Elana Hill Zimbabwe (Rowing)
- Gregory Widmer Switzerland (Swimming)
- Racheal Nachula Zambia (Athletics)
- Elaine Droubly Ivory coast (Swimming)
- Ronny Bakale Congo (Swimming)
- Chakyl Kamal Mozambique (Swimming)
- John Kamyuka Botswana (Swimming)
- Pina Ercolana Kenya (Swimming)



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THE CLOSER

Text: Rick de Villiers Images: Emile's own collection & Doctor Jaco Joubert

Whether at work or on the hockey field, Emile Smith is equipped for the task of sealing the deal.

Like most Sales and Marketing Managers, Emile Smith has an easy way with words. He is charming and has the exactly the right kind of smile to close the deal. And like other professionals of this designation, he likes coffee.

When he takes his seat opposite mine, he already has a steaming café latte in hand. Perhaps not the most typical of coffees for a businessman, but then again he isn't the most typical of businessmen.

Unlike most other Sales and Marketing Managers, Emile Smith is about to leave for his second Olympic Games. What distinguishes him further is the 150 international hockey tests in which he has represented South Africa and the 65 goals he has scored. Still, everything about him speaks business.

'I'm not as nervous as I had been going to Athens in 2004,' says Emile, reflecting on his state of mind a month before the Beijing Olympics. 'I feel much calmer this time round and I'm looking forward to it very much. I think the main thing is just to focus on the game.'

'At the last Olympics we came in last, but this time our goal is to finish within the top six and qualify for the Champions Trophy in Holland. I wouldn't put a medal past us – the potential is there for us to leave a legacy behind.'

For Emile, the 2008 Games will bring about a personal milestone: 150 test caps. The highlight of his career, he says, has been the respective matches of his 100th appearance and 50 international goals. Running out for test number 150 at the Olympics will be right up there.

The feat is all the more impressive given the difficulties surrounding the dynamics of the corporate and sporting environment. 'The hpc afforded me a great opportunity when they took me in. Because there isn't a great deal of money in SA hockey, most players have to choose between a professional career and a sporting career, and as a result many good players have fallen by the wayside. Without the assistance of the hpc and the University of Pretoria, I wouldn't be in the position I am now.'

'I think there's a direct correlation between a team sport like hockey and the corporate environment. In both these worlds you are influenced by what others do, and it is important to give of yourself to others.'

But like all good strikers, Emile has a killer instinct and likes to take control. With a wry smile Emile concedes that degree of selfishness often turns out to be for the greater good. 'I am a team player and I always think of the team first, but as a striker you've got to make certain decisions on your own. It's up to you to seal the deal.'



When night falls on the rooftops of Giyani it stays put till morning. Inside the ramshackle houses of this rural town in the Limpopo Province there is no light to chase shadows, no running water, no luxury. But when the sun breaks on the red dust of the streets, children – barefoot – brave the cold on their way to school.

Lunchtime brings the expected range of activities: boys playing soccer on a barren pitch, girls skipping or busy at netball. One feature, however, stands out incongruously: a rowing machine inside a classroom with a leaky roof, or, as four teenagers from Giyani see it, a ticket to a better life.

The objective is simple enough: place one coach and one apparatus among 70 students of a local school and identify those youngsters built for speed, endurance and cold mornings out on choppy waters.

Khanyisa Mabunda, Arnold Mathapa, Akane Makamu, Sibusiso Mhlongo are those youngsters. And for them rowing has meant much more than just a chance to see the flickering lights of a big city. They have been taken up into an elite programme of the Rowing Academy of the hpc which aims to develop world class rowers in spite of all difficulties.

Roger Barrow, director of the Academy and head coach of the national team, believes the programme is proving beneficial both for the teenagers involved and also the sport as a whole. 'The kids incorporated in the programme have all been hardened by a tough rural existence. Rowing is an endurance sport and definitely requires the staying power these rowers exhibit.'

'Our goal is to nurture champion black rowers against all odds and provide them with opportunities they would otherwise not have had: eating with a knife and fork, learning English, being properly nurtured. This, for me, is a bigger achievement than the Olympics. The main thing with this programme is to show other clubs that though transformation is tough, it is possible.'

From its beginning in 2005, the programme has endeavoured to provide a high-performance platform for the members of the academy (there are currently nine). This means that the athletes have access to all the necessary facilities at the hpc, as well as its specialist staff. But due to a lack of sponsorships, the programme's existence is being threatened, and so too the four teenagers' continued stay in Pretoria.

'At the moment funding is a massive issue,' says Barrow. 'If we fail to get financial support, I will be forced to close down the academy. Unfortunately, that's the reality.'

And this is the tragic irony underlying the situation: while the Rowing Academy is one of the hpc's best-run and most successful programmes, boasting two Olympic athletes and a national under-16 champion, its closure seems immanent unless someone steps in to save the day. Let's just hope that day arrives sooner rather than later 🇿🇦

TROUBLED WATERS

Despite the Rowing Academy's continued success, it faces closure.

Rick de Villiers finds out why.

Text: Rick de Villiers Images: Susan du Toit



Inside the deputy principal of the TuksSport Combined School's class, two matric pupils have perched themselves on separate benches, their feet placed on the drop-down seats. But contrary to the stereotyped images of unruly adolescents *The Breakfast Club* might have fixed in our minds, there is no air of the rebellious about either Offering Tlaka or Strike Nkuna.

From neither's lips does a glowing cigarette hang.

No detention is being served out. And there is no banter between students and teacher; firstly, because it is lunchtime and Mr Nel is out, and secondly, because the two teenagers reserve all their defiance for one person – Mr Newton with his silly rules.

Aided by a thread bare stretch of rubber and dangerous lack of fear, Offering and Strike have made it their business to shame the laws of gravity. Since their respective starts in Trampoline seven and eight years ago, both have literally been scaling new heights.

But at the recent Trampoline World Cup in Spain gravity struck back, and as Offering will testify, coming down crashing ain't no fun.

'How big is the Big Mini?' Offering, deputy head boy, consults his fellow prefect. They speculate for a while and eventually Strike makes the final estimation: 4mx2m – the surface measurement of the trampoline mat a jumper must land on after the initial launch move. 'Ja, it's about that size – so not very big. 'Anyway', Offering continues, regaling the story behind his limp with great zeal, 'as I did my first move I felt I was a little off balance. I overcorrected in the air and ended up landing on the right side of the mat. The cables snapped and the ligaments of my left leg tore – grade three on the outside and grade two on the inside. Today is the first day I'm at school without crutches.'

Strike picks up the theme with the same enthusiasm. 'When I saw Offering go down, there was so much going through my mind. I had bailed my first pass (trampoline jargon for a heat), so seeing that happen made me even more nervous for the next one.'

Their eyes are lit up. They like flying through the air. They like danger – something you wouldn't guess by the self-elected nicknames ('Versatile' for Offering and 'Mr Niceguy' for Strike) embroidered on their school track-tops. Much more revealing though is what they would call each other.

'Crazy,' says Strike instantly. 'My nickname for Offering would be "Crazy". I wouldn't mention all the stuff he gets up to, but...'

'Ha!' Offering's smile flashes two perfect rows of teeth and a little bit of mischief. 'He's crazy too, but I guess I have to come up with something else. Maybe "Sense". I'm not saying he's a chicken, just that he's the one

who'll think twice before doing something.'

There is definitely something of a daredevil in both Offering and Strike, and perhaps that is the reason for their positions in the senior Protea trampoline team. In the coming months they will be competing at the National Championships, the African Championships and the World Games. But the big prize is what they have set their sights on.

'2012 will be the first time that South Africa will have a trampoline team at the Olympics', says Strike. 'We really want to be there.' But the future is a distant and foggy destination, and right now the teenagers have some other pertinent questions to answer. There are the matric exams, an endless range of study careers to choose from, and, of course, girls. 'Ask Strike about his girlfriend,' Offering prompts. Strike flies up from the desk with a curious mix of embarrassment and glee.

'No, don't put that in there,' he protests.

'Do it,' says Offering, who has seemingly found new liberation in singleness.

'Offering is pap – he can't keep a relationship. But me, I'm the legend.'

The verbal game of ping-pong carries on till the two friends realise that break-time is about to end. Strike is first through the door and Offering goes limping after him. After all, growing boys can't be expected to defy gravity on empty stomachs 🌈

If gravity-defying acrobatics were a crime, Offering and Strike would surely be in trouble...

THE LAW BREAKERS

Text: Rick de Villiers Image: Susan du Toit



A lot can be learned about a person just by listening to their voicemail greeting. For instance, if a full name is offered along with some form of apology for the unavailable party's unavailability, this person is most likely in business and has probable cause to believe he/she will be contacted by strangers. If some curt phrase like 'You know what to do' is what you find on the other side of the unanswered phone, the recording in all likelihood belongs to a student engaged in an afternoon nap. Then there is the standard cell phone company message, which means this person is either technologically challenged (i.e. born before 1978) or hiding something. But in Mareli Joubert's case, her voicemail greeting paints a much more intriguing picture. 'Hey, dis Mareli. Ek's tien teen een op die gholfbaan.'

On the surface it may not appear to be much, but that of course is just the surface. Its undercurrent conveys she is an easy-going gal, not fussed about formalities but keen to get to the point. The liveliness of her voice hints at her equally lively personality. And lastly, the message tells you where she is most likely to be found.

It's 1pm on a Thursday afternoon, and when I arrive at the TimeOut Café Mareli is halfway through her lunch.

'Sorry for having started,' she says, wiping her mouth, 'but this growling student belly couldn't wait any longer.' She is comfortably dressed in jeans and a blue Drymac that indicates that she is a member of TuksGolf.

She asks me whether I would like anything to drink, but before I can decline her phone rings. It's her coach, Louis Coetzee. Midway through the conversation she cups the phone and politely asks how long we will be. 'Not more than 30mins,' she says, passing the information on to the coach and looking at the big digital wristwatch on her left arm.

'I've got coaching to do afterwards,' she explains. 'I help out at Hoërskool Waterkloof's golfing academy, analysing the kids' swing and general technique. Personally, I can't think of a better job for me.'

She sends her plate back to the kitchen with half the lasagne untouched. A gesture of embarrassment, perhaps? Unlikely. The 21 year-old's manner is easy and free. When she talks her hands move in synch with her enthused discursions on academics, future goals, and her family's newly acquired patch of land in Nelspruit.

'I love my course and I think it's a grand privilege to be

part of the first sport-specific degree in South Africa. It is just so much more specialised than any other sport science programme.' Mareli is in her second year of the BSportSci (Golf) degree at the University of Pretoria, and though its name is a mouthful, the aim of the programme can be simply put – golf, golf, golf. Aptly, it's what Mareli is all about too.

I was first introduced to golf through my dad. I was in Standard 6 and would regularly join him on the course over weekends. To earn some pocket money for myself I would play caddie for other members, and that's where it all started.'

Yes, I do think golf suits my personality,' she answers, mentally weighing her characteristics. 'I'm not really one for the spotlight; *ek's maar stil en rustig.*'

The statement is hard to believe, especially since she needs little prompting to qualify her statement. 'I do, however, miss the team aspect of sports like hockey' (Mareli had national colours both for u/16 and u/18). 'You know – going on training camps, sharing a bus. But I've adapted to the golfer's life, making friends on the circuit, in class – wherever.'

She takes a sip of what looks like very weak tea and tells me about her recent accomplishments. A new member of the Gauteng-North A team, Mareli has steadily been driving her way up the ranks of South African Women's golf. Earlier in the year she claimed a 10th overall position at the SA Amateur Championships and finished on top in the second flight of the Gauteng Champs.

Next on the agenda are the World SA and the Inter Provincial Championships, both to be held in September. 'Yes, I am putting in a lot of work at the moment, and so are my coaches, Louis Coetzee and Johan Steyn. With all the gyming, coursework, coaching, league matches and studying, quite a lot is taken out of you. But what I love about golf and what makes it different from other sports is that the scenery always changes. And with new courses come new weather conditions, which makes every round of golf a unique challenge.'

One can tell a lot about listening to a person's voicemail greeting. You might not be able to discover intimate details about someone's life, but by listening closely enough you'll catch something of their character. And if there's one thing Mareli Joubert's voicemail suggests, it's that she's out there doing what she loves 🌈

THE DRIVING FORCE

Text: Rick de Villiers Image: Susan du Toit



Mareli Joubert cannot take your call right now – she's busy working her way to the top of SA Women's golf.

With the Beijing Olympics now a reality, and the incredible dominance of Speedo in the pool, we take a look at who is behind the Brand in South Africa.

Paul Barrett-Smith, President of Speedo SA, could have been designed specifically for this role.

"My competitive swimming only really kick started after matric, and I competed for Western Province for many years in the 400m and 1500m free, holding both those records." The sports isolation cut out any international swimming dreams, but surf lifesaving continued for some years on the world's beaches. Paul joined Clifton Surf Lifesaving Club as a junior, and continued to dominate this sport for over 30 years, both as a competitor, and coach, at national and international level.



"My main event was the surf swim, 400m+ out through the waves, around the swim cans (buoys), and back through the surf onto the beach."

S.A. Lifesaving records detail his achievements. "Tour Leader to Australia, 1976. South African Sports Merit Award, 1985. SA Lifesaver of the Year, World Lifesaving Merit Award 1985. International Training Officer, 1986.

National Team Coach to America, 1983, National Team Coach through to the 1992 Australian test series, and the World Championships in Japan the same year. National Coaching Director 1991 - 1995. Western Province Honours, and the prestigious South African Lifesaving Honours in 1994."



Paul was one of the few South African athletes to earn Springbok colours, up to 1981, interim colours 1992, and the SA Protea badge 1993.

There is no doubt that Paul has lead an eventful life in the water. But some moments stand out more than others. "Well, the Cape Town to Robben Island swim

was very special, 12°C no wet suit.... (the things people get up to for fun)

Meeting Vladimir Salnikov, the all time Russian 1500m world record holder at that time made a huge impact on my life.

The four day surf ski race from Port Elizabeth to East London was really tough, but the most memorable moment was standing in our green and gold, hearing our new national anthem played before the 1992 lifesaving test against Australia at Surfer's Paradise, Queensland."

Special times indeed, in fact Paul's Cape Town to Robben Island 10km swim at 2 hours 38 minutes was the record for five years, and is still today one of the fastest times all time for the longer crossing.

Paul grew up in Cape Town, St George's Grammar School, economics degree, 11 years with ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries), took a year off to coach swimming full time, and then signed up with Speedo.

"I had always swum in Speedo, so to work for a brand that you already believed in, was fantastic. 26 years later, I now look back with amazement and pride how far we have come together."

Paul stays fit and does live the Brand. He still swims 2000m most days and walks for over an hour daily, "Yeah, I swam masters for a while, 400m and 1500m SA records, but too much travelling now to hold that together."

Married with four grown up children, Paul sees plenty of talent surging through their genetic pool. Included in the World Championships and Olympic Games' circuit, Paul and his wife Jan now run the Gold Coast



Mile event in Australia, with the top male and female Australians winning a free trip to swim at the Midmar Mile. The Midmar winning South Africans win a free trip to the Gold Coast 1500m event.

"My day time job....we have the licence to manufacture and market Speedo products in Southern Africa. As President I am responsible for hitting the agreed sales targets, and personally work hands on with the key accounts for all Speedo Performance products. I am now also working closely with Speedo International, and Speedo Australia, on new product,

and southern hemisphere product sourcing. We have a great Speedo South Africa Team headed up by Gael Wise, who put all the swimwear together, and have really driven the Brand onto the beach while still ruling the pool.

I drive our Sports marketing programme, and, obviously, the new Speedo LZR RACER has been the focus of world attention. However, we need to remember that at Atlanta, Sydney, and Athens, our new Fastskin suits dominated the world records and medal counts, and at Melbourne 2007 World Championships our new FS-PRO was worn for 12 of the 15 world records.

LZR, 41 world records before we even got to Beijing. Awesome. But its evolution, not revolution...."

Quick Quiz time....

Favourite food. "Lamb chops and mash, or cottage pie. Maybe its just the mash..."

Favourite music. "Still the Beatles, they changed the music world, and I was really competing hard at that time."

Motto. "More a lifestyle choice. You have to be passionate to make it work."

Inspiration. "Well, we used to get bubble gum in wrapping paper that had a Confucius type message printed inside.

This one had a picture of a jovial type guy saying "6 months ago I couldn't spell salesmun, now I is one..."

"You can achieve whatever you desire.

Meeting athletes like Michael Phelps, Amanda Beard, Salnikov, Ryk, Roland, continues to motivate me about what can be achieved, no matter what."

Last word.

"Living legend, not me," says Paul, "But the Brand is" 🇳🇵

*Text: Manfred Seidler
Images: Paul's own collection*

Paul Barrett-Smith

LEGEND



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SA team captain



Garth Tune



Chanelle van Wyk



Thabang Moeketsane



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Challenges bring out the BEST



The definition of a true athlete is to master challenges with dedication, perseverance and hard work with an attitude of courage and determination. Not only to compete within their area of expertise but the arena of life gauging the tricky waters of sponsorship funding and financial predicaments brought on by the everyday practicalities of living a life of being a full time professional athlete with limited means.

Sport taps into the emotions of its viewers elevating the most mundane spectator to the champion receiving the gold medal on the podium. It reminds us of how it feels to be crowned in glory despite our living circumstances. It is for these reasons that sponsorship initiatives by businesses has been on the increase as sport is a powerful medium to communicate with their respective target market within the broader public.

Our athletes that have been selected to carry the hopes and dreams of South Africa has sometimes had many a challenge to face, not only the physically demanding and emotionally draining road of tough discipline and perseverance but the extra concern regarding their financial funding. Should something happen to an ankle, knee, hamstring or a virus that destroyed your immune system, what would the financial implications be? Medical treatment costs, pardon the pun, an arm and a leg if you are not covered not to mention the impact the additional stress has on the body that limits the speed of recovery.

Consequently BESTmed Medical Scheme recognised the value of sponsoring a selection of track and

swimming athletes in order to lighten the burden for these individuals to aspire and achieve their Olympic dreams. Sport acts as a means to uplift and unite our colourful rainbow nation regardless of race, gender or socio-economic standing. Our athletes encapsulate the essence of beauty, grace, dedication and strength, qualities that strengthen the very fabric of our society. Their respective disciplines and outlook caters for the whole of South Africa.

BESTmed Medical Scheme proudly sponsors:
Gerhard Zandberg,
Thabang Moeketsane,
LJ van Zyl,
Geraldine Pillay,
Chanelle van Wyk and
Garth Tune.

“Our sponsorships are geared towards supporting the medical needs and requirements of our athletes as their bodies are the tools they use in creating their dreams not to mention that it carries the hopes and aspirations of the country” Says Alan Fritz General Manager of Sanlam Healthcare Management who manages BESTmed’s sponsorships.

Every sport needs heroes that stand out and are seen as an example for their greater community, and funding of these heroes have been neglected in the past, however our swimming and track athlete heroes have made great progress tackling this challenge and are paving the way for the future heroes of our country.

“When personal limitations are exceeded they serve as a basis for others to challenge themselves, whether living a more positive and healthy lifestyle or fulfilling a personal dream, whatever may inspire others to experience the power of living apposed to merely going through the motions everyday. We challenge you to raise your bar and be the BEST!”

Go forth and conquer every challenge bestowed upon you! 🏆

Talking about injury pain

Text: Monja Muller and Melissa Brokensha

Sport injuries are probably the most dreaded experience athletes might face during their sporting careers, especially before the Olympic Games! Sport injuries and injury rehabilitation involves not only a physical process but also psychological factors that impact on the injured athlete. For example, anxiety, fear, depression, loneliness, separation, loss of confidence, threat or loss of status and identity, and acute and chronic pain are argued to be important psychological consequences of, as well as emotional responses to injuries. When athletes get injured they get scared! They start anticipating the worst and in severe cases get depressed. They feel isolated and alone.

One consequence and response that sport researchers have focused on, is the pain associated with injury. Pain is seen as a pervasive and debilitating obstacle for the injured athlete because it threatens and alters the athlete's ability to participate in sport. Pain also has an impact on the rehabilitation process as it influences aspects such as adherence to rehabilitation programmes. Thus, an adequate understanding of injury pain requires knowledge of not only its biological substrates but also its psychological aspects.

Talking to athletes about their injury is an important part of injury diagnosis and rehabilitation, as it is thought that this talk or interaction, can increase adherence to rehabilitation programmes and reduce recovery time. One aspect of this interaction is the talk that centres on injury pain. Injury pain is a key diagnostic feature during consultation and provides important information that can facilitate the rehabilitation process. Therefore, understanding how athletes talk about their injury pain, may bring forth new ways of dealing with this pain.

Furthermore, better understanding may assist health professionals in providing better quality care to injured athletes.

A model to help athletes understand pain.

Pain could be viewed as a dynamic and reciprocal interaction between biological, psychological and socio-cultural variables that tend to shape an athlete's response to pain. This model argues that the biological substrate of pain affects both psychological factors such as mood, and the social context within which the person exists such as interpersonal relationships. According to the conceptual model of pain, pain begins as a biological event (**nociception**) that gives rise to psychological awareness (**perception**). From this follows a search for **meaning**, which subsequently serves as a guide for **action**.

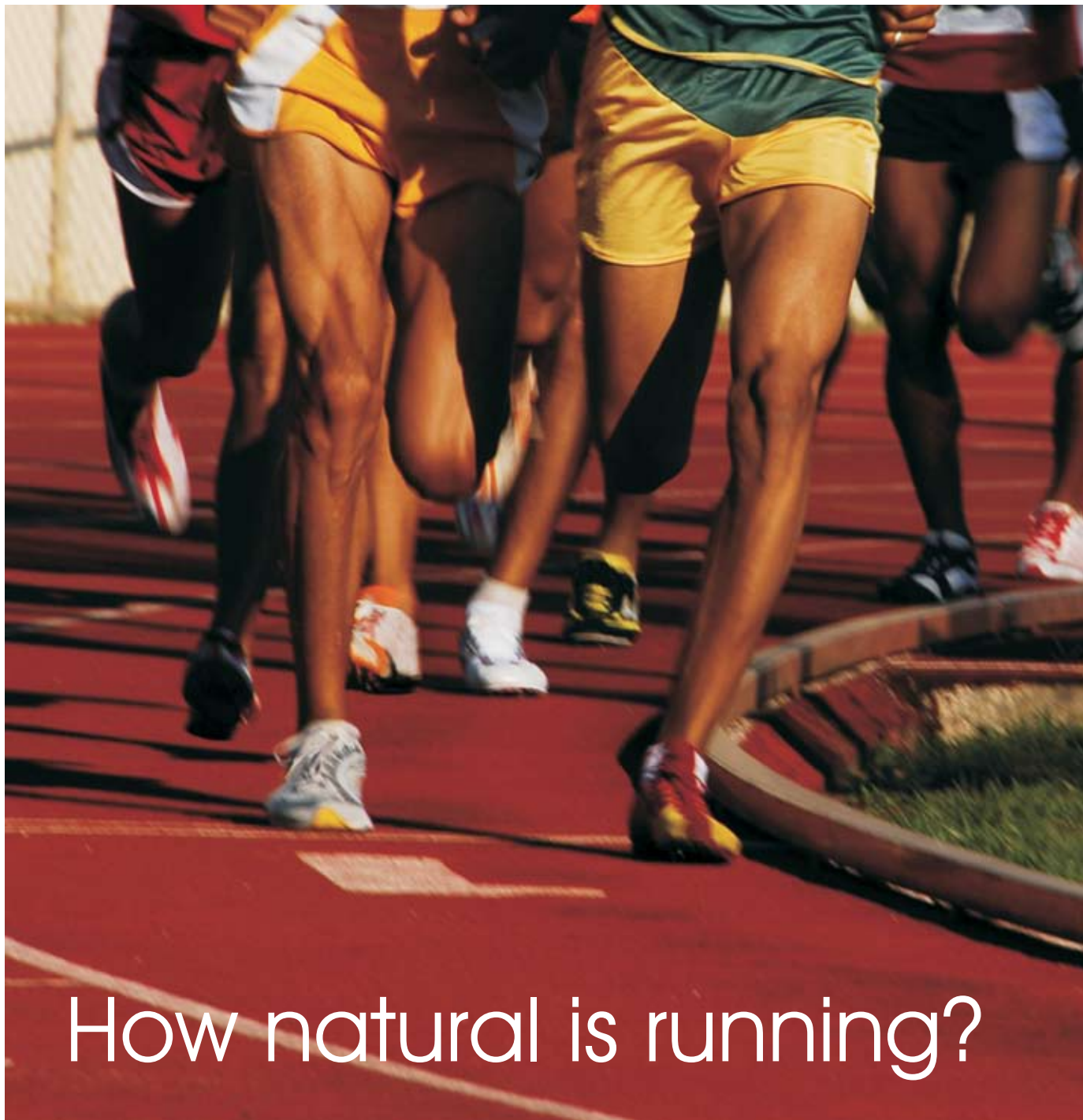
The **perception** of pain is seen as a summation of inputs from multiple brain centres, including the centres that serve emotion and memory. Perception sets off a psychologically driven chain of events, the goal of which is to give **meaning** to pain. Consequently, athletes search for meaning is a process of making sense of their injury pain, and how this can affect their lives and sport participation. Athletes will therefore wonder whether the pain is so severe that it could end their sporting careers or is it only a temporary time-out period approaching. Pain acquires some of its meaning from prior experience for example previous injuries, present state of mind (whether an athlete feels positive or low in mood, and future expectations (how will this injury affect preparation and performance). That is, pain takes on meaning as a person evaluates initial perceptions in the light of memories of other painful

events (past), current physical limits (present), and an assessment of how the injury will influence further activity (future).

The meaning that an athlete attaches to pain, leads to different and multi-layered **action**. Action, therefore, has many forms and includes responses such as distinguishing between different types of pain (performance, injury, benign or harmful), as well as interpreting or ignoring pain. Furthermore, action leads to decisions concerning whether or not to continue training or performing.

Another form of action includes the reporting and communicating of pain to significant others including coaches, parents, team mates or health care professionals. The way in which an athlete displays and talks about their pain can determine the way others respond to the athlete. Therefore, pain is a private experience that becomes public when athletes report and talk about their pain.

To conclude, it is important to realise that sport injuries and pain is not only a physical process but involve much more. Therefore, although pain is a universal phenomena, each athlete perceives pain differently. Pain is perceived according to a variety of physical, psychological, and social factors that lead athletes to attach unique and different meanings to their pain experience, which in turn influence their actions. Talking about pain is important as it can provide an outlet and sense of control to an athlete. This can assist coaches and health care professional to know where to help an athlete and they can get back on track and fulfil their sporting dream 🌈



How natural is running?

Text: Amy Bathgate head Biomechanics and Video Analysis Department, hpc

When we delve into the world of running it is easy to see that it is without a doubt, a very popular competitive sport in its own right and also a fitness activity used at all levels, from recreational gym routines to elite sports training programmes. In the world of nature, it is indisputably, the most natural and simplest form of locomotion and motion for us bipedal human-beings, learnt from a very young age and possibly without conscious motor control for most of our lives. But with this in mind, is running, in the sporting context, a natural phenomenon which only requires improvements in fitness to increase performances or decrease times, irrelevant of distances covered? And if this form of motion is so natural, why then do runners often suffer from various injuries or discomforts as a result of doing it? In this article we are going to briefly attempt to answer these questions from a biomechanical viewpoint and hopefully ignite a chain of thought that will be carried along into most different disciplines and sports for the benefit of all intending to improve their performances in the future.

Biomechanics can be defined as a field of sport science that applies the laws of physics and mechanics to human movement, or rather, the application of the principles and techniques of mechanics to the structures, functions and capabilities of living organisms. Biomechanical analysis is usually done in order to gain a better understanding of the quality of performance in athletics events, through modeling, simulation and measurement. Of vital importance is to have a basic understanding of how physics and its laws can be applied to sport, and the outcomes that could result from such principles as forces, motion, resistance, momentum, inertia, friction, drag, etc. Mechanical compensation and injury are also usually the result of various physical entities and can often be good indications of possible weakness, either in strength, stability or motor patterning. The biomechanics of running, in particular, can be thought of as the "technique" or "how to" component of the sport. Having good biomechanics is equally important to running well, as having a sound physiological foundation (high VO₂ max, high lactate threshold, high aerobic capacity, etc.) and it is important to take into consideration how many running injuries are caused by faulty biomechanics.

Just like training your body to develop endurance, stamina and speed to run further at a faster pace, so too can you develop proper running technique during your training. Replacing ingrained bad habits with programmed good form is a four stage process. Stage one is referred to as "unconscious competence" – not thinking about what's being done correctly or incorrectly. This is how most runners cover their distances, not thinking or realizing about anything they are doing wrong. The next stage is "conscious incompetence", where there is a realization of what is being done incorrectly (possibly due to video analysis or coaching) and a conscious attempt to override "bad habits", but possible difficulty getting it right. "Conscious competence" follows in stage three, with a definite awareness of what is correct and the ability to run consistently with these corrected aspects, however, regular reassessment of technique is still required. The final stage is referred to as "unconscious competence". At this stage, all corrections to technique have been made, and after running properly for a period of time, basically becoming a habit requiring very little conscious thought.

Some runners have a smooth, flowing style of running while others are awkward; some hit the ground hard while others have soft landings; some are economical while others waste energy; some lift their knees high while others shuffle; some runners lean forward while others run upright. You can find runners

with all these different characteristics in the same race and we often tend to copy the techniques of winners, resulting in ignorance of what could be a more effective technique for each individual. Its easy to say everyone has their own pace and runs with their own "style", which is true to a certain extent because your body can unconsciously decide what "feels best." However, this may not always be the best technique for speed and the reason is that you are not born with the correct running technique, it must be learned. Every runner has personal strengths and weaknesses and their running style should be built around those aspects. With all this said, is there an ideal running form? It has been seen that runners with "improved" form often run less economically after the adjustments than they did with their "bad" form. To answer this question it is vital to understand what "good running technique" is, and to consider all parts involved in making this movement pattern possible.

Running can be seen as a series of alternating hops from one leg to the other (left to right leg). The ankle, knee and hip provide almost all the propulsive forces during running (apart from some upward lift from the arms). The running cycle comprises a stance phase, where one foot is in contact with the ground while the other leg is swinging, followed by a float phase where both legs are off the ground. The other leg then makes contact with the ground while the first leg continues to swing, followed by a second float phase. With this pattern in mind, it is easy to see that if the leg muscles are not strong or stable enough individually, that the entire movement will be affected. A simple movement like a one-legged squat often provides much valuable information pertaining to potential conditioning problems which decrease performance and possibly heighten injury risk. Any weakness or instability displayed during a one-legged squat would be heightened by approximately 3 times during running due to increased action-reaction factors during movement. The most common conditioning faults presented during such testing is weakness in the external hip rotators or glute medius particularly (which results in the inability to hold the knee stable and under the hip during loading, instead of collapsing or rotating medially) and weakness in the back & hip extensors or glute maximus particularly (which results in the trunk collapsing forward into slightly excessive hip flexion). Although these weaknesses arise from the hips, the potential injury risks are usually portrayed in the knees or ankles as these joints suddenly have to provide stability to a movement where they are not meant to provide stability, and certain muscles end up over-activating in compensation. The human body is amazing in the way it compensates for weakness

in movement by utilizing other muscles, or smaller movements, in order to complete the desired task. And this occurs without any conscious control at all. The problem with this amazing ability is that most often, compensation patterns become habits and the correct muscles are not utilized to their full potential, thereby hampering performance and increasing injury risks. In other words, despite running being a very natural and simple form of locomotion, it is vital to incorporate an individualized strength and conditioning programme to address weaknesses in order to optimize conditioning, reduce injury and maximize performance.

Apart from strength and conditioning, the two key components of running economy, and the two elemental aspects of running which must change in order to become a faster runner, are stride length and stride frequency. Improvements in fitness and physiological parameters will only increase the distance you are able to cover at your familiar pace, while increasing the speed at which you run can most often only be done by optimizing stride length and frequency. The easiest way to improve stride frequency is to take a look at your range of motion (ROM) used while running. Keeping the knees less flexed and the foot down at the level of the knee rather than pulled up close to the buttock during the swing phase creates a very long lever with a heavy foot dangling on its end. This lever then has to be swung forward for the next step and the longer the lever, the more effort is required to move it and the slower it can be moved. Rather, pull the knee in closer, essentially shortening the lever and making it easier and faster to move. When optimizing stride length it is important not to over-stride, as allowing the lead foot to strike ahead of the body's centre of gravity creates a braking force which leads to added resistance, and hence, increased effort to overcome. Rather than reaching out with the foreleg to get maximum distance during a stride, think about pushing back as hard as you can on each step, using the gluteal and hamstring muscles to do so. **Run from your hips – not from your knees!** In summary, three great ideas for technique improvements are better quadriceps flexibility to increase ROM, increased knee flexion during the swing phase and heightened backward pushes with the hamstrings and gluteal muscles. It is important to note, however, that while slightly more flexion is good during the swing phase, excessive flexion during the stance phase is bad as these joints have to be straightened back out again at toe-off, requiring more energy and increasing the time spent in contact with the ground (footstrike).

When looking at the upper body, the main function of the arm action is to provide balance and promote efficient movement. In the forward horizontal plane

the arms and trunk move to oppose the forward drive of the legs; during the braking phase (heelstrike to mid stance) the arms and trunk produce a propulsive force and during the propulsion phase (mid stance to toe-off) the arms and trunk combine to produce a braking force. This may seem a little weird, but in fact it is an advantage: the out-of-phase actions of the arms and trunk reduce the braking effect on the body and so conserve forward momentum. In the vertical plane around the centre, the arms and upper trunk oppose the motion of the pelvis and legs, i.e. as the right knee drives up and through in front of the body – producing an anticlockwise angular momentum – the left arm and shoulder move forwards – creating a clockwise angular momentum and counteracting the knee motion, thereby helping to reduce rotation forces through the body during the whole gait cycle. Although the legs are much heavier than the arms, the shoulders are wider than the hips, so the arms are well positioned for their job of counterbalancing the leg rotation. This may explain why female runners use a slightly wider or rotating arm action to compensate for their narrower shoulders and lighter upper body. The arm action has more to do with running efficiency than with injury prevention directly. A good arm action needs to be encouraged to counterbalance lower-limb forces and angular momentum, which may in turn help reduce injury. It also contributes a little to the vertical lift during the propulsion phase which may help the runner to be more efficient, reducing the work done by the legs. An analysis of running technique is most easily done using a video camera so that the film can be slowed down and played back at a fraction of the speed – thereby making it easier to detect problems or potential performance restrictions in technique. Visual and biomechanical feedback also makes the athlete more aware of what exactly they are doing in their running and where their strengths and weaknesses are. Correcting pitfalls is then much easier as they have a solid foundation or idea to work from.

In summary, despite various "style" differences between runners, there are certain key basics that need to be incorporated into all running techniques in order to be as economical and efficient as possible, as well as to avoid injury. The key factor to keep in mind is that the goal in running is to go forward (usually as quickly as possible depending on distances to be covered), and in order to do that, all the individual movement used should have a positive effect on that goal, without wasting energy on additional, and most often fatigue causing secondary movements. In terms of conditioning, stability is key to efficiency, and the hips and gluteal muscles are KING!!! 🏆

LONG-TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT:

TALENT IDENTIFICATION

*Text: Darlene A. Kluka, Ph. D. and Anneliese Goslin, D Phil,
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There is no doubt that those associated with sport continue the quest for performance excellence. Coaches and athletes, in particular, continuously search for answers to

(1) What is the role of performance-based, long-term athlete development and assessment and (2) What is the role of sport science and technology in the development of skilled and empowered coaches who are responsible for creating environments conducive to performance excellence?

Previously (The Medalist, August, 2007), we have focused on the question involving the role of technology in the development of skilled and empowered coaches. This time, we will focus on long-term athlete development (LTAD), specifically, talent identification. There appear to be three general categories of talent identification approaches:

(1) Systematic, governmental systems; (2) systematic, non-governmental systems; and (3) non-systematic approaches.

- **Systematic, governmental systems** – former soviet bloc countries; China; Cuba
- **Systematic, non-governmental systems** – tennis, swimming with well-structured age-group programmes; developmental infrastructure identifies and reinforces talent moving through system
- **Non-systematic approaches** – somewhat random identification systems with no particular



approach; in essence, they appear to be little more than physical education classes designed as scholastic teams by coaches

Talent has several properties that are genetically transmitted and, therefore, innate. Nevertheless, talent is not always evident at an early age. Qualified human movement specialists may be able to identify its existence by using certain markers. These early indications of talent can provide a basis for predicting those individuals who have a reasonable chance of succeeding at a later stage. Very few individuals are talented in any single domain; indeed, if all children were equally gifted, there would be no means of discriminating or explaining differential success. Furthermore, talent is specific to that particular domain. Ericsson, Prietula, and Cokley (2007) identified consistent and overwhelming evidence that experts are made, not born. There does not appear to be any substantive correlation between intelligence quotient (IQ) and expert performance in areas such as chess, music, sports, and medicine. The only apparent innate differences that are significant involve height, weight, and actually body size, specifically with regard to sports. The investigators also determined that deliberate practice facilitates the development of expertise. Deliberate practice involves specific and sustained efforts to perform that which the athlete has the greatest challenge with. It is only by placing effort at what cannot yet be done that an expert continues to develop.

The complex nature of talent is highlighted by these principles. It is not surprising, that there is no consensus of opinion, nationally or internationally, regarding the theory and practice of talent identification. Usually professional clubs depend on the subjective assessment of their experienced scouts and coaches, employing lists of key criteria. These are set out as acronyms; for example, the key phrase incorporated in the scouting process of Ajax Amsterdam is TIPS, standing for Technique, Intelligence, Personality and Speed. Alternative lists include TABS (Technique, Attitude, Balance, Speed) and SUPS (Speed, Understanding, Personality, Skill).

Talent detection refers to the discovery of potential performers who are currently not involved in the sport in question. Due to the popularity of football (soccer), for example, and the large number of children participating, the detection of players is not a major challenge when compared with other sports.

Talent identification refers to the process of recognizing current participants with the potential to become elite players. It entails predicting performance over various periods of time by measuring physical, physiological, psychological and sociological attributes as well as technical abilities either alone or in

combination.

A key question is whether the individual has the potential to benefit from a systematic programme of support and training. Talent identification has been viewed as part of talent development in which identification may occur at various stages within the process. Talent development implies that players are provided with a suitable learning environment so that they have the opportunity to realize their potential. Long term athlete development refers to the investiture of commitment, time, effort, energy, finances, and other key factors that are necessary for the development of athletes through their lifespan.

The area of talent development has received considerable interest of late, leading several researchers to suggest that there has been a shift in emphasis from talent detection and identification to talent guidance and, therefore, long term athlete development.

Talent selection involves the ongoing process of identifying players at various stages that demonstrates prerequisite levels of performance for inclusion in a given squad or team. Selection involves choosing the most appropriate individual or group of individuals to carry out a task within a specific context.

For many years, scientists have attempted to identify key predictors of talent in various sports. In this type of research, particularly evident in Australia, China, Cuba, and the former Soviet eastern bloc countries, there are attempts to identify characteristics that differentiate skilled from less skilled performers and to determine the role of heredity and environment in the development of expertise.

For instance, identifying and selecting talented volleyball athletes are not straightforward operations. Detection and identification of talent are more difficult in team games than in individual sports such as running, cycling or rowing, where predictors of performance are more easily scientifically prescribed. Long-term success in a team sport is dependent on a host of personal and circumstantial factors, not the least of which is the coherence of the team as a whole and the availability of good coaching. These factors make it difficult to predict ultimate performance potential in many sports at an early age with a high degree of probability.

What does this lead to?

The most effective contribution from sport science to talent identification is likely to be multidisciplinary and in the form of Performance Enhancement Teams (PETs). Identifying talent for games at an early age is not likely to be mechanistic or unidisciplinary. Successful identification needs to be followed by selection into a formal programme for developing playing abilities and



nurturing the individual holistically towards realizing the potential predicted. Eventual success is ultimately dependent upon a myriad of circumstantial factors, including access and opportunities to practice, staying free of injury, and the type of mentoring and coaching available during the developmental years. Personal, social and cultural factors also influence ultimate performance.

Skills such as speed, dynamic and static balance, focus, power, and agility are packaged differently by sport, but it is critical for youngsters to have baselines for basic skills. These skills will transfer to a youngster's primary activity, so everything that a youngster does to improve the quality and extent of baselines from which sport-specific skills can grow can enhance opportunities to excel in sport.

For example, most games played are possession sports. Rugby, soccer, baseball/softball, field hockey and basketball have roles and strategies that allow each team to control the ball for extended periods of time. One statistic kept for these sports is time of possession of the ball for each team.

The sport of volleyball, however, it is a team sport of rebound and movement. The ball is never motionless from the moment it is served until it contacts the floor or is whistled dead by an official. The size of the court is relatively small for the number of players, creating a congested playing area. Because of this, the game has evolved into one of efficiency, accuracy and supportive movements. Each team has a maximum of three contacts with which to accomplish the game's objective, which is to return the ball and have it contact the floor on the opponents' side of the net within the boundaries of their court. The outcome of the rally, game and match becomes a summation of each player's efforts. This is the ultimate in individual contribution and team effort.

The individual techniques of the game are quite different from those of most team sports. Because the essence of the game requires the body to move through all zones of movement, the ball can be played at the highest point of a jump or just inches from the floor.

The forearm pass is one technique unique to the game. No other team sport fosters ball to forearm contact as an accurate and efficient skill. Sitting volleyball is yet another example of adaptations in volleyball performance technique.

Developing Performance Excellence?

Excellence in performance shares common roots regardless of its form of expression. The concert pianist, research neurologist, and Olympic athlete are all products of sequential, multi-stage development systems. The commonality among these pathways to excellence is surprisingly strong. In his seminal book, *Developing Talent in Young People*, Bloom determined that superior performers practiced intensively, had studied with devoted coaches, and had been positively supported by their families during the formative years. Additionally, the amount and quality of practice were essential elements in the level of expertise that was achieved.

Istvan Balyi, a sport scientist and coach from the Hungarian/Eastern European system now residing in Canada, integrated much of what was involved in talent identification and long term athlete development in the Eastern European system and adapted it to meet the needs of democratic societies, with particular focus on UK Sport and Sport Canada.

A number of criteria necessary for effective talent id tests have been identified. Here is a quick overview (Kearney, 1999):

Stability-

Variable being measured is stable or unchanging over time and is only minimally impacted by growth and development. Variable must have a very strong genetic component to it, and be independent of the experience and training of the athlete.

Tunneling –

The variable is measurable at a young age, and effectively predicts the adult status on that characteristic. If height is a variable with strong tunneling, height of 7-

8 year olds would be highly predictive. Height, however, is not a good example of tunneling because of the significant variation in rate of development across people. Early maturers are taller, younger, and do not reach the adult height of some later maturers.

Performance relevance –

Variables used for talent id should be intuitively relevant to performance. Critical variables include those that are underlying characteristics that are common among all individuals who achieve a high level of athletic success within a sport discipline, but are not necessarily capable of differentiating among elite level performers. An example might be oxygen uptake among elite 10,000 meter runners. All individuals capable of running less than 30 minutes for a 10 K will have an oxygen uptake above 75 ml.kg.min; however, there is a weak relationship between oxygen uptake of these elite runners and performance times. In contrast, a related variable is a variable that may help differentiate among elite level performers when present in concert with critical variables. Using the same example of 10 K runners, the velocity at lactate threshold, or velocity at vo2 max, has a much stronger relationship to competitive performance capacity than simply oxygen uptake.

Assessment integrity –

Traditional measurement and evaluation criteria of validity, reliability and objectivity. In the area of talent identification, this can be challenging, as tests may be valid and reliable but not objective or any other combination. A test may validly assess a certain physiological, psychological or morphological characteristic, but that characteristic may not be a valid predictor of athletic talent. Test validity measures the intended variable, but that variable is not a valid predictor of talent; therefore, the test is not valid for use in talent identification.

Applicability –

Needs to be applicable to the environment in which it is going to be used. The characteristics that contribute to the applicability of a test is that it must be simple, easy to administer, and field-based. There is a continuing debate about the use of field-based vs. laboratory-based tests. The general philosophy reflected in the literature is that field-based tests should be used for initial screening and that the results of these may be further differentiated by the use of laboratory-based procedures on a more select group of individuals. Categories of Talent identification tests include:

Morphological

- Somatotype (stature)
- Mass
- Height
- Fat-free mass
- Length and interrelationships among segment lengths

Motor

- Strength
- Speed
- Reaction time
- Agility
- Flexibility
- Balance – static and dynamic

Psychological and Sociological

- Personality Traits
- Psychological profiling
- Readiness
- Coachability
- Self-concept
- Sociometric skills and assessments

Significant others

- Visual perceptual skills and assessments

Decision making and “Game Intelligence”

In a South African context, most youth participate in sport in concert with either their parents or their direct peer group. It is very difficult to direct a young person’s participation toward a sport that is not part of their social culture regardless of how they may have scored on a talent identification test.

Political examples of former Eastern bloc countries showed that potentially gifted athletes had opportunities to significantly enhance the overall well being of their family, as well as be psychologically rewarded with the notion that they were contributing to a national goal. These factors increased motivation for young, potentially talented individuals, to participate in that activity.

Not only are traits genetically inherited, but there also appears to be a genetically-based trainability such that some individuals have the capacity to adapt positively to training, whereas other individuals may not respond as favorably. Individuals who also have a broader range of genetic input may in fact have a greater potential for achieving high levels of performance in certain areas. There may be a number of other intervening variables such as parental influence, peer group contribution, political priorities, and nutritional status that can contribute to the evolution of an athlete from initial identification to long term performance success.

What about the future?

The following include possibilities for the attainment of appropriate long-term athlete development programmes that include talent identification as a part of the equation for athlete success:

- **National Governing Body (NGB) funding** – each national sport body in South Africa would benefit by investing resources just below national competitive phase to identify and recruit talented and motivated athletes
- **Those National Governing Bodies with limited funding** - implement talent identification programmes to increase probability that specific athletes will have success at highest levels
- Global **talent identification summit** including coaches, athletes, programme directors and sport scientists to share knowledge of most successful international and domestic talent identification programmes, development of meaningful assessments, and sustainable results. This would be an outstanding opportunity for the University of Pretoria's High Performance Center to be intimately involved with this.
- Analysis of talent identification systems on three quality dimensions that include structure, process and outcome as they relate to talent identification, talent selection, and talent development 🇷🇺

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The last thing a runner needs in the preparation and actual running for a marathon is a disruption in their run throughout illness or injury. In many cases dietary aspects can either contribute or solve problems such as muscle cramps, runner's trots and stitches.

GASTROINTESTINAL SYMPTOMS

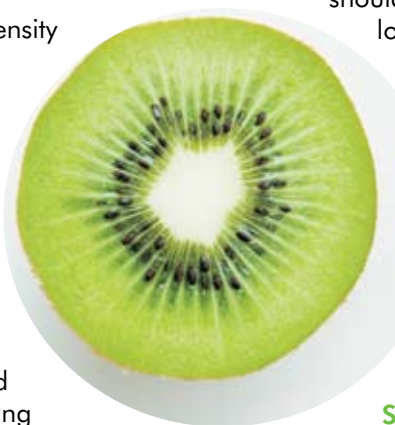
Gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, intestinal cramps, diarrhoea, abdominal bloating, burping and flatulence are common in marathon runners.

Nausea and Vomiting

Running for long distances or at a high intensity often results in nausea, vomiting and a decreased appetite during and for a period after exercise. There are several theories why this happens. If the problem results because of a reduced blood flow to the stomach, reducing the level of exertion or effort should get rid of these problems even though it is hard to slow down. Sometimes pressure builds up in the stomach which causes reflux of the stomach contents. Allowing a longer period (3 hours) of time between eating and running may relieve these symptoms. This can often be hard to achieve due to time constraints, but it will be worth your while to wake up earlier for breakfast if you are battling with nausea and vomiting on the road. Dehydration and a diet high in protein and fat can also increase your risk for nausea on the road.

Runner's Trots

Many runners experience abdominal cramps, diarrhoea and the "urge to go" during or immediately after running. The presence of waste products in the bowel causes fluid to be released into the gut which causes the bowel contents to dilute and provoke diarrhoea. The release of cortisol (stress hormone) during the run also stimulates the bowel. A gradual increase in mileage and good conditioning can minimize the effect of cortisol. The runner can also try to switch the timing of training runs from the morning to the afternoon or vice versa. Runners battling with runner's trots should try to reduce fibre intake, for example switching from whole wheat bread to white or brown bread or changing from a high fibre cereal (All Bran) to a lower fibre option (Cornflakes). Fibre should be reduced especially in the day before the race. The bowel can also be trained to perform before, rather than during the run. Drinking a hot drink well in time before the run and allowing time for a lavatory visit after a good warm-up can condition the bowel to empty before the run.



STITCHES

The stitch is a localized pain in the abdomen, particularly at the side. The exact cause of a stitch is unknown. Runners who suffer from stitches may find some relieve in slowing down or cessation, bending forward and breathing deeply while pressing the painful area quite hard.



General Recommendations to avoid Stitches

- Wait for two to four hours after a meal before running to allow time for food to clear from the stomach.
- Avoid high fat and high sugar foods and drinks as they take a longer time to digest and clear from the stomach.
- Ensure good hydration before and during the run by drinking small amounts at regular intervals to prevent overstretching of the stomach wall.
- Avoid hypertonic drinks (fruit juices, soft drinks and hypertonic energy drinks) before and during exercise seeing that they take longer to empty from the stomach.
- Drink small volumes of isotonic or hypotonic sport drinks or water at regular intervals.
- Increase training load gradually in terms of duration and intensity.

Flatulence

Once food is digested and absorbed, bacteria in the large intestine use the food residue as a source of nutrients and produce gas as a by-product. Some foods are more prone to the formation of gas and should be avoided if the runner suffers with gas, for example beans, cabbage, broccoli and brussel sprouts.

General Dietary Advice

- A high intake of protein, fat, fibre and hypertonic fluids decrease stomach emptying which can increase the risk for gastrointestinal problems. The runner should have a carbohydrate-rich diet that is low in fibre, fat and protein.
- Dehydration and thermal stress have a negative effect on gastrointestinal function. Runners should therefore drink sufficient isotonic or hypotonic drinks to prevent dehydration.
- Changing eating behaviour may help, for example eating more slowly in a relaxed atmosphere.

RUNNING INTO PROBLEMS – NUTRITION CONSIDERATIONS

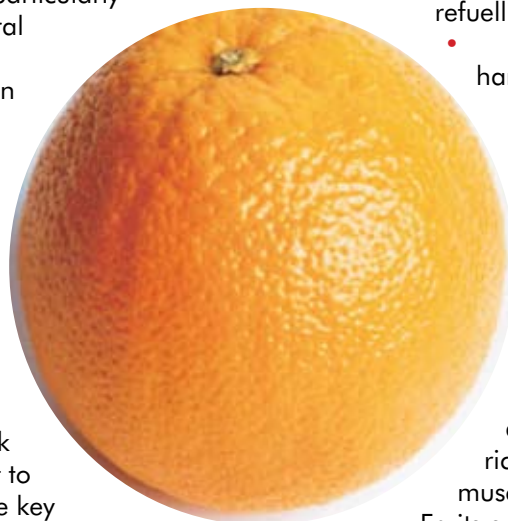
Text: Nicki de Villiers, Registered Dietitian, hpc

MUSCLE CRAMPS

Cramps are temporary involuntary muscular contractions or spasms. It often occurs with an increase in speed, distance or with running in unfamiliar terrain. In these circumstances runners must allow enough time for rest, recovery and stretching, particularly after hard training sessions. Several minerals, including magnesium, potassium and calcium, have been implicated in causing muscle cramps. It seems that cramps can be related to muscle fatigue and loss or large amounts of both fluid and sodium all acting together. Poor refuelling of muscle glycogen stores can also aggravate the problem. Runners prone to cramping and those with a high sweat rate may benefit from drinking a sport drink rather than water and adding salt to their diet. Rest and fluid intake are key factors in recovery from cramping.

General Recommendations to avoid Cramps

- Be well conditioned.
- Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated during training, particularly sports drinks with adequate sodium content.
- Determine individual sweat rate and plan fluid intake to match sweat loss.



- Add salt to meals, especially during hot weather or when sweat losses are higher. Craving salty food can indicate an increase in sodium need.
- Ensure the intake of five to nine portions of fruit and vegetables.
- Include carbohydrates at all meals and ensure refuelling after every training session.
 - Allow adequate recovery and rest after hard training sessions.
 - Concentrate on a good stretching routine after warm up and running.

MUSCLE SORENESS

Muscle aches and pain are caused by fine little tears in the muscles which can lead to inflammation, tightness and stiffness. Including plenty of foods rich in antioxidants may help to reduce muscle damage and prevent inflammation. Fruits and vegetables not only contain antioxidant vitamins, but also protective phytochemicals, not always found in vitamin and mineral supplements. Include five to nine portions of colourful fruits and vegetables for example guavas, kiwis, oranges, paw-paw, peppers, tomatoes and dark green vegetables, for example broccoli and spinach daily. Good sources of the antioxidant vitamin E include seeds, nuts, whole wheat bread and cereals, green plants, milk and milk products and egg yolks.

JOINT ACHE

Running can put a burden on joints and neglecting joint care can lead to problems. **Omega-3 fatty acids** can help care for joints and keep them supple and flexible. Omega-3 fatty acids should be widely available from the diet through the intake of oily fish, walnuts, pumpkin seeds and linseed or flax oil. Runners sometimes prefer the intake of omega-3 supplements seeing that the mentioned sources often does not feature in their regular diet.

Glucosamine, a natural substance found in the body, has an important role in keeping the cartilage healthy. Glucosamine has been shown to regenerate cartilage and it appears to have anti-inflammatory effects and supplementation thereof seems to provide some pain relief and improved function in people with regular knee pain.

Vitamin C has an important function in collagen formation. Collagen is a protein found in all connective tissues such as bones, cartilage, ligaments, tendons and skin. A daily intake of fresh fruit and vegetables will ensure an adequate intake of vitamin C.

DIET AND IMMUNE FUNCTION

Hard training is associated with reduced immune function. The immune function can be further impaired by a poor diet. A diet insufficient in energy, particularly carbohydrate, protein, iron, zinc, and vitamins A, E, B₆ and B₁₂ would place the runner at risk for an impaired immune function. A balanced diet, adequate in energy, carbohydrate, protein, vitamins and minerals is crucial to maintain immune function. Adequate carbohydrate intake counters an increase in circulating stress hormones. It is therefore recommended to ensure a carbohydrate intake of 30-60g in drinks during prolonged exercise.

General Recommendations to avoid Illness

- Ensure the intake of plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Include plenty of iron- and zinc-rich foods in the diet. Iron sources include red meat, liver, pilchards in tomato sauce, eggs, oysters and mussels. Plant sources include fortified breakfast cereals, spinach, soya and dried apricots. Zinc sources are organ meat,

meat, fish, poultry, shellfish, dairy products, nuts, whole-wheat products, vegetables, asparagus and spinach.

- Maintain a high intake of carbohydrate-rich foods.
- Avoid rapid weight loss which is an indicator of sub-adequate energy intake.
- Drink plenty of fluids that contain carbohydrate before, during and after prolonged and intensive sessions.
- Allow plenty of rest and recovery time after training.
- Keep hands away from eyes and mouth.
- Wash hands regularly, especially after touching anything previously touched by someone with a cold.
- Just before and immediately after running a race, keep away from large crowds or people suffering from flue or cold.
- Avoid sharing food, cutlery and other utensils, particularly drinks bottles, with other people, especially other runners 🏃

Reference:
Burke, L. 2007. Practical Sports Nutrition. Human Kinetics.
Griffin, J. 2005. Nutrition for Marathon Running. Crowood Press.

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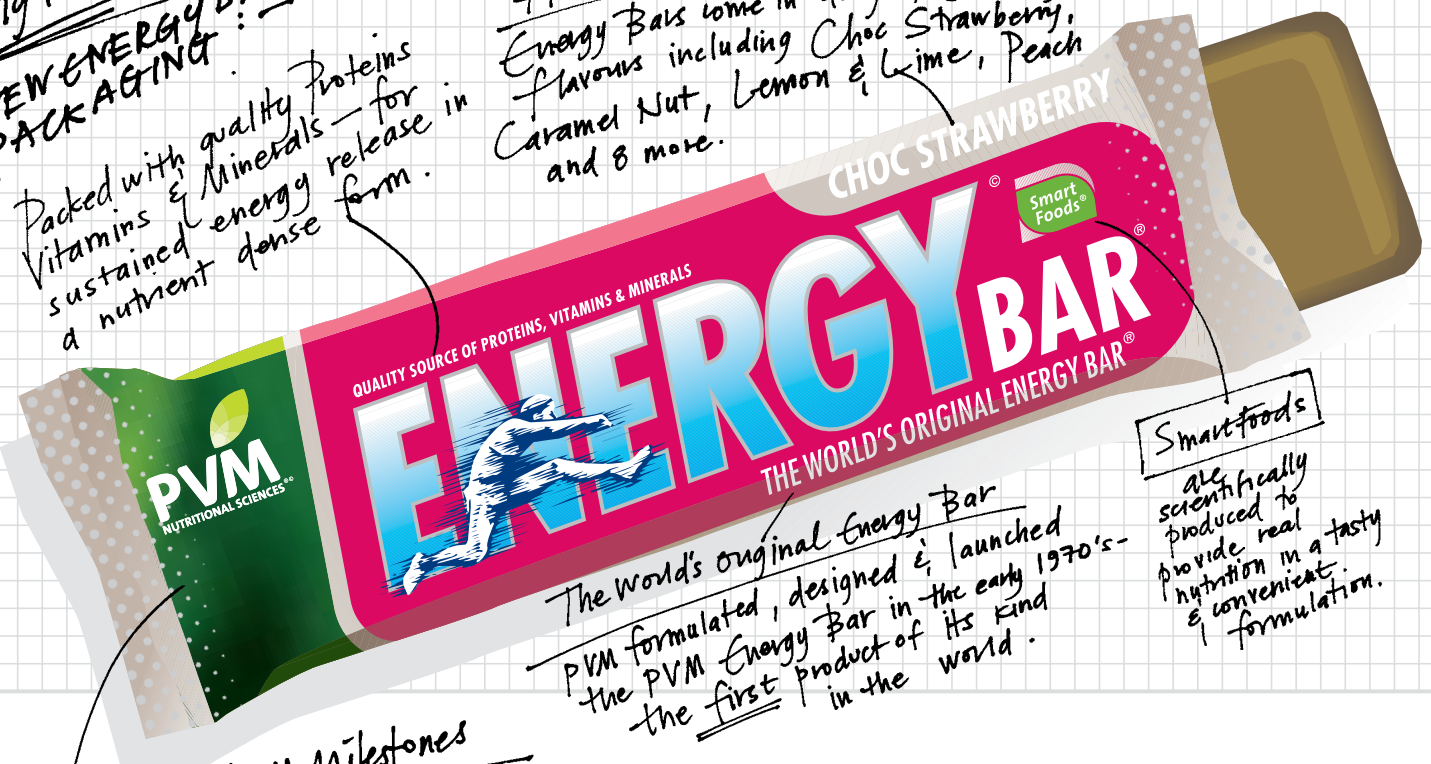
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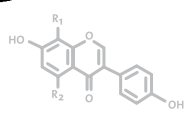
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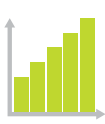
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1992 Enerformula Range: Energo became the world's first hydration and electrolyte replacement drink; containing protein to increase blood sugar control. Enerload became the world's first carbo-loader containing protein to increase carbohydrate (CHO) storage.

1999 Energy Dynamics: Cutting-edge scientific product range focused on individualised nutritional intake. This range of products became the first version-coded supplements independent of any specific dietary regime. Some version 3 products are currently available.

1999 Thermogenics: PVM made the decision not to develop and market any thermogenic weight loss formulae due to health concerns and the fact that weight loss achieved by the use of thermogenics is of a temporary nature and cannot lead to permanent, medium- to long-term weight loss.

2003 Octane Gel: Includes protein that has, to date, never been used in gel form.

Intensive scientific research undertaken by the National Institute of Food Research in the 1960's, led to the establishment of PVM (which stands for Proteins, Vitamins and Minerals). Subsequently, PVM became the first company to manufacture products to combat malnutrition. We have since produced a wide range of food and energy supplements in various nutritional fields.

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Our passion is nutritional science. Our mission is to understand the complex biological processes of the human body. It is for this reason that the company that produced the world's original Energy Bar is still the market leader after 35 years.





COMRADES STEP-BY-STEP

Text: Lindsey Parry

December 2007 saw 4 people selected to achieve their dream of running the Comrades marathon. The programme was filmed and broadcast on SABC Sport so the athletes were selected to represent the full spectrum of Comrades hopefuls.

Lindie Janse van Rensburg is an artist living in Pretoria, a member of the Tukkies athletics club and at the start of the programme had never run further than a Half Marathon. She'd come to the right place..

Nick Alton an accountant in Pretoria and member of the New Balance Running Club was another novice who'd recently completed his 1st 21km. He was going to comrades with or without help.

Magie Mohulatsi a master's student at Pretoria University and also a member of the Tukkies Athletics club was the veteran in the squad with 8 Comrades behind her. Could we help her improve?

Thabile Dube a working mother from Sunninghill and member of Sunninghill Striders. Regular runner but had never gone past the 21km mark. She came to us with a knee problem; the challenge was on to get her across the finish line.

All four athletes were given the full treatment, medical check up from the Doctor, screening from the physio's, a Functional movement analysis, a visit to the sport psychologist, the dietician and a physiological assessment. The athletes were then given training programmes to address their imbalances and build them up slowly to a level to complete the Human Race.... As with most programmes there were problems along the way! Thabile needed reduced mileage as it was determined she had osteo-arthritis, however she was determined to follow her dream. Nick fell very ill from a water bourn virus, developed pneumonia and then blood clots. It was an uphill battle to get him ready...

The 15th of June 2008 arrived; the athletes and staff were nervous but confident. Chariots of fire booming over the loud speakers, thousands of Comrades hopefuls lining up in Durban, Goosebumps... The gun and the race begins.

This year was an up run which can be very daunting

with the first 30km practically all **up hill**, and you still have 2 mythical climbs to conquer in the second half – Inchanga and Poly shorts.

Early on it was Nick leading the way with Magie and Thabile running together and Lindie coming through just ahead of the cut off after 10km. Things changed on the long climb up Fields hill with Magie moving ahead, followed by Thabile, then Nick and Lindie moving steadily at the back. After the first 30km the support crew were vital to keep up the moral of the athletes and thanks must go to Steve Ball, Jimmy Clark, Nicki de Villiers and Dr Maaki Ramagole for the great job they did!

At the top of Inchanga the picture was getting hazy, Thabile was storming away from her fellow step by steppers, Magie was struggling but had experience on her side, Nick was in trouble and Lindie sailed as she cruised past just ahead of cut off.. Nick stopped for some counsel from Nicki about nutrition and was on his way.

Onto the mythical climb of Poly shorts, 2.7km long and steep. Doesn't sound like much.. Try running it after 70km of punishing terrain. Thabile was far ahead by now and took a brisk walk up the climb safe in the knowledge a finishers medal would be hers. Magie, Nick and Lindie were tucked into the 12 hour bus and all looked in better spirits, everyone was on track for their dream.

Off to the stadium and Thabile had beaten us there!! 11:30, a great time for her first voyage. We then waited as the clock ticked down. Did we prepare them well enough? Will they hold out? The questions we were all asking. And there they came, first Nick in 11:50, running arms raised feeling like he was winning the race, then Magie, relieved to finish number 8 and last, running at the same pace she started at and with the same big smile on her face: Lindie in 11:53.

On the hottest Comrades in 8 years, with the highest drop out rate in many a year the Step-by-steppers hung in to finish. Well done to everyone involved and a big thanks to the Sport Science and Medical Unit staff that helped these people fulfil a dream 🏃



Institute for Sports Research
University of Pretoria

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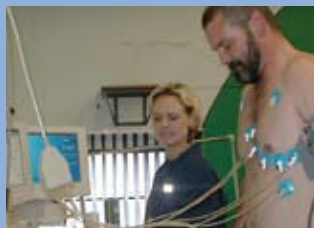
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Periodisation: Part 3

Rounding off your planning

*Text: Steven Ball BA(HMS) (Hons) Biokinetics; CSCS(NSCA)
Head Strength & Conditioning Specialist*

In the previous two editions we have looked at various aspects related to periodisation planning. We established that planning is a critical component of the developing and performance athlete and that proper planning and preparation leads to great performances. We also established that periodisation is important in planning for the training year ahead, always showing progression in training, exercises and in turn allowing for optimal physiological adaptation. If there is a lack of variation, we will find that there will eventually be a stagnation in the individuals abilities and performances.

Within this we will look at loading patterns, briefly, and then look at practical tips and questions that we should ask ourselves when we look to setting up our periodisation plans.

Loading correctly is of paramount importance in the overall plan. The loading patterns followed are crucial in the outcome of the training and in turn the performances achieved. One of the key aspects related to the loading patterns is that of optimising recovery and loading patterns are designed to achieve just that. Though the loading cycles used we can either break the athlete down to far or allow for optimal recovery and in so doing better performance.

Most coaches use an array of loading patterns and this depends on the individual athlete, time available prior to competition, prior history of training and individual rate of recovery. Typically we will find that most coaches and sport scientists will make use of a **step-type** approach. The individuals ability to tolerate heavy loads improves as a result of adaptation to the various stressors applied. This method requires a training load increase followed by an unloading phase during which the body adapts, regenerates, and prepares for a new increase. The speed and frequency of increase in training load must be determined by each individuals need's, rate of adaptation, and competitive calendar. An abrupt increase in training may go beyond the athletes ability to adapt and in turn affect the individuals physiological balance (Bompa, T 1999)

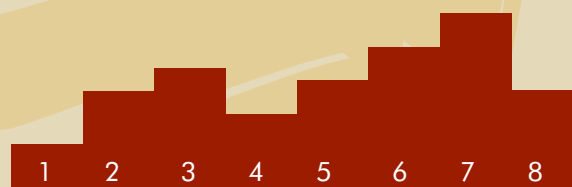
Depending on various factors some individuals are loaded in a 3 or 4 week cycle. The step-type approach does not mean steadily increasing the load. It must be highlighted that a specific load however will need to be repeated several times to allow for adaptation and this adaptation will not be seen in just one single session. It is important to keep in mind that this loading pattern can and should occur from day to day (within a week)

and from week to week basis.

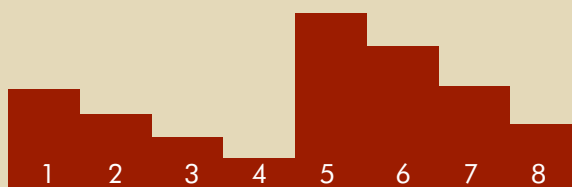
Within the traditional loading or forward step loading you will find that we increase the load from one week to the next (or day to day) usually for around 3 times. The next step in the process will then include an unloading phase to allow for a period of regeneration and physiological adaptation from the ceiling of adaptation that was achieved from the loading done over the previous 3 cycles. During this unloading or regeneration phase the reduction in overall load allows the body an opportunity to recover itself and recovery from any accumulated fatigue within the previous three loading steps. This allows the body an opportunity to accumulate new reserves for the further increases in training load. This unloading phase represents the next lowest step for the next macrocycle of work.

Variations have been used regularly within loading patterns. These include lengthening the adaptation phase (permitting a higher increase in the adaptation) and following a reverse step loading. Within the reverse step loading method the load decreases from step to step allowing for greater recovery and in turn also better quality work being done. I have personally found this method of reverse step loading particularly useful during the final phase of the competition year assisting the athletes during the cycle where they need to be in peak capacity.

The following illustration shows examples of the loading patterns:



Weekly or daily pattern - Step Loading

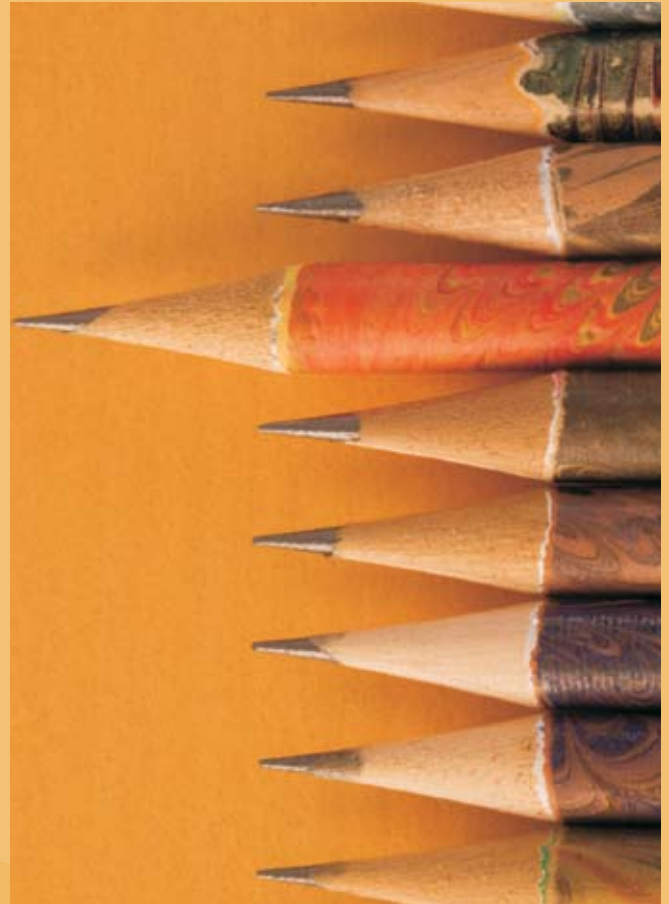


Weekly or daily pattern - Reverse Step Loading

Following below are some Practical tips and questions that you can ask yourself when you are setting up your periodisation plan, These include and are not limited to.

Practical Tips

- Work backwards with your planning. Start at the major competition for the season or cycle and plan backwards incorporating the elements required for optimal performance at a specified time
- Calculate the weeks between specific phases to allow for more accurate planning up until performance events
- Determine the optimal loading pattern i.e. daily, weekly and monthly for the athlete specific to the specified dates of desired performance
- Try and incorporate as much information into the periodisation plan so that an athlete, coach and federation has a comprehensive outline of the overall plan.



Questions to be asked

- **What competitions are the athletes competing in? Which ones are the most important for this season and where we want the athletes to peak? What are these dates?**
- **When will there be taper phases followed?**
- **Will there be any training camps for the athletes and if so when?**
- **When will the athletes have holiday or leave and time off?**
- **What is the expectations of the national federations or provincial associations if they are to be competing on this level?**
- **What disciplines will the athlete or team being making use of. This incorporates all areas of involvement and should specifically include all aspects of strength, conditioning, speed and sport science services.**
- **What is the previous training background of the individual or group I am planning for?**
- **From a long term athlete development perspective where is this individual at present, what is required of them for that phase of development and how can we move them to the next phase of development?**
- **The availability of training and sport science time and the associated level of proficiency of the individual or squad.**
- **What is the level of efficiency and experience of the athlete or squad?**

So hopefully over the series of these articles we have been able to highlight various aspects that should be thought about, utilised and included within your planning. Keep in mind the importance of good planning and that lack thereof could lead to poor performance 🇳🇵

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3. Baechle & Earle (2000). **Essentials of strength and conditioning.** Human Kinetics. 2nd Edition

Adductor Strains

Inner thigh or Adductor injuries are common injuries treated by the physiotherapists at the hpc. Adductor strains are common in sports that require forceful directional changes such as rugby, soccer, tennis, hockey and cricket.

The adductors are a group of powerful muscles located on the inner thigh and consist of six muscles, namely: Adductor Magnus, Adductor Minimus, Adductor Longus, Adductor Brevis. The Gracilis and Pectineus muscles are also part of the adductor group.

This group of muscles is most commonly injured when it is subjected to forceful contractions or excessive stretching which overloads the muscle to the point of failure. A muscle strain, which is tearing of muscle fibre will then occur. The site of injury is most commonly the musculo-tendonous junction. This is a section of muscle close to the bone, where the muscle becomes less elastic and therefore more vulnerable to injury.

Acute injuries are common, and if managed correctly should see the athlete returning to their respective sport without too much time spent on the sidelines. But when these athletes are rushed back to competition and continue to play with even moderate pain, adductor injuries can become chronic and can plague a person incessantly.

Strengthening

The adductors should then be strengthened, starting with isometric exercises and progressing to dynamic exercise. Lunges and side lunges as well as sports specific exercises are end stage rehabilitation. Only once straight line running is completely pain free may the athlete commence with direction changes while running.

Strengthening exercises should also focus on the abdominals as well as hip flexors, since weakness in them will place extra strain on the adductors. Once again, these exercises should all be done in a pain free range to ensure that the injury does not develop into a chronic one.

Chronic Injuries

The adductor tendons attach onto a small area of bone on the pelvis. This area has a poor blood supply and a rich nerve supply making it slow to heal and very sensitive to any intervention. This is why the rehabilitation should not be rushed 🏳️

Reference: Clinical Sports Medicine. Brukner and Khan. Third edition 2006.
Adductor Strains, American Journal of Sports Medicine
Bruce Fry et al. Feb 2007

Initial Treatment

As with most other soft tissue injuries, the R.I.C.E protocol should be followed. Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. This controls the initial bleeding and swelling. Ice can be applied for 10-20 minutes every two hours. During this phase the leg must be rested as much as possible.

Range of Motion

Subsequent to this, the range of motion must be restored, first passive range and then active range, the range must be gained by working "to pain" but not "through pain". Adductor injuries are notorious for developing into chronic injuries, this is mainly due to an overly robust and accelerated rehabilitation that works through pain.

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Training Tips

The role of **SPEED** and **AGILITY** in cricket.

*Text: Steven Ball BA(HMS) (Hons) Biokinetics; CSCS(NSCA) Head Strength & Conditioning Specialist
hpc, University of Pretoria*

For many years avid cricket followers watched in awe as Jonty Rhodes flung himself around the field taking amazing catches, swooping in the field like a bird of prey closing in on it's target causing chaos in the batters minds and stealing countless runs that were seemingly never there. At some stage all of you who were watching his brilliance were left wondering, "How does he do that?" and quite simply Jonty, like all the other top fielders in the world, possessed a unique balance of speed, agility and anticipation. So lets delve a little deeper into these components and the role they play in performance on the field.

Firstly let me point out that of the speed, agility and anticipation components, the X-factor would most certainly be anticipation and to coach this most would agree is extremely difficult. So let us then focus on what we can improve through technique and training, that being speed and agility.

By definition Speed is described as the "rate of motion or progress" or the time taken to cover a certain distance and is usually related to linear (straight line) movement whereas agility is defined as "the power to move quickly and easily, nimbleness" and is describes the ability to change direction quickly and effectively.

When considering speed more often than not we consider maximal speed and acceleration and ultimately the goal of speed training is to get an individual to achieve maximum speed in as short a time as possible. This is obviously achieved through optimizing acceleration and is usually reached after a sprint acceleration phase of approximately 30 – 50m. Bearing that in mind it is likely that you may only get the opportunity to reach maximum speed a couple of times in an entire cricket match when chasing a ball to the boundary, our training interventions from a speed point of view need to target acceleration because cricket

involves many bursts of explosive acceleration and linear distances in cricket are carried out over mostly 5 – 20m distances. The first and most important step in improving speed is to improve efficiency and we do this by improving running technique. This can be achieved through a basic understanding of technique and then the implementation of various technical drills involving apparatus such as hurdles, speed resistors and speed parachutes.



SPEED



Finally and for me most importantly we need to implement interventions focused on improving agility. This is achieved through drills that target foot movement and body position because these 2 factors will decide how quickly we change direction. If we can improve the speed at which our feet move we can improve the time it takes to move towards the ball or between the wickets. As part of my training sessions I will use ladders, hurdles and slalom poles to improve quickness and body position. The final step in the progression will see the introduction of fielding stimuli such as catching or ground fielding to ensure that the movements are relative to those that take place on the field of play and encourage reaction time and eye, foot and hand co-ordination.

A part of all of us wants to be the one who takes that brilliant catch, stops that vital run or steals the winning single to win the game. Through an understanding of the basic principles of speed and agility and the implementation of various basic training drills we can all improve how quickly we move and ultimately have a large role to play in both our personal success and the teams success as a whole.



AGILITY

SPEED & AGILITY

Text: Prof Rian Cloete, Director: Sports Law Centre, hpc

Original fake sport merchandise for sale

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Sports licensing and merchandise is growing in popularity as a marketing tool. Whereas sponsorship involves the placing of a corporate trademark on a sports product, licensing involves the placing of a sports trademark on a corporate product. Sports licensing and merchandising rights in relation to sports events generate attractive financial rewards. These rights include sports event and team logos and emblems ("logo licensing"); sports event and team "mascots" ("character licensing"); sports stars licensing ("personality licensing"); and sports clothing and footwear licensing ("product licensing").

The production and sale of fake sports merchandising is also big business. It is estimated that it is costing the European Union economy a staggering £250 billion a year. Millions were (and are still) earned through counterfeit copies alone of the number 23 Real Madrid shirt of David Beckham. Fake merchandise [or counterfeit (pirated) copies] is defined as the unauthorised use of registered trademarks in connection with the production and/or distribution of goods.

Registration as a trademark might not always give sufficient protection. Problems occur when the logos, badges or titles of sports organisations or events do not establish a link between the sign and the trademark or indicate the sports organisation as the originator of the goods or event.

With respect to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, FIFA made it clear that they are the originator of the



event by registering the official titles, "2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa", "2010 FIFA World Cup" and "FIFA World Cup". Other famous events have also become known as a particular event by the federation concerned, such as the "IAAF World Athletics Championship".

In *Arsenal Football Club v Matthew Reed* [case C-206/01] Arsenal experienced similar problems where they had to deal with non-official merchandising products with the logo of Arsenal FC. Reed stated on a notice on his stall that the goods he sold were not official Arsenal FC products. The European Court of Justice, however, held that Reed infringed upon the trademark of Arsenal FC.

In South Africa, a sport logo can be registered as a trademark for a range of consumer goods if it satisfies certain legal requirements [see the Trade Marks Act 194 of 1993]. A sports logo can also be protected by copyright as a protected work [see the Copyright Act 98 of 1978]. Sport and Recreation South Africa owns the copyright of the logos of the Protea and Springbok national colours and earns revenue from its copyright ownership. To protect the integrity of these national assets, they may not be reproduced on items such as clothing or promotional material such as caps, without the express permission of Sport and Recreation 🇿🇦



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HIGHLAND

Water is the essence of life. More and more people prefer quenching their thirst with water rather than with soft drinks or even fruit juices. The two most important reasons why people buy bottled water are for their health and safety. It is generally assumed that bottled water must be clean, or at least cleaner than tap water. This is not always the case. Not all water is the same. A lot of chemicals, for instance chlorine, are added to tap water to make it safe for human consumption. In the same way, bottled waters go through different processes before they get to the shelves. The Department of Health has set out the following standards to distinguish between the different types of water:

Distilled water:

When water is boiled, the water vapor is turned back into liquid through a process called recondensation. This purifying process leaves dissolved contaminants such as salts behind and only pure evaporated water is utilized.



Mineral water:

This type of water usually comes from a borehole and water is directly removed from the underground source. It does not come to the surface of the earth of its own accord, but rather by mechanical means. The natural filtering process has not been completed, as it did not come up through the different layers of rock formations.

Spring water:

A spring or a fountain is an underground water source that has been pushed up to the earth's surface in a natural way. This implies that the water went through a natural filtering process that may take decades to complete. By the time the water is pushed out at the eye of the fountain, the water is usually exceptionally pure. Although most spring waters still go through a filtering process, this is mostly a precautionary step.

WHY HIGHLAND WATER?

The general public has, in recent years, become more educated in terms of health related issues and can make informed decisions regarding aspects such as mineral contents. Highland water is of the purest currently available on the market. The spring water is characterised by a very low dissolved mineral content. This is an important feature in terms of its value and utility. The modern trend in bottled waters is a preference for low mineralised waters. This style of water is preferred as it is light and refreshing, which matches a contemporary and active lifestyle.

Prepared or purified water:

Water from any source, including tap water, is put through a filter and/or treatment process, such as reverse osmosis, to remove any impurities and harmful chemicals, such as chlorine. Minerals may be added at the end of the process. This does not qualify as natural water.

Natural water:

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The Limpopo Academy proves it's possible **SPORT FOR SPORT'S SAKE**

Text: Rick de Villiers

Upon arriving in Manchester for the INAF-FID European Athletics Championships, Abram Matloga knew that no matter how hard he ran the 800m event, he stood no chance of bringing home a medal. Not because he was not good enough, nor because of a lack of determination. The reason was plain – only European competitors were allowed to receive their worth in gold, silver or bronze. And yet Abram Matloga pushed on and pushed past his fellow racers, leaving them behind to claim the first place.

Le sport pour le sport. The concept carries as much of the curious about it as the skeletal frame of dinosaur in a museum: interesting, quaint, but out of touch with the real world. Sport today runs on little else than money and sponsorships. But at the Limpopo Academy of Sport, no one seems to have got the memo.

A few months ago we brought you an article on the joint venture between the hpc and the Limpopo Academy. The goal of the partnership was and still is to nurture the talent of local athletes by providing them with quality support structures. And judging by the recent performances of the athletes, the project is bearing fruit.

At the event mentioned above, six of the Academy's intellectually-challenged athletes secured podium

position. In the high jump, Boitumelo Mogashoa came in third, and Jane Rasakanya did the same in both the 3000m and 5000m long-distance events. And South Africa's 4 x 400m men's relay team (Boitumelo Mogashoa, Abram Matloga, Ishmael Legodi, Ayanda Xolisi) left their competitors in the dust to claim top spot.

The absence of medals mattered little, because these athletes and their coaching staff at the Limpopo Academy are in it for the love of the sport. Ms M.J. Ramodike, Manager of the Academy, feels the aims of the project are coming together in a way no one could have anticipated. 'The achievement of these athletes shows the relationship between us and the hpc to be a very successful one. Overall performance has been enhanced and there is definitely a growing interest in athletics.

'Moreover, sportspeople from rural areas are being given opportunities they would otherwise not have had. With the hpc's expert guidance we are performing better every day, and we wish to maintain that standard.'

And a standard has certainly been set. The philosophy behind the Limpopo Academy's approach is one of passion for sport alone. It's sport for sport's sake 🏆

Emiley Grey heading for Beijing

So what is so remarkable about Emiley Grey? After all she boards and lodges at the Univeristy of Pretoria High Performance Centre (hpc) and is just another Olympian amongst many right. Wrong. Yes Emiley is all of that, but she is so much more.

At 16 Emiley will be heading off to Beijing at the end of August. End of August? Well yes, that is when the Paralympic Team heads off to Beijing and Emiley will be in the swimming squad.

When speaking to Emiley I was stunned to find she was in self-study. At 16! "I'm doing what is the equivalent of the O and A levels in England". That more than the fact that she is going to the Olympics is what impressed me about Emiley. Also that she is fully expecting to finish her schooling within the next year or two.

For the last 6 months Emiley has made her home at the hpc. Her swimming under the watchful eye of coach Igor Omelchenko has improved remarkably. So much so, that Emiley is swimming for the Bronze Medal at the Paralympics in the 100m breaststroke.

It's all about Respect

When Joey Mongala enters the room there is the sense of quiet confidence about him. Its no surprise really, at the age of 23 he has competed in both emerging Sprinkbok Colours and the Emerging 7's, as well as played for the Blue Bulls for 4 years.

His demeanor is one of respect and that is what he values most highly along with his faith in Jesus Christ. Quite clearly those qualities were what attracted hpc Academy Manager Danie Du Toit when he approached Joey to become a Mentor in the Academy programme. "My biggest dream right now is to instill a sense of responsibility in the kids I am looking after and help them not make the mistakes I made." As Mentor Joey is on locker or floor duty once a week where he will oversee the 16 boys from Locker 4 between 18h00 and 20h00 at dinner, make sure they study till 21h00 and then ensures that lights are out at 22h00.

"But it's more than looking over their shoulders. I try and instill a sense of pride in them and that they take collective responsibility for anything that goes wrong on the floor". Not an easy task when he is dealing with age groups from 13-18. What Joey doesn't mention is that he has another huge responsibility in looking out for any problems that may crop up amongst his charges. That includes becoming a confidant and sometimes alerting teachers and parents as to some areas that may be of concern to them.

Parents can rest assured. Their boys are in good hands with Joey. "I really like what I do. I want to be around at least for another two years and see this group and the next through Matric." Parents can be assured of continuity in how Locker 4 is run.



Chasing a Dream

There is no doubt that the single biggest sporting code in South Africa is soccer. The Glamour Clubs such as Kaizer Chiefs, Orlando Pirates and Sundowns spending fortunes on their players and staff. And anyone who has ever witnessed the derby between Chiefs and Pirates will never be the same again. It is a spectacle to behold.

The talk in the streets is always of the latest shanigans of the PSL or SAFA. But quietly under the radar one person is making a difference in women's soccer, part of the sport that does not get much attention from the public nor the media, yet Basetsana and Banyana Banyana are improving all the time, and that after only 6 years of having some sort of structure in place. All of this came when Fran Hilton Smith decided that women's soccer deserved a place in the spotlight. Fran is heavily involved with FIFA and on a trip to the States in 2002 met Jamal Pritchard of the Pretoria University High Performance Centre. She shared her dream with him of having proper structures in place for women's soccer; a feeder system; a place where budding talent would receive the best support, not only in technical training but the whole back up. Nutrition, nutritional advice, physio, education and of course the right training. And so the Ladies Soccer Academy was formed.

Currently there are around 25 kids at the hpc and visiting the TUKS School. "Education is a priority", says Fran. "Many of the players leave school and are not geared for life in the outside world. So we make sure that their education is up to standard. Besides, better educated players, are just generally better players. They tend to read the game better. Also there is life after Football and we need to prepare them for that as well."

For those who are not academically minded, Fran and the hpc Academy take them through a life skills course and teach them to be hairdressers or something that will be able to provide them with a living.

The team that competed at the 2008 FASU Games included 2 players who went through the hpc Academy programme. Kaneilwe Mathibela and Simphiwe Dlodlu. Then Basetsana only narrowly missed out on qualifying for the World Cup.

Fran has very definite plans for the future and wants to increase the intensity of the programme. Already Augustine Makalalalane holds the position of Head Coach. Augustine has not only played at the highest level – he played pro football in Switzerland for many years – but is also one of the highest qualified coaches in the country. As Head Coach at the hpc, Fran has appointed Anna Monate, a former Banyana Banyana player.

With all the back up and professional expertise available at her hands, it wouldn't be a surprise if the ladies soccer team under Fran Hilton-Smith, in the years to come, emerges as the more successful soccer team to represent South Africa 🇿🇦

Text: Manfred Seidler

TuksSport News

My first comrades experience!!

Text: Bosman Grobler

After completing my first comrades a lot of people asked me the obvious question: How was the Comrades? The simplest answer I can give is very, very far...

In my preparation for Comrades 2008 I tried not to focus on the 87km I had to run, but I told myself that I had to run for eleven hours. This is however easier said than done...

The atmosphere at the start was electric and truly a unique experience. The long run was started with shosha loza, the national anthem and the ever so famous rooster.

With a bronze medal the ultimate goal my running partner (Alwyn Kaltwasser) and me started the eleven hour run on Sunday June 15th at half past 5. The original plan was to stick together and finish together within the eleven hour mark.

With my partner a doubtful finisher at the 35km mark, I set out to concur the last 50km on my own. In true comrades spirit I picked up a fellow runner and chatted away the next 25 km. The last 25 km was on my own, and a lot of time was spent in a meeting between my Savoir and me. It is here that it becomes apparent that the comrades can not be finished in ones' own power. It takes a combination of focus, willpower, a higher power and a bit of craziness to finish...

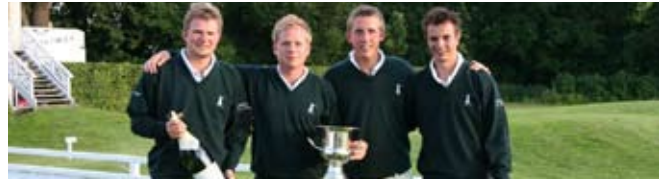
The race itself is unbelievably well organised with 42 water points, support all along the road and the true spirit of Comrades.

The feeling of entering the flora mile and crossing the finishing line with a time of 10:38:36 was overwhelming and something that will stay by me for the rest of my life. More so was to watch the 5000 runners, including my running partner finish in the last hour of Comrades 2008.

The lasting impression: Comrades really is the ultimate human challenge!!



Student Matchplay – Ingolstadt, Germany 2008



Catholic University Eichstaett-Ingolstadt hosted the Students Match play for the third time. The tournament took place from June 18-19, 2008 on the private course of HRH Duke Max of Bavaria north of Munich/Germany. Universities could enter one team of four students. Participation was limited to 26 university teams from all over the world. The past years' competitions saw teams compete from Europe, South Africa and USA. Due to the general high interest in the event, regional quotas applied.

After a serious month or two's play-off's, the final Tukkie team was selected.

The University of Pretoria's team consisted of:

Stefan Rall, Francois Coetzee, Lukas Steyn, Shain Johnson, Louis Coetzee – Manager/Coach

The competition was decided by a stroke play qualification on the first day. The best 3 scores of the 4 team members counted.

UP finished 2nd in the stroke play and therefore qualified for the A flight Match play Division. Only 4 teams qualified for the A flight. Francois Coetzee also finished 2nd overall and Lukas Steyn Made top 10.

The final results were determined through a matchplay format. Tuks played Manchester in the semi final and won 2½ - 1½. The finals commenced afterwards: Tuks against Exeter. This match was decided through 2 games of foursomes. After the match, scores were still level on 1 all. The Cup winners were decided by a sudden death play-off, which was won by Exeter on the 1st play-off hole. Tuks finished 2nd after being 3rd in 2007. After the match Stefan Rall went on to win the "Long drive" competition. Tuks were the crowd favourites through the week.

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LEAD THE WAY TOYOTA

Inside News

JUNIOR ZAMBIAN CHAMPION HEADS FOR OLYMPICS

Text Olivia Raper

As the whole world looks forward in expectation to the Beijing Olympics, Racheal Nachula looks forward to run the race of her life, the 400m.

Racheal Nachula is no stranger to hard training and high expectations. Even as the 18 year old finds herself competing in her final year as a junior athlete, Racheal has performed outstandingly this year as she has already competed in five major races and now finds herself flying off to the Beijing Olympics where she will race in the 400m event on the 15th of August.

"Wow, this girl truly has a lot of talent." Born in Lusaka, Zambia, this talented athlete aspired to be like her role model, Maria de Lurdes Mutola. Mutola, who was born in Mozambique and specialized in the 800m event, has traveled all over the world to win many gold



medals and compete in the Sydney and Atlanta Olympics.

According to Racheal it takes talent from God, discipline and lots of hard work to get where she is, especially at such a young age. When her time for the 400m wasn't improving people often discouraged her and told her to change her coach, but while interviewing Racheal I could see the close bond that she shares with her coach, Steve Rautenbach. "I couldn't believe it when she told me that she use to run a time of 57 seconds when she first arrived at the hpc." Now, within two years, she has astonished everyone with how well she has improved by running a 51:39 in the 400m event (Bronze) at the 2008 African Championships in Ethiopia, which helped her to qualify for the Beijing Olympics.

LJ van Zyl sent a warning out to his major rivals when he ran a season's best in both the Golden Gala, Golden League 400m race in Rome and then again 2 days later in Athens at the Tsiklitria 2008.

Van Zyl had to be satisfied with 4th in Rome, behind the USA's Kerron Clement, Bershawn Jackson and the Jamaican Danny McFarlane. But in Athens he turned the tables on McFarlane winning the race in his fastest of the year 48.22sec.

Since racing in Europe, Van Zyl has steadily been improving and his latest result is the third fastest time of his career. In Rome he clocked 48.79sec. Clement, who has the fastest time in the World this year, dethroned countryman and USA Trial Champion Bershawn Jackson. Up until the Rome Golden League meet, Jackson was one of the contenders for the end of season Jackpot, but his loss to Clement means he is out of the running for the \$1000 000 Jackpot prize for staying undefeated in his event.



It was however the 48.22sec win in Athens of Van Zyl, that has made the pundits sit up and take note. It means that Van Zyl has moved into the realm of legitimate contender for a medal at the Beijing Olympics.

After his race in Rome, Van Zyl had a long conversation with his coach Nico Van Heerden back home. Van Heerden has been working on the TUKS' athlete's confidence since LJ had a bad start to the season. "I told him to attack between hurdles 3 and 6. In Rome he left himself with too much to do and had to settle for 4th. In Athens he executed just the way I wanted him to."

Clearly the talk worked, as Van Zyl was bolted out of the blocks and left the rest of the field for dead, including McFarlane who just two days previously had shown Van Zyl a clean pair of heels. It also means that Van Zyl appears to be peaking at the right time of the season.

LJ will race in the next Golden League meeting on Friday in Paris before returning home for his final fine-tuning and an onslaught at a medal in Beijing.

Text: Manfred Seidler

World Champs Vancouver 2008

Text: Lindsey Parry

It was a great privilege to be involved in the management of the junior high performance programme leading up to and including the World Triathlon Championships hosted in Vancouver.

The trip was a success both from a management and a performance point of view. Thanks to the input from Dawie and Anneke Kotzé, the age group team managers, the high performance team was able to secure accommodation near all the training and racing facilities. While in Vancouver I was very ably assisted by Carol Austin (Head of the Triathlon South Africa High Performance Programme) and Andrew Janse Van Rensburg (Physiotherapist to the Triathlon South Africa High Performance Programme)

Race Reports:

Junior Girls:

We arose to a foul day in Vancouver with the mercury dipping below 10 degrees, the sea temperature at 12 degrees and some rain to make the racing really interesting.

Vicky Van Der Merwe had a good race, exiting the water with the main bunch and cycling safely within the bunch. After a hick up in transition Vicky had a solid run to place 16th in the junior girl's race, seconds outside the top ten.

Ashleigh Blackwell acquitted herself well at her 1st world championship, struggling to adapt to the cold. She finished a credible 41st despite suffering from hypothermia and a bout of asthma.

Junior Boys:

Wikus Weber had a great race exiting the water in the main pack. The cycle was very technical in the conditions and Wikus kept out of trouble getting onto the run course after an excellent transition. Wikus had his best run to date to finish in a creditable 21st in a very competitive field.

Loy De Jager had a solid performance, after getting off to a perfect start in the swim a mistake at the turn around boy cost him dear and he exited the water in the chase pack. From there Loy had a good race, finishing off in 40th position.

Richard Murray struggled to adapt to the cold water and lost more time than usual on his weakest discipline. He however showed great courage to cycle on his own and passed a number of cyclists before unleashing one of the top 5 run splits of the day to force his way into 49th.



The World Junior Athletics Championships started in Poland and two South Africans are in the finals already.

The final preparation consisted of a week's training at the High Performance Centre (hpc) on the University of Pretoria grounds.

Tuks hurdler Claudia Viljoen, who has high hopes of making the finals in the 100m, was clearly at home in the environment at the hpc, as she trains there everyday. For the rest of the team it was an opportunity to start to focus, go through last minute team management meetings and generally prepare for the big day.

"All the Senior athletes always stay here for their final preparation before departing to whichever major championship, so for us Juniors it was really great to be treated the same way. It makes us feel part of the future of athletics", said Viljoen.

The importance which Athletics South Africa places on having their teams do their final preparations at the hpc speaks volumes for the relationship built up between the two parties over the last few years. Every Senior Team had their final test and preparations done at the hpc, and now the Juniors are following suit.

"This is the nucleus for the 2012 squad leading us to the London Games", said the President of Athletics South Africa, Mr. Leonard Chuene. It is quite clear that Athletics South Africa believe very strongly that the hpc is the best possible place to prepare their athletes, both Junior and Senior for any major championships.

For Viljoen the World Junior Championships will be the highlight of her athletics career to date. It was almost touch and go though or the Tukkies athlete would not have been in the team, after sustaining a knee injury at the South African Senior Championships in March this year. That injury meant that she was below par at the South African Junior Championships at LC De Villiers in April. The Junior Championships were also the trials for the World Junior Championships. Viljoen was handed a lifeline when she was selected to compete at the Southern Region Junior Championships in Harare in June.

She duly won the 100m hurdles and booked her place in the team. "I was worried about not making the team, but coach Nico Van Heerden never lost hope and with the support of Ignacious "Naat" Loubscher in the gym and the rehab I had at the hpc I am on my way to Poland. I'm expecting to get to the finals, but know I'll have to run a PB if I want to get into the medals." Viljoen's best is 13.80sec, which she ran at the SA Student Games at LC De Villiers in March.

Text: Manfred Seidler

Inside News

Glamour Club scoops TUKS player

Text: Manfred Seidler

Proving that the University of Pretoria/High Performance Centre (hpc) combination is a successful breeding ground for pro soccer players is Gordon "Gillie" Gilbert. The 25 year-old left back has just been snatched up by glamour club Kaizer Chiefs, arguably the most prolific club in the history of South African soccer, and one which virtually all aspiring players in the country want to end up playing for. Gordon moved to Scotland when he was eight years old in 1990. But at the back of his mind was always the dream to come back home to South Africa. "My roots are here, I have family here and I always did want to play football in South Africa." The European education clearly seen in the use of the word football.

Gillie – Gordon's nickname – came back to South Africa 4 years ago after finishing his studies in construction management in East Fife, close to Edinburgh. His big dream though was always to play football for a pro team, preferably in South Africa. To that end Gillie played at club level with St Johnson before moving to East Fife. Such is the talent of Gillie, that East Fife did not want him to leave, but despite the Scottish accent, Gillie's heart is in South Africa.

Upon his return 4 years ago, Gillie was spotted by the TUKS coach Steve Hobbs who immediately saw the then 21 year olds potential and signed him up for the



University team where he played for the next 2 years.

"Their approach is amazing. Really professional the way they train and look after their players. During my two years at TUKS I wanted for nothing. The guys in the gym were always willing to help; the whole back up team that the hpc provided was incredible. Need a physio, no problem. Injuries, they've got the doctors. It's a really professional set up at the hpc and TUKS."

That back up, combined with Gillie's undoubted talent and work ethic, saw him snapped up by Mpumalanga Black Aces, the old Witbank Black Aces club; and Gillie was on his way to becoming a "pro footballer" as he always wanted to be.

The cherry came when he was signed by the mighty Amakhosi at the end of last season. "I've been with them now for a month and it has been fantastic. The club has so much history and tradition, and such a pedigree, it's a dream come

true. But the bottom line is, without the grounding received at TUKS and the High Performance Centre, University of Pretoria I would never be here now" Gillie "returned to his roots" so to speak last week when he and the rest of the Chiefs team were training at the hpc. For a pro team such as the Amakhosi to make use of the facilities at the hpc,, speaks volumes for the centre.



The New Balance team in conjunction with the highly qualified staff of the hpc and the world class facilities have taken their Tech training to a new level by having retail staff training at the hpc in Pretoria with input from the highly qualified staff at the hpc on running injuries and other sporting injuries along with all the updated product information that is provided by the NB Tech team of Justin and Coenraad.

In addition to this New Balance has introduced the retail members to some of our sponsored athletes who perform in our product to provide feedback to the sales people on the floor.

In picture here we have a group of Total Sports specialist footwear sales staff pictured with Hezekiel Sepeng (NB sponsored athlete) and Coenraad, Pepsi and Justin from New Balance.



Carla Germishuys crowned World Champion

Text: Manfred Seidler

24-year-old Carla Germishuys could not have asked for a better send off in her last year of competing in the 20-24 age group category in Triathlon after winning the 2008 ITU 20-24 World Triathlon Championships in Vancouver, Canada on Saturday 7 June.

For Carla, who will be competing as an Elite athlete from next year, the title is evidence of the immense talent and support she has from the University of Pretoria High Performance Centre.

The win did not come easy as the weather conditions were atrocious; so much so that the organisers shortened the 1500m swim leg by 400m and the bike leg by 2-3 km. The water read a freezing 12 degrees Centigrade and exposing athletes for more than 30 minutes was considered to be too dangerous. However, incredibly heavy currents made many of the swimmers almost make up the 1500m original leg, merely by trying to stay on course.

The run course also contributed to confusion amongst the athletes. The route was a two and a half lap course; some athletes missed out on a loop with no blatant intent. But the end result was confusion with the final placings. Carla finished 2nd behind America's Ashley Morgan who "won" in 1:56; 46 (overall time), however that included a 25min43se 10km run! Way better than the men's World Record for that distance. It was clear she had run a loop short. That meant that Carla was automatically bumped up from 2nd to 1st.

It has been a rapid rise for Carla from Novice to World Champion, as she only started the sport 4 years ago. In that time she went from 36th (debut Worlds in 2005) to 7th to 8th and finally on top of the podium. That kind of improvement is virtually unheard of in the sport and bodes well for Carla as she develops into an Elite athlete. "I know I will need to become faster in the bike and run legs to be competitive in the triathlon at Elite level. The top girls are

running around 34min for the 10km run leg and my best is 38min. But I am going to give it my best shot over the next few years. The advantage I have is that as of next year I can focus more attention on my sport as I will have finished my community service as a Physiotherapist."

"Also having the sport science services of the High Performance Centre of the University of Pretoria available at my fingertips is a huge factor in my improvement. They take care of everything for me, my coaching, nutrition, physio treatment, the works."

Carla will spend the next week in Canada before she returns home with the World Championships medal around her neck.



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from the sideline



Text: Lester Mills

It's with much excitement that I, and I'm sure all sports fans, await the Summer Olympic Games starting in Beijing on August 8.

Certainly, if you thought other editions of the "greatest sporting show on earth" had covered all the bases as far as creating a spectacle was concerned, I have a strong suspicion the Chinese are about to prove us wrong.

Already we have been bombarded by all sorts of off the field issues in the run up to the Games.

Naturally, being a communist country, politics have played a huge role in the build-up to the Games and will during and no doubt after the Games are completed. China's poor human rights record reached new heights after its harsh dealing with unrest in Tibet. As a result, protests over Tibet bedeviled the traditional carrying of the Olympic torch across the world to Beijing with unprecedented security measures taken. Then there's the "pollution issue." Haile Gebreselassie a double Olympic champion in the 10000m and current world record holder in the marathon opted out of taking part in the Olympic marathon because of the poor air over Beijing and most athletes are definitely concerned about the situation.

That aside, however, reports are that the Chinese have spared no expense in preparations for these Games. In spending what observers estimate to amount to tens of billions of dollars, even entire factories have been moved in an attempt to ease the grave pollution problem. With money seeming no object in a country which lays claim to having one-fifth of the world's population, stadiums, transport systems and the general technology surrounding the event will be state of the art.

It's with this backdrop that the 225 members Team South Africa – the biggest yet sent to the Games – takes to the arenas of Beijing.

Of course, we all have high hopes for them, but in truth don't expect miracles.

Our swimmers, the likes of Roland Schoeman, Ryk Neethling, Gerhard Zandberg, Suzaan van Biljon and track and field stars like Mbulaeni Mulaudzi, Godfrey

Moekena and LJ van Zyl are within touching distance of medals, but it kinda ends there.

Maybe rower Ramon di Clemente who won bronze in the men's pairs in Athens and his new partner Shaun Keeling will surprise as too will canoeist Shaun Rubenstein, a former world champion, in the 500m and 1000m K1 events but they too have their work cut out for them.

Naturally we all would love to see all of the above winning medals of any colour, but I'll put a decent wager on all of them getting overshadowed should another South African – up until now not mentioned – win a medal.

Having already achieved notoriety simply by qualifying for the Games, Natalie du Toit, will become an instant world swimming icon should she grab a medal in the 10km open water swim. A new event at the Games, Natalie stands a great chance of finishing in the top three of this grueling race in spite of having lost a leg in a motorcycle accident in 2001. As a Paralympics swimmer Natalie is world famous, but should she finish in the medals in Beijing she will become a world heroin. Her chances aren't that bad either, she qualified for the 10km open water event by finishing fourth in the world championships in Spain. Remember that's against able-bodied swimmers.

A medal for Natalie will certainly make this sports fan a happy one regardless of what our other athletes do 🏆

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