

Magnolia Newsletter

April 2010 (no 15)

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.

Magnolia Long Run – 11th April

We had perfect weather this year and with the school holidays, the roads were very quiet. Magnolia again organised another fantastic run through Brooklyn which attracted **554** runners (324 more than last year) and from clubs around Pretoria, even as far as Warmbad, Lichtenburg, many from Jhb, Thabazimbi, Nelspruit, Witbank, and Roodepoort. Magnolia did themselves proud and to all those members that offered up their Sunday to help, we would like to say a big thank you to all of you. Special thanks to **Running Inn, Run-Away Sport and Irene Marathon Club** for manning 3 water points and supporting our event with 103 Irene runners. It was really appreciated. This run has become truly a Pretoria Long Run which we can all be proud of.

We had chocolate cake, muffins, banana bread, biltong sandwiches, cooked sausages, salty chips, biscuits, bananas, grapes, cooked potatoes, and sweets at almost every water point and lots of friendly faces along the route. Again, many thanks to all of you.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Herbert, Jenny, Dave, Adolf, Tinus, Freddie, Kevin, Hank, Mike, all the entry ladies and all those that helped at the water points who played a big part in bringing this run together.

Special thanks also to Jacques Rossouw for the energy sachets and Ghardi from MSM rub that catered for your aches and pains after your run (**both products are now available at the clubhouse at dealer prices**)

Interesting stats : 111 – 15km, 203 – 30km, 98 – 45km and 142 – 60km (entries)

Club clothing

Ladies Crop Tops: We anticipate the new order will be available next week.

Tracksuits: 2nd Order for tracksuits has been placed and delivery is expected next week.

First Ascend clothing: We would like to place an order in the next 5 weeks, details to follow shortly

Comrades

• **Comrades SUPPORTER T-SHIRTS**

Please see attached proposal for our Supporters T-Shirt and we need to place our order **ASAP**. If you have not yet ordered, please forward me your size requirements. Cost will depend on the amount ordered (last year we paid R55). The more ordered the cheaper they will become. We have a choice of either royal blue or orange (see attachment) and a separate email will be issued tomorrow to canvass colour to be ordered.

• **Comrades Kerk Diens (NG Oosterlig Kerk) - 2 Mei tweede diens – starts @ 10:00** **Ds Herman Nienaber**

Kontak asseblief vir Elzette as jy meer besonderhede wil he. 012 347 3361, 082 292 3725

elzette@timestalent.co.za - dink ons moet so 09:30 bymekaar kom

H/v Hugo- & Leastraat, Waterkloof Glen

All runners/walkers and non Magnolia members are welcome

• **Thank's to the following sponsors for items to go in our goody bag:**

- **Colgate** for again sponsoring various Colgate products, Sue thank you
- **Mimmo's Brooklyn** for partially sponsoring our Dry Fit Top
- **Sportron International (SPN)** will sponsor one Endro Energy Gel sachet per Comrades entrant.
- **CPS QS** for the large cash donation, thanks to Dries Prinsloo

• **Individual donations** received from the following members, again thank you:

Dieter Gloeck, Kevin and Ina Lombard, Colin and Jenny Billau, Mike and Janeen de Klerk, Ronald and Ina Lagerwall, Antonie Bam and Elizna Swart, Marianne and Johnny De Mesquita

• **Collection of Qualifying Times and Club details update – do not miss the 26 April deadline**

Birthday wishes - enjoy your special day

Bossie	Boshoff	12	April
Babby	Feltsadas	12	April
Elizabeth	Stewart	12	April

Helene	Verbeek	13	April
Anneke	Jansen van Rensburg	16	April
Lloyd	Nelson	16	April
Judas	Ntuli	20	April
Michelle	Essink	21	April
Hendrik	Kotze	21	April
Wouter	Kritzinger	21	April
Darshan	Lakhoo	22	April
Ryk	Visser	23	April
Deon	Marais	24	April
Miroslav	Dimitrov	28	April

Welcome to our new members to the Magnolia family

Tumelo Marumule

This week's Thank You's goes to:

1. See Long Run report
2. Ina Lombard for all the hard work in getting Comrades bag together and designing our supporters T-Shirt

YEAR PLANNER - NEXT 3 MONTHS

- Next Social: Bring and Braai 4th May
- Next Club Tent: Loskop Ultra marathon
- Away Race: Loskop Ultra Marathon 17th April
- Comrades Church service – 2nd May
- Comrades Chairman's Run and Union Building photo session – 24th May
- Comrades Club Captains braai – 24th May

April / May 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	17 April	NO Slow Run			(Loskop)
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	18 April	Organised Run (car support)	26	06h00	Tinus 083-304-7054
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sat	24 April	Long Slow Run	25	06h00	Colin 082-578-3935
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	25 April	Organised Run (car support)	26	06h00	Tinus 083-304-7054
		Normal Club walk	10	06h00	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sat	1 May	Long Slow Run	18	06h30	Colin 082-578-3935
		Normal Club walk	10	06h30	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	2 May	Organised Run (car support)	18	06h30	Tinus 083-304-7054
		Church Service 10h00			
		Normal Club walk	10	06h30	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sat	8 May	Long Slow Run	15	06h30	Colin 082-578-3935
		Normal Club walk	10	06h30	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	9 May	Organised Run (car support)	20	06h30	Tinus 083-304-7054
		Normal Club walk	10	06h30	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sat	15 May	Long Slow Run	15	06h30	Colin 082-578-3935
		Normal Club walk	10	06h30	Suresh 082-446-6880
Sun	16 May	Organised Run (car support)	20	06h30	Tinus 083-304-7054
		Normal Club walk	10	06h30	Suresh 082-446-6880

Pre-entry Race closing dates and details (away races and PRE-ENTRY ONLY)

- **Cradle of Humankind 10 / 21** – www.enteronline.co.za race date 27th April
- **Colgate 15 / 32km** - on line entries close 16 April www.enteronline.co.za Race date 8th May
- **Closing dates for pre-entries – local races only (can still enter on the day)**

- **Wally Hayward** - on line entries close 27 Apr www.enteronline.co.za + all Sportsmans warehouses race date 1st May
- **Jackie Mekler 25km** - on line entries close 1 May www.enteronline.co.za + all sport shops Race date 8th May

Race Calendar and key dates

24 Apr 06h00	Mazda 15km Cost: R35 – 15km	Venue: Ford Sports and Recreation Centre, Watloo, enquiries Robert 083 231-0324 :
28 Apr 18h30	Exxaro Night Race Series NEW race on calendar Cost: R20	Voortrekker Monument Contact: Dirk Lourens 083 609 1438 or Winston Fisher 082 781 2794 Pre-entries #, \$ and &
1 May 06h30	Wally Hayward 42 / 21 / 10 Cost R70 – 42.2, R40 – 21.1, R30 – 10km	Hoerskool Zwartkop Mopanie Rd, Centurion. Enquiries Mike 082 4357
08 May 06h00	Jackie Mekler 25km / 10km RUN LEAGUE RACE Cost: R45 -25 and R25 -10km	Pretoria Military Sports Grounds, Thaba Tshwane (Voortrekkerhoogte) Pre-entries #, \$ 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
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.**

CONGRATULATIONS TO: Nienke Meijer who completed the Rotterdam marathon in 3:59:30

Time Trial

1 st and 3 rd Tuesday of month	Opposite Magnolia Club house (Runners & Walkers) Official start time:17h30	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
13 th Apr	800 meter sprints	5h15	Contact Freddie for details 083-347-5040
20 th April	Time Trial (3, 5, 6, or 8km)	5h30	Clubhouse
27 th April	800 meter sprints	5h15	Contact Freddie for details 083-347-5040
4 th May	Time Trial (3, 5, 6, or 8km)	5h30	Clubhouse
11 th May	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).

Run-Away Sport shop moving location

Run-Away Sport is moving shop location, **they will remain on the same floor in the Sanlam Centrum Glenfair**, but as from the **1st June** they will be moving to a new shop location - 2 shops to their right where Berlina Sewing shop used to be located.

Race fixture changes

- 1) Mazda 15km race moved 24th April.
- 2) The venue of the Brooklyn School event 29 May 2010 changed from the school to the Jacaranda Shopping Centre 18 Avenue Rietfontein.

No races during World cup soccer tournament (01 June to 15 July) - Commander: Operational Support

Please take note that the Event Section (Metro Police) **WILL NOT** approve "public" events from the period 01 June 2010 – 15 July 2010 due to the 2010 FWC and prioritization of resources ensuring the successful running of the 2010 FWC event as well as executing our day-to-day policing tasks within the City of Tshwane. Only approved City events related to the 2010 FWC as well as applicable parallel events will be allowed and policed. This decision was endorsed by our management as well as the ProvJoints (as SAPS also do not have additional resources).

E-mails received

- **Comrades Accommodation Pietermaritzburg:**

Are you worried about getting up at 02h00 AM on 30 May and then having to travel to Maritzburg with about 16 000 other cars, getting stuck at the toll plaza and again on the Highway to the start.

Magnolia has booked two self catering cottages in Maritzburg for the Comrades weekend. According to the Owners the Cottages are about 10 minutes drive from the City Hall. Currently there are four places available due to cancellations.

For more details at <http://www.kenosis.org.za/>

Cost is R560.00 per person for the weekend. (Friday night to Sunday Night) You will have to share the cottage and its facilities with other Comrades runners. Preference will be given to those booking for the whole weekend. The full amount paid will secure your place.

You will have to arrange your own transport from the finish back to Maritzburg, we are in the process of arranging transport to the start on 30 May.

Contact: **Ronald at 082 808 4062** or Ronald.Lagerwall@resbank.co.za

- **Comrades Bus**

Hi Collin, I had to start a second bus, can you please place the detail in your newsletter, unfortunately the price has gone up to R1300 due to the bus availability. **Contact Dirk Olivier (W):012 358 7848 (H)012 345 6222 086 510 8825**

- Hi Colin

After having working at the water-points on the Long Run for the last 5 years, it was good to be at the other end this time slogging away with all the other runners although while running my 4th lap, I started wishing that I was back behind the water tables.

I realized what makes the Long Run so popular, albeit amongst other runners, approaching the well organized and friendly water tables made it all worthwhile.

Magnolia can hold its head high and it's understandable why there is such a good turnout on these Long Runs.

Experiencing both sides it would be difficult to choose which one is the more preferred.

Thank you for everyone involved and the excellent water tables.

I'm proud to be a Magnolian.

Karel Niemand (Thanks Karl, we are all proud to be a Magnolian after yesterday's run – Colin)

- More Colin

Ek moet Magnolia komplimenter op jou excelent GOED georganiseerde longrun! Dit was great gewees, die waterpunte was beter as enige race waarop ek al ooit was (ek sulk net oordat ek nooit van daai legendariese chokolade koek gekry het nie!)

Dit was so lekker gewees, die roete, die atmosfeer, die mense by die waterpunte, die waterpunte self en daai TOEBROODJIES!!!!!! Well done, Magnolia verdien twee goue sterretjies!

Marie Van Rooyen (Medihelp Athletic club)

- Good morning guys,

Just a word of thanks from our side for yet another great race ; the water tables, refreshments and organization in general were once again well organized and we had a great time !

All the best to you and your club members for the next 7 weeks to Comrades, and may you all have a great Comrades race. See you next year

Running greetings,

Sandra Deysel (Clubcaptain - Alpha Centurion Runners / Walkers)

- Hi Magnolia

Thank you very much for the excellent opportunity on Sunday to get the long run fit into the schedule.

Maybe a funny piece of "report back"...the little lanterns in the potable toilets! A detail such as this makes it clear that the whole event is well thought through! Thanks.

Herma (Thabazimbi Marathon Club)

- Hi there Colin,

Thank you for having the opportunity to help on Sunday with the beverage tables. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Unfortunately I had to leave early but the 1 ½ hours was great.

Regards

Ria Maré

- SMS – Baie dankie vir n great georganiseerde klubrun Johan Grove
- SMS – URGENT Isabel soek lift die 26ste Mei Donderdag of na Amanzimtoti toe en 31 May terug PTA toe. Bly in Stella Maris. Thanks Isabel. Cel 083 772 9027

NO RACE REPORTS THIS WEEK

Herma, Marie, Karl, Ria, Johan, Isable, your contribution and articles, as always is much appreciated. Thanks guys

[Sport products available from the Magnolia Club House on Tuesdays](#)

Short cut to Pain Relief, do you suffer from sore muscles, backache, arthritis, muscular strains, sprains and running related injuries. **MSM RUB, an unique high potency formula MSM cream combination of natural oils and extracts that provides fast effective relief of pain that lasts.**

The MSM RUB 80g = **R75.00** or contact Ghardi on 079 560 7171 (Please mention Magnolia as your reference)

[SPN \(Sport Performance Nutrition\) products available at dealer prices from the clubhouse:](#)

Magnolia is now registered to sell the international SPN products direct to our members. Jacques Rossouw (a sport scientist) has been directly involved in the development of the SPN Endro and Carbo-Load Gel energy enhancing sachets and these products comes very highly recommended by top SA and world athletes. The inclusion of FoodState technology into these products makes them better absorbed and utilized by the body.

FoodState nutrients are the most important advance in nutrition today. They are a unique new generation of vitamins and minerals molecularly bonded to proteins, carbohydrates and lipids in a complex food matrix as found in natural foods. These nutrients are absorbed up to 5 times more efficient than commercial available vitamins and are retained up to 16 times longer by the body.

SPN Stoke (carbo load) helps endurance by delaying the onset of fatigue when taken prior to an endurance event, as part of a carb-load programme. 43gram sachet

SPN Blaze (energy) helps fights fatigue and provides energy during an event. Optimizes ingestion, digestion, and absorption of carbohydrates during exercise. Contains Glucose, Fructose, Caffeine, Sodium, Vitamin C, Potassium, FoodState. **Our cost +/- R100 per box of 10, normal retail price over R130**

An initial order for all 3 products will be placed and they will be available from the clubhouse early next week

[Internet Articles](#)

[Run Healthy All Year](#)

For some people, staying healthy is actually pretty simple. It amounts to fighting off the smaller stuff (colds, flu, infections), and avoiding the larger stuff like cancer and heart disease. Runners are different. Our standards are higher. – By John Hanc, Dave Kuehls and Martha Schindler

We demand to be healthy on many fronts. We want to run well and consistently, to eat right, and to feel energised and optimistic about life. For us, the pursuit of good health isn't just about avoidance. It's about being proactive in four important categories: Injury-prevention, general health, nutrition and mental outlook.

In that same proactive spirit, we consulted dozens of experts for their running and health advice – from coaches and nutritionists to psychologists and biomechanists. The result: A nifty list of tips to lower your risk of flu and colds; a wall map to keep you motivated all year; a simple exercise to prevent ankle sprains; plus several other ways to take charge of your own well-being. Here's to your health.

Don't rush your run: Trying to squeeze a 5km run into world-record time can lead to stress, fatigue and injury. "Your daily training runs should be relaxing, they should include a proper warm-up – whether that's brisk walking or easy jogging – and they should come after a brief period of anticipation," says sports psychologist Michael Sachs. "That is, give yourself a chance to look forward to it."

Strengthen your ankles: Strong ankles will help you avoid sprains and other injuries, and they'll help you run more efficiently. Try this: With your eyes closed, stand in a doorway balancing yourself on one foot, gradually working up to 45 seconds for each foot. "This also improves nerve conduction from feet to brain, which will enable you to quickly straighten your foot when stepping on uneven surfaces, further preventing sprains," says podiatrist Richard Braver. Do this exercise two or three time a week.

Incorporate rest days and rest weeks: No one ever got a knee injury from watching TV on a couch. Take at least one preferably two days a week off from running. This is when your body says thank you and heals all those little aches and pains, preventing them from becoming big aches and pains. Also, a good rule of thumb is to alternate hard weeks (i.e. more mileage) with easy weeks (less mileage). Or run two hard weeks, then back off for an easy week.

Watch wet surfaces: Slick asphalt and slippery mud are an invitation to fall, so slow down as you approach these surfaces. And don't run on trails or grass after a steady rain. "These may be too soft and mushy, which can put extra strain on your feet, Achilles and calves," says Dr Braver.

Don't mix hills and speed: A hill workout (for example, eight times up a gradual hill) and a speed workout (for example, eight 400m repeats) during the same week can overstress the illiotibial band, which runs along the outside of the knee, leading to tendinitis," says sports doctor Dan Pereles. "Do one or the other, not both during the same week."

Be careful of concrete: More than any other surface, concrete sends the force of each stride up into the leg. So don't run on it. Or at the very least, vary your terrain so you mix concrete surfaces with grass, gravel, trails and treadmill running on different days of the week.

Don't run in old shoes: Your first line of defence against overuse injuries is where the rubber meets the road. Change shoes every 500 to 700 kays, or when the shoes seem worn out, to make sure you're pounding the pavement, not vice versa.

Cross-train: Incorporate cycling, swimming and/or walking into your week to give your legs a needed break from the impact of running. This aids recovery and helps prevent fatigue-induced injuries.

Heat things up: For minor aches and pains, apply heat (in the form of a heating pad or hot water bottle) to the problem area for 15 minutes before your run. "If the area feels better, then it's usually okay to run," says Dr Braver. If you still experience soreness, it's best to take a day off. And if the pain continues, see a doctor.

Over 40? Hit the gym: "Injuries would be cut in half if every runner over 40 runner started strength training," says physical therapist Jim Porterfield. Weight training strengthens and energises the whole body, and it'll help keep you injury-free. Aim for two sessions a week, and figure to do eight to 10 different exercises that work your entire body.

Get Fitter & Faster - Fast!

Running faster than you usually run can be highly motivating. It can also take your fitness to another level. So if you've never done a speed workout before, or you haven't run one in more than a year, add some quicker running to your schedule. – By Jeff Galloway

To get started, go to a track, find some smooth trails, or head to any running area that is relatively flat and offers stable footing. Then try this introduction to speedwork:

First Workout

I call this the 15 Fast Seconds workout. Warm up by walking for three minutes, then running easy for eight minutes. Then run comfortably for 10 seconds, increase your speed for 10 more seconds, and speed up again for five seconds. At no point should you be running flat-out. Walk for two minutes. Repeat the series two more times. Cool down by running easy for eight minutes, then walking for three.

Second Workout

Do this one four to six days after the first workout. Start with the same warm-up and cool-down as in the first workout, then do the same acceleration drill followed by two minutes of walking, but instead of doing the series three times, do it four times. Then run comfortably for 10 seconds, increase your speed for 10 seconds, then speed up again for 10 seconds. Walk for two minutes. Repeat the series two more times.

Third Workout

Once a week, repeat the second workout, adding two repeats to the first set of accelerations (work up to 12 repeats) and adding five seconds (work up to 30 seconds) to the length of the last segment in the second set of accelerations. For example: Week three you'd run six accelerations in the first set and extend the last segment of the accelerations in the second set to 15 seconds. Remember to do the same warm-up and cool-down

Physician Heal Thyself by Bruce Fordyce

As South Africa embarks on the "silly season" leading up to Two Oceans and Comrades, Bruce Fordyce offers some divine inspiration on what causes injuries and how we can avoid them.

In Luke 4:23 the Bible says, "Physician heal thyself". I'm not a religious person myself but I quite like this proverb's wise counsel in which we are encouraged to attend to our own defects. This is very appropriate advice for South Africa's runners as we embark on the "silly" season.

From now on, more and more of us will be breaking down with a multitude of injuries. Not one of these will be "an act of God" and all of us will be injured because we will ignore the basic rules of injury prevention.

These rules are wonderfully identified in the runners' Bible "The Lore of Running" by Tim Noakes. Every serious runner should own a copy of this book and it should be well thumbed through and dog-eared. "The Lore of Running" is as important as running shoes and marathon medals. I own three editions and while Noakes has changed and tinkered with some of his ideas the [10 laws of running injuries](#) remain constant in each edition.

1. Running injuries are not an act of God
2. Each running injury progresses through four grades
3. Each running injury indicates that the athlete has reached breakdown point
4. Virtually all true running injuries are curable
5. X-rays and other sophisticated investigations are seldom necessary to diagnose running injuries
6. Treat the cause, not the effect
7. Rest is seldom the most appropriate treatment
8. Never accept the advice of a non-runner as a final opinion
9. Avoid the knife
10. There is no definitive scientific evidence that running causes osteoarthritis in runners whose knees were normal when they started running

"Nothing in excess" and "know thyself" are two Ancient Greek aphorisms inscribed in the forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, site of the famous oracle. Fitting messages for runners today. We become injured because we do too much, too quickly, and too soon and we continue to get injured because we don't know our own biomechanics and we fail to recognize the patterns of training behaviour that cause injuries. It is no coincidence that beginner runners become injured far more frequently than veterans. They don't know themselves well enough and they are unable to heal themselves by avoiding the pitfalls of hard training. We have all experienced the despair and frustration of injuries and yet they are so simple to avoid. It really is possible to heal ourselves by avoiding the behaviours that lead to injury.

In 1964 Kokichi Tsuburaya finished 3rd in the Olympic marathon in front of his countrymen in the Tokyo Olympic stadium. Most of us would be delighted with an Olympic bronze medal but Tsuburaya had entered the stadium in second place and

had been passed on the track by Britain's Basil Heatley. He felt he had let his country down and vowed to train even harder for the following Olympics. There was no "Lore of Running" to consult in 1968 and unfortunately Tsuburaya broke every training rule possible. Unable to train because of a crippling lower back injury he took his own life leaving a simple sad note. "Can't Run"

Lets hope none of us have to utter those awful words this season.

The Perils of the Cat Eye by Bruce Fordyce

Cat's eyes have been one of the greatest inventions of modern times for everyone except road runners

In 1934 Yorkshire's Percy Shaw invented the road markings and lights that we know as cat's eyes. Their value to motorists was really proven in WW II when the blackout in the UK made night driving particularly hazardous.

With the Two Oceans a few days away I am reminded that one of the difficulties of climbing the monstrous Chapman's Peak apart from the climb itself is to safely negotiate one's way up and down the mountain without falling victim to the cat's-eye tumble.

There have been cat's eyes on Chapman's since it was first built but a few years ago somebody decided to replace the old ones with a small upright metal box that is a death trap for runners. I remember being alerted to the problem a couple of years ago when, with a yelled profanity the runner in front of me stumbled, flung his arms out, tried to grab the back of the runner in front of him, and crashed to the ground tearing the back number off the runner he had tried to grab for support. Then the following year I saw medics carefully stitching a woman's chin. Her red-stained running vest spoke volumes. That same year I had ridden the Cape Argus Cycle Tour and had been riding wonderfully until my front tyre was torn off by a cat's eye.

The problem is not confined to the Two Oceans. There are a number of road races in South Africa where cat's eyes are a menace. At this year's Sunrise Monster in Pretoria a big, hefty bloke went sprawling in front of the small bus I was leading. His ¾ pike with side-roll was worth at least a 9.75 from the Olympic gymnastics judges. At the finish of the same race my mate Lawrence Mallen was lying on a stretcher in the medical tent while medics attended to his bloodied knees and grazed shins. "Damn Cat's Eyes" was his response to my concerned question "What happened to you?"

Of course this problem is not the fault of the race organisers and the Two Oceans team have, for instance tried placing dozens of safety covers over the cat's eyes with some success. Despite these efforts and the warning shouts of other runners there are always going to be cat's eyes casualties. The problem is here to stay and it is one we runners need to be continually aware of.

That's easier said than done. There are so many distractions in a race that prevent us from focusing on the dangers of little metal blocks dividing the road. Fatigue, shuffle running styles, crowded groups of runners covering the road and sheer forgetfulness will always help to trip us up.

I suppose some warning signs might help, but really we are just going to have to remember to remain vigilant and to look after each other