

MCRRC Intervals

November 2018

Newsletter of the *montgomery county road runners club*

On the Horizon

November 4

Rockville 10K/5K

King Farm, Rockville, MD

<https://www.rockville10k5k.com/>

November 11

Candy Cane City 5K

Chevy Chase, MD

November 17

Stone Mill 50 Miler

Montgomery Village, MD

<https://www.stone-mill-50-mile.org/>

Run Under the Lights – SOLD OUT!

Gaithersburg, MD

<https://mcrrcrununderlights.com/> -

Volunteer today!

November 24

Turkey Burnoff

Gaithersburg, MD

December 2

Seneca Slopes 9K

Gaithersburg, MD

December 9

Jingle Bell Jog

Rockville, MD

Join us after the race for our Annual Business Meeting!

We are currently working the 2019 race schedule. Thank you for your patience!

For complete details of MCRRC's races and programs, visit www.mcrrc.org

Board Meetings

Board Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month.

Parks Half Marathon



Runners make their way through Needwood Park.

Photo: Dan Gieb



Dinny Bedard is having fun, despite the soggy conditions.

Photo: Karin Zeitvogel



A Year of Epic Running, with More to Come

by Scott Brown, Editor

Walking the dog this evening, I noticed the leaves on the trees in our neighborhood are finally turning from green to the vivid shades of red, yellow and orange that mark my favorite season. I'm hoping the fall foliage holds out till the weekend so I can get a scenic run on the trails ... and let my legs recover from the marathon I ran a couple of days ago.

It's hard to believe another training season—and another year—is drawing to a close. At the same time, it's an opportunity to look back at what we've accomplished, and to look forward to the next challenge. This issue of *Intervals* features epic challenges to inspire you, training tips to help you pursue that next goal, and lots of interesting stories.

In this issue, MCRRC President Mike Acuña highlights the return of the Club's terrific winter training programs and previews some new offerings to help ensure that the Club is adapting to the needs of our members.

Also in this issue, Melissa Rittenhouse brings nutrition tips to help marathoners in training eat their best before, during and after

exercise. If you're still trying to nail your nutrition, be sure to check it out!

Next, Rachel Miller of MCRRC's Run Performance Lab provides an overview of ankle sprains and how to prevent and treat them. If you're like me and have dealt with recurring niggles in your ankle or other joints, consider a visit to the Run Performance Lab to get some expert advice!

For this month's runner profile, Lisa Reichmann talks to Adrian Spencer of MCRRC's Competitive Racing Team about his attempt to run from Gettysburg to Arlington during the summer, and the training and preparation it takes to tackle such a major challenge.

Finally, in another tale of running ridiculous distances, Roman Gurule chronicles the role that MCRRC's Experienced Marathon Program (XMP) played in helping local ultra running legend Michael Wardian break a 40-year-old record for running the full length of the C&O Canal Towpath. It's a truly impressive feat made possible in part by the help of several XMP runners.



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Have comments or questions? Or want to help?
Contact us at Intervals@mcrcc.org.

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Intervals is published bimonthly by the Montgomery County Road Runners, P.O. Box 1703, Rockville MD 20849.

MCRRC is a non-profit, educational organization which promotes personal health and fitness through the sport of running. The club conducts regular running activities, including training sessions races, seminars, and social events.





Bring on the Fall ... Please!

by Mike Acuña

Hopefully by the time you're reading this our local temps have come to their senses and replaced the lingering mugginess of summer with crisp autumn air as many of us venture, or have ventured, to our fall races. Whether warm, cool, flat, hilly, short or long, I hope your dedication to training through what has seemed to be one of the most humid and longest summers has resulted in attaining the goals set earlier in the year.

That said, it's an exciting time of year as summer training programs come to a close, fall races approach in a flurry, fall to winter programs kick off (Speed Development, Advanced Marathon Training, Winter Trails, Winter 5K, and Winter Half Marathon, to name a few), holiday-themed runs return, and the Board readies to present next year's operating budget at the December business meeting following the always fun Jingle Bell Jog. It's been a great year thus far, and we look forward to delivering a promising financial outlook next month.

Speaking of promising news, as the Board remains focused on defining and delivering member benefits, a Club-wide survey will soon be released. Please be on the lookout, as this survey will

be distributed through Survey Monkey and I hope we hear from you. As always, your feedback is critical to the Club's success in meeting your needs.

Also under the heading of membership benefits, the Board recently approved a plan to partner with the DC Tri Club and cross-promote a Sunday morning indoor spin class in Montgomery County. Details will be shared on our social media pages and MCRRC-Info. In return, the DC Tri Club is promoting our winter training programs to meet the running needs of triathletes as they prepare for various distances of their three-sport challenge. In addition, and with discretion,

you will see moderate advertising on our social media pages where local businesses have arranged discounts for MCRRC members where the benefit is relevant to running.

As this is the last issue of the year, I hope that everyone has a safe and happy holiday season, and I hope to see you all at one of our many upcoming events.

Cheers,
Mike

— Mike Acuña is the President of MCRRC. He can be reached at president@mcrcc.org.

Keep up with the latest news and information about MCRRC events and happenings!

Like us on Facebook – Montgomery County Road Runners

Follow us on Twitter - @MCRRC

Connect with us on LinkedIn - Montgomery County Road Runners

Instagram account - @MCRRC

Subscribe to our Yahoo Groups!

mcrcc-alert for breaking news alerts (track closed due to thunderstorms)

mcrcc-info for general news and information about club events

mcrcc-discuss for discussion with other club members about anything running or club related

<http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/mcrcc-info/>

Daily Nutrition for the Marathoner

by Melissa Rittenhouse

On average, training for a marathon requires at least a three-month commitment and it helps to have a good base before that. Marathon training also demands changes in daily food intake that differ from your couch potato days. In this article, I provide you with some basic tips to incorporate into your daily training to help you hit your workouts and make it to the start line healthy and confident.

First, carbohydrates are the preferred source of energy for activity, especially for running a marathon. Foods that provide carbohydrates include the grains: bread, rice, pasta, cereal oats, farro, barley, etc.; all fruit; starchy vegetables, such as potatoes and many beans; and dairy such as milk and yogurt. Carbohydrates are often considered off limits to many, but they shouldn't be. As you see, there are some choices that offer more nutritional benefits than others and there is a time and place for all sources.

Recommendations Before Exercise

Research has continually demonstrated that carbohydrates are crucial before workouts, particularly high intensity workouts. There has been some debate as to if you can train your body to be more metabolically efficient at burning fat. Future research in that area will continue to grow; however, at this time, all evidence suggests the higher the intensity of the workout, the more beneficial carbohydrates are for performance. Those who are going to run a race, long run, tempo run, sprints, or participate in stop-and-go sports will clearly benefit from consuming adequate amounts of carbohydrate before exercise. The amount varies based on when your last meal was and how long before your workout, but in general, 30-60 g of carbohydrate within one hour before a workout is likely beneficial.

Recommendations During Exercise

The table below indicates the recommended amount of carbohydrate based on the type and duration of activity. Carbohydrate needs can also vary based on environmental conditions and fitness level. There are no protein or fat recommendations for before or during activity.

Recommendations After Exercise

After exercise, focus on a mix of protein and carbohydrate choices. It is important to replace the carbohydrates

you just used so your body can replenish its muscle supplies. It is also important to include protein to help the muscles recover. A nice balanced meal should be sufficient. However, if you have a second workout later that day, or two days back to back of heavy training or racing, extra carbohydrate options should be added in throughout the day. It is recommended that athletes consume 20-30 grams of protein at each meal (i.e., breakfast, lunch, dinner) in order to maximize muscle protein synthesis

Carbohydrate Recommendations for Exercise

Type of Activity	Recommended Carbohydrate Intake
Low, moderate intensity or <45 min	Water carbohydrate not typically needed
High intensity 45-75 min	4-12 oz. of a sports drink
Endurance, intermittent, high-intensity 1-2 hours	30-60 g carbs/hour or (0.5 - 1.0 g/kg)
Endurance/Ultra endurance 2-3+ hours	60-90 g carbs/hour

Table taken from Rosenbloom CA and Coleman EJ. (2012). *Sports Nutrition A Practice Manual for Professionals*. 5th Edition. Chicago, IL: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.



Melissa Rittenhouse

Ankle Sprains Can Be Tricky—Treat Them Right!

by Rachel Miller

As runners, we experience many aches and pains throughout our training. And we often ignore those aches and pains so we can continue running. However, an injury that most of us have had at some point in our lives, not even necessarily caused by running, can come back to haunt us if not addressed properly: the ankle sprain.

You step on a rock, or in a pothole, or do something like walk down the steps and somehow land on the outside of your ankle. You usually feel immediate pain or even hear or feel a “pop” which is never a good sign- I’ll explain why shortly. Your ankle swells up, you limp for a few days, maybe even use crutches, and then after a couple of weeks the pain goes away and you feel back to normal (or almost). You return to running, relieved that you are past that pesky injury, or are you?

Most sprains occur when your foot is pointed down and inward, leading to injury on the outside part of your

ability to balance. These receptors relay information about limb position to the brain and balance, or proprioception, allows us to move freely and respond to change without consciously thinking about where we are. However, when you sprain an ankle, the normal feedback mechanism to the brain is altered, leading to more difficulty responding to uneven surfaces and slowing reaction time.

Altered mechanics at the foot and ankle lead to problems at the knee, hip, and back. Who knew a little sprain could do all that?

And is your pain really a sprain? Be very careful about self-diagnosing. Your pain could be an injury to the bone, such as an avulsion fracture. These types of injuries are treated differently than a sprain. Always consult a health care professional, preferably one that understands runners, such as a physician, physical therapist, or podiatrist, to assess your ankle if your pain persists or you cannot bear any weight on that foot.

How can you avoid ankle sprains from recurring, and haunting you in the future? As soon as possible after the sprain occurs, apply ice and use compression to address swelling. After a few days, once the swelling has gone down, and if there is no redness or warmth at the injury site, I like to switch to heat to help reduce stiffness and promote healing. You can check your ankle range of motion by drawing the alphabet with the toes of your feet, which targets every motion of the ankle. Don’t neglect your core and hip strength as well, since with an ankle sprain your gait is usually altered and activity level decreases, both of which can lead to weakness.

Once the pain has subsided, make sure you follow these important steps to minimize lingering effects of a sprained ankle:

- **Check your balance** with this easy test: barefoot, balance on one foot without holding onto anything. If your trunk sways, leg shakes, or you have to use your arms to balance, you likely have an imbalance that needs to be addressed. One suggestion

would be to actually practice balancing on one foot—you can practice on level or unlevel ground, eyes open and eyes closed. Be sure to stand near something stable in case you lose your balance. For those of you who do trail running, practicing on unlevel ground is even more important.

- **Strengthen your ankle!** There are plenty of exercises on the internet that you can do. I prefer to begin with resistance bands on all ankle motions. You can also try standing on one leg and raising up and down on your toes slowly.
- Consider having your **running form assessed**. As I said previously, ankle sprains often lead to altered biomechanics, which leads to injuries. Take advantage of the Run Performance Lab that is offered for Club members.
- A Physical Therapist can assess your weaknesses and develop an individual plan to address them and get you back to running painfree with efficient form.

What can you do while waiting for your sprained ankle to heal? Cross-training is a great option. Once you are able to walk pain-free, try a short, easy run on a level surface, like a track. Finally, after you are running pain-free on a level surface, return to running on uneven surfaces, which help train our bodies to stay upright even when we misstep.

If you take away anything from this article, remember not to ignore or minimize ankle sprains, be careful about self-diagnosing, and act quickly to address the weakness, instability, and balance issues that can arise from these common injuries. Even if your ankle injury was decades ago, you can still work to improve balance, strength, and stability!



foot and ankle, but other parts of your foot and ankle can experience injury, as well. When you twist an ankle, muscles and tendons overstretch, which causes weakness in those structures. Ligaments also stretch and can even tear- back to that “pop” mentioned above, that usually means you’ve partially or fully torn a ligament (or two...) During the healing process, scar tissue forms but this tissue is not as strong as the original muscles, tendons or ligaments. More importantly, what we don’t feel is often the most ignored – injury to the proprioceptors in the joints that help us with our

Adrian Spencer



by Lisa Levin Reichmann

Adrian Spencer, 35, first joined MCRRC in 2015 after winning that year's Little Bennett XC race. While he claims it was beginner's luck, Adrian is a talented runner whose accomplishments on the race course earned him a spot on the MCRRC Competitive Racing Team. If you ran Spin in the Woods this year, you might more easily recognize Adrian as the speedy bunny! This past summer, Adrian attempted a 125-mile run from Gettysburg to Arlington via Antietam, along the Appalachian Trail and C&O Canal. Due to high heat, Adrian cut the route short at 111 miles, which he covered in just over 20 hours of running, an impressive feat. Adrian, originally from Princeton, N.J., lives in Silver Spring with his wife, Leah, 3-year old daughter, Nora, and their newest arrival, Nina Audrey, born on October 16.

Describe your athletic background:

I had two stints playing organized team sports in elementary school: soccer, which I hated (I pulled one of my own teeth out so I wouldn't have to play in the championship game), and one season of baseball in the outfield, where they put the scrawny kids who couldn't play. The next year the coach suggested to my parents that I wasn't suited for it and that was the end of my athletic pursuits for a long, long time.

How did you start running?

I had run a little bit on my own during college for exercise but was never really into it. In the summer of 2012 I was out of shape and went on a two-mile jog with my brother-in-law. I had to stop every 1,000 meters or so to walk a little. I was nearly 50 pounds heavier than I am today and hated how I felt and looked and wanted to make a change. This experience coincided with me discovering the book *Born To Run*, which was a

gateway to the world of ultra running.

What are your favorite training routes?

I live less than a mile from both Sligo Creek and the Northwest Branch, so on any given day you can find me on one of those trails. I travel a lot for my work as a stage manager and speaker coach, so I'm incredibly fortunate to be able to run all over the country and the world. My absolute favorites are Rancho San Antonio Nature Park outside of Sunnyvale, Ca., a place I



Photo: Dan Reichmann

Adrian Spencer

visit a few times a year for a couple of clients and adore on every level (except the snakes). I love running in San Diego and I recently discovered and fell in love with Montjuic Park in Barcelona. But if I could snap my fingers and run anywhere in the world, I'd choose Zion National Park in Utah. It's breathtakingly gorgeous and it's got it all: flat, hilly, road, trail. In another life, I'll live there in solitude for 50 years and run every day.

When did you make the decision to try to run from Gettysburg to D.C.?

In July 2017, I ran the four-state challenge from Pennsylvania to Virginia along the Appalachian Trail. When I was studying the route, I realized that I could connect Gettysburg with D.C. and Arlington via the AT and the C&O Canal Towpath. After the four-state challenge and my experience at the JFK 50-Miler, I was confident that it'd be a fun day of running so I began planning in earnest that fall.

What type of training did you do to prepare?

I achieved a marathon PR in March at Rock 'n' Roll D.C. and felt spectacular afterward—so good that I added eight miles at the end of it to make my own ultra and ran way too hard the next week and didn't give my body the proper time for recovery. That mistake, coupled with a legitimately ugly depressive episode in April, meant that I was way behind the eight-ball going into what should have been peak training in May and June. I've suffered with depression my whole life and have found running is both a wonderful therapy and, occasionally, a nasty trigger. But thanks to my incredible wife, Leah, and my enthusiasm for the adventure, I was able to build a good base in May and build up to some solid ultra-distance training runs in June of 25 to 35 miles. I would have liked to have had a 50-miler in there, but with the truncated lead-up, I decided to play it safe and do more with less.

What kind of planning did you have to do to cover that route?

I studied maps and read a lot of history in an effort to build the best route and get as close to the story of the battle and the history and features

of the land between Gettysburg and D.C. This included delving a little bit into Antietam, which I included as a 15-mile detour of sorts; those two battles are related in so many ways and it felt right to pass through since I was on the doorstep. It felt important to me not to go into this halfheartedly. I felt it was owed respect—not just the distance, but the history. It demanded a certain solemnity. I needed to honor the people who fought and died there, to really study what happened there and how the contours of the land informed the movements of the two armies and the outcome of the engagement. All of that work informed the route-building and my mindset going in.

And on a practical level, I *needed* to learn as much as I could about the land because I had to plan aid stops, water drops and places to go or call if an emergency arose. I logged all of that information and synthesized a fairly detailed spreadsheet for my crew, friends and family.

What were the biggest challenges you faced during your Gettysburg to D.C. run?

Undoubtedly the heat. I really wasn't so concerned about the distance (in retrospect, maybe I should have been). It was 80 when I started just before 7 a.m. on July 1, hit 90 by 9 a.m. and didn't dip below that mark until dinnertime. It forced me to run much more conservatively, which might have been a blessing in disguise. I was hours behind my projected splits going into the nighttime part of the run, but because of the deliberate pace, I was in really good shape going into the cooler overnight hours. When the heat hit on the second day, it just sapped all of my energy and forced me to pack it in 111 miles into the 125-mile route. Looking back on it, I'm really amazed I lasted that long. It was brutal.

What memories stand out most from the run?

There are so many. I think a lot about standing on Cemetery Ridge, at the start of my run, the site of Pickett's Charge, which was the end of the three-

day battle, sobered by the profound gravity of what happened on that field. Friends I hadn't seen in years coming out at odd hours of the night to support me. Having my family meet me at the point where this run became my longest run. But undoubtedly my favorite memory is running along the Potomac as the sun rose on the second day and seeing the numbers on my watch jump from 99.9 to 100. My biggest goal when I first started this running journey was to be able to cover 100 miles on foot in less than a day and it was incredible to watch YEARS of work manifest in a single moment of accomplishment.

How do you keep yourself focused during your ultra-distance runs?

By trying not to focus on much of anything at all, to not think about what came before or what's coming next and not even what's happening now, but to just be and find a rhythm that I consciously believe is sustainable for my body, then forget all about it and just exist in the moment. That's different from thinking about being in the moment. Once you start thinking, you're dead. You just have to exist, trust the work you put in and your plan, and let it happen. I listen to music and podcasts in training but never during races. I don't want to be distracted by anything, most of all the voice in my head.

How do you try to stay injury-free when training for such high mileage running? Have you had to deal with any injuries during your running career?

I dealt with a torn meniscus after Eastern States 100 (in my case, 64) in 2017, which took me out of racing for a few months. But other than the routine niggles and strains, I've managed to stay pretty healthy and run more than 2,000 miles a year for the past four years. Everybody is different, but personally I am not a fan of super high mileage training for high-mileage runs. It's counterintuitive, but I'd rather be 10 percent undertrained and rested than 5 percent overtrained and tired. Of course, you have to get in your

long runs, but running 80, 90, 100 or more miles a week just because other people do is so dumb to me. I listen to my body, I try to keep high intensity effort to 20 percent or less of my overall volume unless I'm in a really specific phase of my training. My MCRRC teammate Shlomo Fishman taught me the wisdom of taking at least one day a week for pure rest, and that has been a huge benefit the past few years and something I'd recommend to just about everybody (again with exceptions for really specific phases of training). I don't adhere to a strict schedule. Instead, I listen to my body and try to follow its lead. I find that keeps it loose and fun. This is, after all, supposed to be a joyful enterprise.

What do you enjoy doing when you are not running?

I love being a dad. I'm not always the best I can be, but I try and it's easily the most rewarding and enjoyable challenge in my life.

Tell us about your goals for 2019:

Life goals: be a great husband and dad to two healthy strong, kickass daughters. Running goals: A yet-to-be-determined 100-miler, the Boston Marathon Double (a predawn marathon from the finish line to the start line, then turn around run the race officially for 52.4 miles in a day). I hope to make a bid to reclaim the four-state challenge fastest known time (currently 6:39:51), but what I'm most excited about is that I'll be officially kicking off a project of running the entire AT, probably one state a year between now and my 50th birthday. Since I never do these things when the weather is nice, I plan on tackling New Jersey sometime this summer. It's about 75 miles long, which seems like a nice day of running.

— Lisa Levin Reichmann is a member of the MCRRC racing team, sponsorship coordinator for the Parks Half Marathon and Pike's Peek 10K, and an RRCA-certified running coach and co-founder of Run Farther & Faster.

XMP Answers the Wardian Call

By Roman Gurule

On September 2, legendary runner Mike Wardian made a historic attempt to beat the Fastest Known Time (FKT) for running the C&O Canal Towpath. It was an epic run traversing 184.5 unpaved miles from Cumberland, Md., to Washington, D.C.

Mike was originally scheduled to run the Kauai Marathon that same weekend, but he canceled his trip due to a hurricane in Hawaii. As a D.C. area local, Mike had long wanted to run the full Towpath. With the weekend opening up in his schedule, he decided the time was now. Without a lot of time for advance planning, he initially had only his father, mother and wife as support. He needed added help. XMP Head Coach Harold Rosen called for volunteers, and XMP answered. A Team Wardian support crew quickly assembled.

The XMP crew, consisting of Anny Rosenthal, Cameron Jackson, Krista Zanetti, Joel Wakesberg, Patricia Calvano Scott, Holly Wittsack, Mike Shane, Omar Ali, Liz Ortuzar, Liz Pham, and Roman Gurule, as well as Florianne Torset and Tom Hu from FTM, joined Mike at different parts of the run to provide pacing assistance, water, nourishment and encouragement.

The first to join in were Liz Ortuzar and Omar, along with an ultra buddy of Mike's. This was at Edwards Ferry, about 30 miles from the finish, at a point when Mike really needed encouragement. Liz and Omar carried food and honey and basically cheered him up over the next 10 miles, helping him return to pace. The next part of the XMP crew coordinated and made adjustments to meet Mike in the Great Falls area to support him for the last 15 miles of his epic journey. Patricia, Holly, Mike Shane, Joel, and Roman served as Wardian support pacers. Anny, Cameron, Krista, Florianne, and Tom set up and executed two critical aid stations.

The XMP water stops were not the traditional aid stations and instead functioned almost like a NASCAR pit stop.

Pacers handed empty water bottles over, the water stop crew filled bottles in seconds, and Mike kept moving. The water stops, combined with the razor sharp execution of the water stop crew, were key to Mike's success.

Water was extremely critical because Mike had already run more than 170 miles, the heat index was in the 90s, and the clock was ticking. During this part of the run, Mike was literally able to pour a bottle of water over himself to cool down every mile or so and to down water and gels every couple of miles.

Mike was a true beast. At one point he exuded a "get focused" type grunt and dropped his pace down to a 6:45/ mile pace for a brief period. Mike Shane and Roman looked at each other as if to say, "this dude is crazy!" Mike settled back into the pace, averaging 8:56 per mile for his last 15 miles.

The craziest moment came on the final approach to Georgetown. None of us, including Mike, knew what the final mile of the route entailed. Not many runners know the Mile 0 marker of the Towpath. Mike asked Roman to speed ahead to check out the routing. Luckily, other members of Team Wardian were waiting and knew the way. The pacers performed motorcade-style traffic control, blocking Georgetown's busy street intersections, allowing Wardian to zoom through. After passing through the heart of Georgetown, there were a few twists and turns until Wardian rounded Thompson's Boat House and touched the Mile 0 marker. He finished the run in 36 hours, 36 minutes, 3 seconds, beating the record set in 1976 by roughly 12 minutes.

Mike is an amazing and inspiring athlete. It was an honor to have had the opportunity to support him. Not only did XMP help an incredible runner break a crazy record, but more importantly, XMP's teamwork and execution were truly outstanding. Definitely one for the books!