

Magnolia Newsletter

Feb 2010 (no 6)

Visit our web-site www.magnoliaroadrunners.co.za

Editor can be contacted at 012-842 2566 W, 012-361 2965 H, 082 578 3935 or cbillau@ford.com for any enquiries

Take care on the roads and make sure that you are visible and safe at all times.

27th McCarthy Toyota 10 / 21km

On behalf of everybody on the Committee we would like to thank all 145 members that helped at the McCarthy 10, 21 km & Fun Run on Saturday and the workers race on Sunday. A special word of thanks to Hank for his dedication, hard work and the commitment he has put into this year's race to make it a very successful event. We can all be proud of having one of the best race organizers in the country and our achievement to host another "great race" was for all to see. We had a very successful race and received many good reviews from other clubs at the venue. Our race will be broadcast on TV 2, date to be confirmed.

We would also like to thank all race committee members for their hard work leading up to the event and to McCarthy Toyota for 27 years continuous sponsorship.

One race day the Metro Police let us down again by not supplying all the promised Metro Police. Once again Magnolian members stood up and really saved the day, and every marshal played their part, without any traffic incidents. Guys, a big THANK YOU, we are in your gratitude.

Entry stats: 21 km 2116, 10 km +/- 2100 and 680 for the 5km (Total 4900).

Jacques Rossouw to visit Magnolia (date to be finalised)

We have arranged for Jacques Rossouw to visit Magnolia in the next 3 or 4 weeks (date to be finalised) to talk to us about preparing for Comrades / your first marathon. Jacques has a wealth of experience and has trained previous Russian Comrades winners in the past. **Watch this space.**

Run-Away Sport shop is not closing

There is no true in the rumour that Run-Away Sport is closing, they will remain on the same floor in the Sanlam Centrum Glenfair, but as from the 1st March they will be moving to a new shop location - 2 shops to their right where Berlina Sewing shop is currently located.

Club clothing

New stock of men's and ladies running vests and crop tops were delivered Monday to Run-Away Sport

2010 Club fees

Electronic payment possible: Standard Bank, Menlyn Branch code: 012345, Acc No – 012187429, Please ref : Club fees – Surname and print a copy as proof of payment. Membership forms are available on our website <http://www.magnoliaroadrunners.co.za/membership/membership.htm>

Comrades

- **Rockies** Comrades Panel Talks – Tuesday 9th Feb at 19h00, entrance fee R40
- **Special guest speakers: Bruce Fordyce, Don Olivier (19 medals) and Jon Patricios. Venue: Road Runners Club, Zoo Lake , Westwold road, Saxonwold. Enquires Val 086 107 6259 or info@rockies.co.za**
- **BUS # 1:** departs from Magnolia Club house 06h00 Friday 28th and returns Monday 31st May
Cost : R1100, deposit R250 Accommodation: Amanzi Holiday Flats, Amanzimtoti
Enquiries: Willie Hall 082 375 6174 or Stephanie 072 374 6044 swalters2@fnb.co.za
- **BUS # 2:** departs from Magnolia Club house 22h00 Thursday 27th and returns Monday 31st May
Cost : R1100, deposit R250 Accommodation: Amanzi Holiday Flats, Amanzimtoti
Enquiries: Dirk Olivier 086-510-8825 dirk.oli4@telkomsa.net
- **BUS # 3:** R750 per person - all inclusive. Contact Daan du Toit 012 365 3553 or 0825724169
- **LOSKOP Marathon Away weekend** – we have booked 4 tent sites for 32 people. R165 per person for the full weekend. Additional charge R30 per car per night will also be payable. To secure your booking, please email me for the bank details.
- **60 Km Long Run will be held on 11 April (4 times 15km laps)**

Magnolia will be holding our seventh Long Run on 11th April run through the **shaded** and **quiet** streets of Brooklyn and Groenkloof. To cater for all types of runners, either fast or slow and to provide the flexibility of allowing the runner to determine their own distance, there is a 15 km loop that does not go further than 3 km

from the club at any time. We have had in the past over 330 runners from all over Pretoria / JHB and hope to equal or better this number.

- **ALL COMRADES ENTRANTS** – we need you T-Shirt size for your Comrades top. We plan to purchase similar dry fit tops like last year. **If no response is received before the end of Feb, your size will default to Large.**
- **SPONSORSHIP opportunities:** Any company wanting to sponsor our Magnolia top please contact me. Your company logo will be embroidered on one sleeve. To reduce your costs, we could consider having dual sponsorship.
- **Individual sponsorship:** Any member that would like to contribute towards the goody bag, either small items or just even a small cash amount, again please contact me.

Birthday wishes - enjoy your special day

Henk	Van lill	11	Feb
Louis	Begemann	13	Feb
Grant	Symmonds	16	Feb
Brian	Tomlin	16	Feb
Hennie	Van Der Merwe	16	Feb
Andre	Claassen	21	Feb
Jeremiah	Kgomokaboya	21	Feb

Welcome to our new members to the Magnolia family

Janine Blom, Theo Pienaar, Kealeboga Molokomme, Leon Le Roux, Robert Harris, Beveley Brown, Renate Van Niekerek, Tania Reid and Nienke Meijer

This week's Thank You's goes to:

1. Thank you again to the 145 members that worked at our Sat race.
2. Hendrik & Heidi, Linda & Wilma, Freddie & Tinus, Mr & Mrs Booyesen for offering up their Sunday morning to help with the workers race. We had 75 runners.

YEAR PLANNER - NEXT 3 MONTHS

- Next Social : Bring and Braai 2nd March, 6th April and 4th May
- Next Club Tent: Bronkhorspruit 32kn
- Away Race: Loskop Ultra Marathon 17th April
- Magnolia LONG RUN (4 x 15km) – 11th April

Feb / March Races and Training sessions

Weekend training sessions

To lift your spirits, join a running group. The change in your routine should help revive you, and the camaraderie will add a social element to your long runs / walk.

Running: Sunday run starts @ 06h00. A vehicle travels with the group, at the pace of the slowest runner and provides cold water, coke and powerade every 3 km. No fixed route and we travel in a different direction every week. All runners are welcome, even if you belong to another club. Please contact our Club Captain **Tinus 083-304-7054**

If you are not running the Saturday's race, come and join our SLOW session aimed at beginners wanting to build up to their first ½ marathon. The pace is between 6.20 to 6.40 minutes per KM. This group is ideal for beginners. **Sat run starts at 06h00.** Please contact **Colin 082 578 3935** for more details.

Walkers: Start 06h00. The group consists of both male and female, from the average to top walkers. These sessions are ideal for runners returning from injury. All are welcome. Please contact **Suresh 082 446 6880** for more details

<u>Organised weekend training sessions starting at the clubhouse (NOTE starting times)</u>					
Sat	13 Feb	NO Slow Run			32km Bonkhorspruit
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	14 Feb	Organised Run (car support)	24	06h00	Tinus 083-304-7054
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sat	20 Feb	Comrades Novice Slow Run	13 + 12	06h00	Colin 082-578-3935
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	21 Feb	Organised Run (car support)	25	06h00	Tinus 083-304-7054
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sat	27 Feb	NO Slow Run	21 + 9		Run 21km Deloitte + 9 extra
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	28 Feb	Organised Run (car support)	25	06h00	Tinus 083-304-7054
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sat	6 Mar	Comrades Novice Slow Run	13 + 12	06h00	Colin 082-578-3935
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880

Sun	7 Mar	Organised Run (car support) Normal Club walk	25 10	06h00 06h00	Tinus 083-304-7054 Suresh 082-446-6880
Sat	13 Mar	Comrades Novice Slow Run Normal Club walk	13 + 14 10	06h00 06h00	Colin 082-578-3935 Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	14 Mar	Organised Run (car support) Normal Club walk	26 10	06h00 06h00	Tinus 083-304-7054 Suresh 082-446-6880
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Pre-entry Race closing dates and details (away races and PRE-ENTRY ONLY)

- **Pick n Pay Marathon** - pre entries close 10th Feb www.enteronline.co.za Race date 14 Feb
- **Pirates Toughest ½ marathon** - pre entries close 17th Feb www.enteronline.co.za Race date 21 Feb
- **Cape Gate Vaal Marathon** – contact Nadia on email ncoen@icon.co.za for entry form. Race date 7 March
- **Remax 21 / 42 (Edenvale)** – pre-entries close 28 Feb www.enteronline.co.za or www.saactive.com Race 7 March
- **2 Oceans marathon** – on-line entries close 3 March www.twooceansmarathon.org.za
- **25th Loskop Ultra Marathon** – Pre-entries close 1 April www.loskopmarathon.co.za race date 17 April

Closing dates for pre-entries – local races only (can still enter on the day)

- **Deloitte PTA** pre entries close 22 Feb www.enteronline.co.za and Run-Away Sport & Running Inn. Race date 27 Feb
- **Akasia 3 in 1 -** pre entries close 3 March www.enteronline.co.za plus Run-Away Sport & Running Inn & Sweat Shop Race date 6 March

Race Calendar and key dates		
10 Feb 18h30	Irene Lantern Night race – 10km Cost: R30	Irene Campus ARC, Centurion enquires 012-654 0005 pre entries All Supersparks stores and #, \$ and &
13 Feb 06h00	Bronkhorspruit 32km Cost R50 – 32 and R25 – 10km	Hoerskool Erasmus, enquires Ronel 082 452 8127. Pre entries Run-Away Sport and www.enteronline.co.za
27 Feb 06h00	Deloitte Pretoria Marathon 10 / 21 / 42 Cost R60 – 42, R 40 – 21, R 30 - 10	PHSOB Club, Hoymeyer Park, enquires Gerald 084-582-7242 entries #, \$ and & online ^^
6 Mar 06h00	Akasia 3 in 1 10 / 21 / 42 Cost R55 – 42, R40 – 21, R30- 10 plus R5 on race day	Wonderpark Shopping Centre, Karen Park enquires 012-549 1690. Pre entries #, \$ and &, plus % Montana, and all Mr Price Clothing Stores online ^^ and ++
20 Mar 06h00	Om Die Dam Ultra 50 / 21km Cost: R120 – 50km and R50 – 21km	Hartbeespoort High School Sports grounds enquires 011 844 0149 www.enteronline.co.za and #, \$ and &
Legend for Hand delivery addresses: # - Run-Away-Sport 361 3733, @ - Varsity Sports, \$ - Running Inn 362 7322 (new number), % - Sportsman's Warehouse, & - The Sweat Shop (Southdown) 665 0048, = - Base Runners or ON-LINE entries - ^^ - www.enteronline.co.za ++ - www.saactive.com		

2010 Running (RR) / Walking League Races (RW)

Please enter the below league races to maximise the amount of league points scored for the club (RR – Road Running & RW – Road Walking)

DATE	EVENT	LEAGUE			CHAMPIONSHIPS	
		Club	RR	RW	RR	RW
27-Feb	Deloitte	Phobians		10; 21 & 42 KM		42 KM
6-Mar	Akasia 3 in 1	Akasia			42 KM	
20-Mar	Right to Run	Arcadia	10 & 21 KM			
27-Mar	Denel	Kentron		10 & 21 KM		
10-Apr	Solomon Mahlangu	AGN		10 KM		
10-Apr	Solomon Mahlangu	AGN	10km			
8-May	Jackie Meckler	PMMC	10 & 25 KM			
22-May	Muller Potgieter	VTM		15 KM		

Achievements

Please e-mail all your race achievements to **Paul Laubscher** at paul.laubscher@gmail.com or 012-844-0744 Work or forward to me. All runners participating in walking events, please contact me for your walking results to be recorded. **Our database already includes over 34 000 recorded race times. Contact Paul if you want all your own personal race results.**

Time Trial

1 st and 3 rd Tuesday of month	Opposite Magnolia Club house (Runners & Walkers) Official start time:17h45	3, 5, 6, 8, 9 km	Select your distance. Time is taken and recorded. Walkers 3km. Some walkers start at 17h00 and do 6 km, last 3 recorded
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9 th Feb	800 meter sprints	5h15	Contact Freddie for details 083-347-5040
16 th Feb	Time Trial (3, 5, 6, or 8km)	5h45	Clubhouse
23 rd Feb	800 meter sprints	5h15	Contact Freddie for details 083-347-5040

Thanks to Freddie for recording the time and to those few who participated in last week's Time Trail.

[News Corner / Race Reports](#)

Have you recently run / walked a fun, unique, local, inspiring race or your first 10, 21, marathon and would like to share your experiences with us? If so, please tell us about it by e-mailing a short race report (English or Afrikaans).

- **[Old Mutual Two Oceans Ultra Marathon 56km](#)**

Entries for 2010 open 1 November 2009.

Closing Date for Entries - Wednesday, 3 March 2010

Date of Race - Easter Saturday, 3 April 2010

Website : <http://www.twooceansmarathon.org.za/>

Note that entries will close as soon as 10 000 entries have been received, even if this is before closing date. NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.

E-mails received

[Ottosdal Night Race 30/01/2010 by Bruwer van Graan](#)

Ottosdal is a small town in the Western part of the country, about a 100km's northwest of Klerksdorp. The road is fair to Klerksdorp but care has to be taken after turning off the main road as there are potholes which can be hazardous, especially when returning late at night after the race.

The start is in the Showgrounds with the 42.2km starting at 17h30, followed by the 10km at 18h00, the 5km at 18h15 and the 21.1km at 18h30.

A carnival atmosphere prevailed and the arrangements were perfect. I entered the half marathon. The race was out and back with the road to Bospoort closed for the event, no cars allowed except emergency vehicles, that in itself is to be commended.

After a lap around the arena we headed out of town, soon sweating profusely in the heat. Sunset was still 30 minutes away and the lanterns that were to light our way had not been lit. They consisted of 500ml wicked cans with paraffin that had been placed dead centre in the road every 10 metres. It took over 2000 of them, preparing, setting up and lighting them must have been a huge task.

The route is undulating with several long pulls, 2 to 3 km's. At each watering point there were cooling sprays. What a pleasure to make use of the full width of the road. At around 19h30 the lamps were lit, giving off a flickering yellow orange light. By now it was cooler and at 20h00 the full moon appeared, casting a ghostly shadow that accompanied me. As the field had spread out I was running inside a black bubble with no other runners in sight, except when overtaking or being overtaken. The lanterns were bright enough to prevent one's night vision to work properly and I kept close to the road centre on the upwind side of the lights.

Judging one's pace was different in that I had to rely on perceived effort instead of speed relative to other runners and landmarks. The going got tough towards the end as misjudgement of pace began to tell.

The end appeared after two hours and the finish was at the starting point. A well organised race that is to be recommended. No less than 3000 runners took part in all the categories and the cycling events attracted 1200 entrants.

[McCarthy Toyota 21km - Ryk Visser CSIR](#)

Ek kan uiteindelik vertel dat ek 'n 100% korrekte race meegemaak het. Dis die eerste keer dat geen gemengery van verskillende afstande op enige stadium plaasgevind het nie, ek het heeltyd gewag vir die 10km manne om verby te kom, ek weet nie waar hulle eers gedraai het nie. Ek is eerlik as ek kan noem dat vandag se race die eerste een gaan wees wat ek 100% gaan rate. Julle verdien dit, great race. Ryk (CSIR)

[McCarthy Toyota 21km – Sat Feb 6 \(Agapes newsletter – author unknown\)](#)

No that wasn't a typing error. I ran my first ultra (21km to the uninitiated) in almost 2 years. It took tremendous will power on my part not to stop at the 10km board. It was at about that stage that I became aware that there had been an error with the route measurement ... the km boards got farther and farther apart. I finally managed to stagger over the finish line, determined that from now on I'll stick to more sensible distances.

On a more serious note ... the organisation was up to the high standards that the organisers, Magnolia under the leadership of Hank Bezuidenhout have set for themselves in the past. No one can complain about the route ... gentle downhills and some slow poison uphill. This is one of the few races that I've managed to check my time at each km board. Take a bow guys.

[McCarthy Toyota 10km / 21km by Jeff Morris \(CSIR newsletter\)](#)

This was the second AGN league race of the year and it was good to see CSIR out in strength. With a good turnout we should be able to keep our fourth position, or possibly shift up into an astronomic third. 47% of our registered athletes ran the first race. Let's see whether more ran this race when the results come out. The league is a participation event - every registered runner who completes the race earns us points that go into deciding our position.

I found the race extremely well planned and organized. Separate starts for the 10k and 21k were great (filling up from the back too). A surprise was that the finishes of the two races were also completely separate so that the front runners of the 21k did not have to weave through the 10k stragglers in the final stretch. The weather was kind and the water points well manned.

The new, undulating course was pleasant enough. An annoyance was the hooting and shouting from taxis and busses at busy crossings but there is very little, if anything, that the organizers can do about that. Generally we kept to quiet streets with little traffic.

As usual, a memorable race organized by Magnolia Road Runners.

Taken from the Runners World Forum

- Once again, Magnolia put on a fabulous event. This is always a race of very high standards.

For me, the goal was simple. Sub 2:17. That would secure 2 AGN league points for my club.

Although it is a relatively easy course and I was confident of doing the goal, there was still a niggle in the back of my mind that I hadn't run under 2:20 for a 21km since November.

Renee had other goals, so we only ran together for the first kilometre and then she disappeared. That allowed me to concentrate on my own race tactics.

I constantly kept in mind that I had to do sub 6:30 on every kilometre and not fall behind, so getting to 10km on 1:03:20 was perfect in line with goal.

In the end, I felt that I ran a good tactical race. Last week's marathon didn't even come into place until the last 2 or 3 kilometres when the legs began to get very tired, but by then it was in the bag and I still managed my fastest kilometre of the race (5:36) on the 21st kilometre. Finishing time was 2:13:22. Well under goal time - my best 21km in 6 months and although I was tired at the end, overall a very satisfying run.

Absolutely nothing to fault on this race. Water points were perfect. The route was well-marshalled and although there were no "real" hills, a couple of slow-poison effects meant that we really had to work in places.

Rietondale Park is a fabulous venue for running and it is used several times a year for this purpose. And, I usually run a good time at these races, so they remain my among my favourites.

Chubby & Slowpoke arrived late, so were only here for the beer. LDV did the 21km. Managed to give Chameleon a squeeze as well. And I got a hug off Connie! Also chatted to PP and Marvin. A good morning for hugs! Renee did 2:11 - I was surprised that she was only 2 minutes in front of me, but she was a little frustrated - she was stopped no fewer than 5 times during the race for traffic. I'm still convinced that she can go under 2 hours on a 21km

- Yep. Will do these McCarthy races for years to come yet!
- I agree, very well organized. Cheers Magnolia.
- Ran the 10k. Though the route was different to the one posted on the Magnolia site it was still easy with just a few bumps over a bridge or such.

Comrades Novice Seminar

Preparations are well underway by those first timers looking to complete this year's 85th annual Comrades Marathon. The internet-based Bonitas Novice Comrades Project, supplemented by the Bonitas-sponsored, live, interactive Seminars held throughout the country, are an imperative step in every novice's preparation schedule.

Every year, runners across the globe are drawn to compete in the Comrades, a grueling 89 km road-running race between Pietermaritzburg and Durban, pushing themselves beyond self-imposed mental and physical limits. It is encouraging to see that each year there are greater numbers of first time entrants, injecting new blood and fresh legs to the grand old daddy of marathons.

Bearing in mind how critical preparation is to an undertaking such as the Comrades, the Bonitas Novice Comrades Project is an initiative funded by Comrades Marathon sponsor Bonitas Medical Fund. Since its launch in early 2009, the initiative, available on the Runners World website www.runnersworld.co.za as well as www.comrades.com, has seen an overwhelming response to its innovative and inspiring approach in preparing first time entrants for this testing ultra-marathon. By providing daily updated training advice from a panel of experts and an additional interactive facility, novice runners have direct access to pearls of wisdom from a panel of experts, including official Comrades Coach, Lindsey Parry, a qualified biokineticist, Two Oceans silver medalist and 2:52 marathon runner, who addresses any queries and concerns a 'newbie' entrant may have.

Building on the success of this initial platform, and launched to supplement the internet initiative, the Bonitas Comrades Novice Seminars were also inaugurated last year and enthusiastically attended. At these discussion groups, novices are afforded the opportunity to interact face-to-face with live experts and fellow runners, giving attendees the benefit of a more personal, hands-on approach to training than can otherwise be achieved via the internet. Led by Lindsey Parry, and featuring a live panel of highly respected sports science experts and nutritionists, discussions cover an array of topics, from nutrition and training to sports psychology and injury prevention.

Through the Bonitas Comrades Novice Seminars, we seek to add a personal touch to our programme. It has been said that every South African should run the Comrades at least once in their lifetime – let 2010 be your year," concludes Mkhize.

The 2010 Bonitas Comrades Novice Seminars are brought to you by Bonitas Medical Fund and will be hosted at the following venues across the country:

Tuesday, 16 February 2010 @ 19h00 at the High Performance Centre, Panasonic, Burnett Street, Hatfield, Pretoria

Tuesday, 02 March 2010 @ 19h00 at The Auditorium, Eskom Megawatt Park, No1 Maxwell Drive, Sunninghill Sandton hosted by Sunninghill Striders Athletic Club

These seminars are free of charge and are not to be missed!!! For more information, contact Thami Vilakazi at the Comrades Marathon Association on 033 8978650 or on Thami@comrades.com.

Ken, Bruwer, and Kenneth, your contribution and articles, as always is much appreciated. Thanks guys

Internet Articles

Know your Heart Rate - By Bobby McGee

Your resting heart rate is a valuable tool. Use it to your advantage and save yourself from wasting valuable training.

One of the best barometers available to runners and coaches in determining both health and fitness is resting heart rate. It can warn a runner of impending illness long before he or she begins to feel bad.

This allows for preventative action and adaptation of training, which could save days, if not weeks of training, and allow the runner to get back to training sooner.

Once you've mastered the art of monitoring your heart you will be able to remain healthy and injury-free, get over illness sooner, peak better, recover effectively and generally manage your training to a far greater effect.

Why heart rate?

In [cycling](#) it is relatively easy to measure a rider's power output by means of fancy machinery, but this is not yet practically achievable in running. For example, many coaches and scientists (myself included) have tried to work with lactate sampling, but this not only leaves runners with sore fingertips from all the pricking, it's difficult to use practically to assist training.

I have resorted to using heart rate as a measure of work rate and found that, if I use accurate results from regular testing, I am able to precisely prescribe distance and intensity for training each individual runner.

Accurately determine your resting heart rate

You should take your pulse first thing after waking in the morning. Use either the radial artery of your wrist, the carotid artery on your neck (on either side of the Adam's apple on the throat), or ideally a heart rate monitor.

For the manual readings, place either your index or middle finger on the pulse, pick up the rhythm of the beat and then begin to count the beats for a full minute and record your result. Press lightly, as too firm pressure will stop the pulse and provide no reading. Do not use your thumb - it has its own beat and leads to inaccurate measurement.

You need the right circumstances and a set routine to accurately measure your resting heart rate. This will ensure that all the possible influences and variables remain constant from day to day and from measurement to measurement.

There are a number of factors that can affect your resting heart rate, and these should be taken into account before you take a measurement:

- **Waking up to an alarm** elevates your heart rate. Lie back, after you have shut it off and relax until your breathing is even and rhythmical before taking your pulse.
- Being awoken by **doors slamming** and other unforeseen occurrences also have the same impact as an alarm - follow the same procedure.
- Be sure you are **fully awake**. If you fall asleep while taking your pulse, you have been drowsy - these low, semi-awake pulse rates are not your resting, awake pulse.
- If you are under **emotional stress**, having bad dreams, or awakening with a start, this will give and explain higher readings. Factor these into your interpretation of your resting heart rate.
- **Too little sleep** also tends to elevate your resting heart rate.
- **Any physical activity prior** to taking your pulse will elevate the result (If you know what I mean!)

In the beginning measure your heart rate more than once each morning to verify the accuracy of your results, or get someone else to also check.

Plot a graph of your resting heart rate to observe how your training and other factors in your life influence it. Evaluate the effectiveness of your pre-race taper by means of resting heart rate - it should drop as you rest up for your upcoming event.

Using resting heart rate as:

• A Health Meter

Here is a good rule of thumb to follow: If your heart rate is five or more beats above average under normal circumstances on a given day, then it is recommended that you take it easy that day, no matter what your training schedule says.

If your heart rate is normal the next day it is safe to resume training. However, the lost session should not be worked in, but left out until the next cycle.

If your heart rate is still elevated the next day, check for signs of illness and act appropriately. In terms of training take that day and the next easy, no matter what your resting heart rate is on the third day.

• A Fitness Meter

A low resting heart rate does not necessarily imply aerobic fitness, nor does a high rate indicate a lack of conditioning. However, a decrease in resting rate over a period of training is a sure indication of increasing fitness and aerobic capacity.

Normal resting rate for the human race is supposed to be between 72 and 74 beats per minute. Most runners have heart rates in the 60's.

The key factor, however, is how training and fatigue impact the resting heart rate. When fatigued, and your immune system is under pressure, the first place this shows up is with an elevated pulse rate.

Similarly, as your fitness improves, so your resting heart rate will drop. If this is not the case your training is ineffectual, or there is something else amiss. Another normal trend is for your resting rate to plateau after a time during a given phase of training.

During a rest phase it will creep up again, but the only time you need to be concerned is if your resting pulse continues to rise over a period of time - a sure indication of over-training.

Your heart is the most important baro-meter of your training, so get to know yours and how it communicates with you. Pay heed to its signals and use the advice it gives.

I believe that the heart is more than just a physiologically marvellous pump. It harbours so much more power, passion, love, guts and glory. Go out there and get yourself some!

Factors that affect your heart rate

Understanding your heart and how it functions provides runners with some access to being disciplined about training and conditioning.

For example, as we get older, both the maximal aerobic power and maximum attainable heart rate decreases. In other words, an older person may expend the same degree of effort in exercising as a younger counterpart, but their heart rate may be considerably less.

The following factors have a marked influence on heart rate:

- **Age:** The older you are, the lower your training heart rate.
- **Emotion:** Emotional stress causes your heart rate to rise.
- **Body temperature:** An increase in body temperature causes your heart rate to increase, while a decrease slows the heart rate. Many top runners cannot perform in temperatures below 10 degrees Celsius.
- **Environment:** Exercising in high temperatures can increase your heart rate by 10 to 40 beats per minute. That's why running in the heat is so dangerous - your heart is working to both cool and drive you.
- **Altitude:** Resting heart rate rises at altitude and is higher in all exercise at sub-maximal intensities, but lower (+/- 5%) at maximal intensities (say for a 10km race).
- **Medication:** A number of medications, like those for heart conditions or hypertension, affect the heart rate. Tell your doctor you are a runner before you are prescribed medication, and know what to look for when buying medication.
- **Smoking:** Even one cigarette increases resting heart rate significantly.
- **Food:** Resting heart rate is increased when food is being digested. Certain foods like coffee (caffeine) cause the heart rate to rise rapidly.
- **Gender:** Women generally have smaller hearts and average 5 to 10 beats higher than men.
- **Humidity:** High humidity stresses our ability to stay cool and increases heart rate.
- **Shifting focus:** Concentrating on what you are doing, instead of events not in the present, allows the heart to beat only to serve the current physical need and not be affected by unnecessary emotion.

For example, thinking of the stressful day that lies ahead while you are taking your waking resting heart rate has a huge impact on the result. Similarly, excitement might elevate the heart rate. (That's why race-day resting heart rates are irrelevant!)

Listening to soothing music and really relaxing will, in turn, lower your heart rate.