

Legendary Footsteps

Running is a very important part of many of our lives. For a lot of us, it is something we would love to share and pass on to our future generations. A legacy of excellence in running has been passed down for 4 generations to one of our members, Mike Ryan. In the early 1900s Mike's great grandfather was a Boston Marathon winner, an Olympic Marathoner, a collegiate coach and represented the U.S. in the Pan Am games as a coach in track and field. After having qualified for the 2012 Boston Marathon, Mike will be running in the 100th anniversary of his Great Grandfather's victory! Mike's story of qualifying in his one and only attempt to run Boston and other great stories are included in this issue.



** First one to correctly identify Mike's great grandfather wins a long sleeve Strider tech shirt! Email your guess to Jen.

North Texas Striders' Holiday Party

Who: North Texas Striders

What: Annual Holiday Party

When: Sunday, December 4th, 5:30PM

Where: Don Camillo Italian Cuisine , 1400 N. Corinth St. Ste 103 Corinth, TX

Look for the Evite soon!

You won't want to miss our Special Guest Speaker for the evening, Gregory "Spareribs" Lamothe.



Spareribs says he was "lousy" at running when he first tried it in the 1960s, but a decade later, it became a life-long habit. He was given the nickname "Spare Ribs" in college because he was so skinny. While he runs for his health, he says he is passionate about the competition involved. In 2008, Spareribs had open heart surgery and had a heart valve replacement. Since the surgery, he continued to run and now runs approximately 40 miles a week. His enthusiasm for life now spreads into coaching, as he works to inspire others to get active.

In Stride with...Keith Sutherland

Age	42
Place of birth	Glasgow, Scotland
Height/Weight	5' 10", and approximately 172 lbs.
Occupation	Marketing Research Consultant
Hobbies	Love to cook, used to play a lot of golf and then re-discovered running a few years ago. In October 2011 my new & favorite hobby is being a dad to little baby Gemma Kelly Sutherland the golf course while enjoying an Ultra.
Personal Hero(s)	My Mum & Dad
Personal philosophy	Life is not a dress rehearsal so enjoy the thrill of the ride. Laugh as much as you breathe and love as much as you live. .
Short term goal	Break 4hrs in the marathon
Long term goal	Go running with my beautiful daughter and wife one day. Be running when I'm 70.
Other sporting activities	One day I'll get back to golf and maybe table tennis (I once represented Scotland at Table Tennis)
Years running	Started in earnest in 2007 having dabbled in Half Marathons in my teens. .
Weekly running program	Currently training for Dallas White Rock Marathon – 35-45 miles per week. Have a love/hate relationship with hills. .
Why I run	It keeps me sane and I can think of worse addictions.
Favorite training run	Probably the long runs in Bartonville. It's a zoo out there (animals and people) but I do love those last two miles coming home.
Favorite distance	The Marathon
Favorite race	Chicago Marathon. Great city, great spectators, great signs and quite simply a great experience. I'm slow enough to be able to read the signs...
Running PRs	I used to be faster... however – Half Marathon – 1.52, Marathon 4.20.
Running advice	You can always run another 10 mins. Never give up, never ever give up.
Favorite book	Tough question – If I had to choose one – To Kill a Mockingbird .
Favorite television show	Modern Family/The Office
Favorite music	Where does one start. Luther Vandross/Artic Monkeys/Groove Armada/Paul Weller and anything funky/rare groove and 70s disco. Oh, maybe drop in some Johnny Cash and The Clash too.
Favorite spectator sport	The Beautiful Game - Football (soccer)
Favorite vacation	Any place that allows me to completely switch off. I love going back to St Andrews in Scotland. It's gorgeous. Really need to check out all the beauty in the USA though.
Favorite famous quote	Do or do not there is no try. - Yoda
Favorite foods	Proper Fish & Chips or Great Texas BBQ
Favorite Restaurants	Trulucks, Salt Lick BBQ (Austin), Grimaldis



In Anticipation of the 2012 Boston Marathon

Michael James Ryan

This marathon has been a long time coming. I tried in my younger twenties with a brash attitude believing I could simply step up the distance and do it. After an injury I realized this distance takes care and respect. After many years being side-tracked by triathlon and mountain biking for fear of more running injuries, the time had come to give it another go. I had a family heritage to uphold. My great grandfather, also named Michael James Ryan, won the Boston Marathon in 1912. He had an impressive running background as a two time Olympian, but winning Boston was the pinnacle of his success as a runner. Now, 100 years later, I was in a position to run on the centennial of his victory. However, it was simply an opportunity. I had yet to run a marathon, let alone an open half marathon. Next step – Qualify for Boston!



Two years in advance I created my plan. Test the longer distances with the White Rock Half Marathon in 2009 getting acquainted with the course. Next year build my distance and qualify for Boston by running the 2010 White Rock Marathon, a December race. It may have been a bit ambitious, but it allowed me time for contingency plans. I started running with the NT Striders and everything was going smooth, including the Half Marathon, and then I took a new job. 80-hour work weeks are not kind to the marathon runner. Therefore that sidelined my White Rock Marathon, driving me to simply maintain my base. When my work schedule let up, my back-up plan of Cowtown in February was in effect. I had to build the mileage faster than I would have liked, but I did complete my final 20-mile run two weeks in advance of the race. The day after my 20-miler I pulled my Achilles tendon running up the stairs. I could not believe it! Have I come this far to have it fall to pieces from such a silly injury? It hurt to walk, and I could not run for 8 weeks. At this point qualifying for the Boston Marathon was starting to feel like a burden. This was the first time in my life running wasn't fun. I maintained a base by doing the thoroughly invigorating elliptical for 90 minutes at a time, going through my entire music library and multiple books.

Moving to Texas from New England five years ago, I had not yet adjusted to the heat. Therefore, I needed to get a cool weather marathon in. With Boston registration in Mid September, that means I needed to do something soon! Madison WI Marathon on Memorial Day was the pick. Additionally, I could visit my 94-year-old grandmother in Milwaukee. This only gave me 6 weeks to increase my mileage from my longest run post-injury of 10 miles. I knew the risk, but I took care of my body with additional sessions of Yoga. Also, the motivation and support I got from the NT Striders helped me emotionally and physically finish this last leg.

The marathon itself went as planned. I visited my Grandmother, and had a nice time with her, with the exception that she was in worse health than I had imagined. I drove back to Madison, ran the marathon, I kept an even pace, and I qualified. I was elated! I came within 1 second of my target time of 2:59:00. Two weeks after the race, my grandmother passed away at the age of 94. Had I not done this race and made that last visit, I would have regretted it for years to come, which did bring an ultimate purpose to the trip.

Lucky for me, this qualification put the fun back in running as the burden has been released. My little sister is fortunate enough to be sponsored by Team in Training, for she is running in honor of her mother-in-law who was recently diagnosed with leukemia. My immediate family will be visiting Boston on this historic day in our family history. Additionally, many of my relatives from the west coast, descendants of Michael James Ryan, will be traveling to Boston in April for this event. We are all excited to honor how he helped pioneer the sport of long distance running. He helped grow the sport by continuing to coach at the collegiate level and Olympic level at a time when running was not understood. I am proud to be part of this history, and look forward to celebrating it.

My 2nd Ironman —Karnten—Austria—July 3rd, 2011

Sonia Soprenuk

What a great race ... this was a life time experience that I would repeat with no doubt. Thanks to Teddy, my "Puchis" who has supported me in every step of this journey.

2.4 miles swim
112 miles bike ride (10 degrees climbs – 2 loops)
26.2 miles run

Thanks to IM Coach Jim Lukanich who trained me again and this time for a more challenging race. He got me to the start in good shape, strong and injury free. I finally learned from him the importance of a proper nutrition and the roll it plays in racing. It took me a while before I started to take this seriously and to understand that lack of it is a recipe for a failure regardless how much or hard you train. Thank you, Jim.

I also want to thank Sean Thompson who later during my training coached me in the swimming discipline. Sean went far and beyond. He spent many hours teaching me the swimming technique and sharing with me his knowledge and experience as an IM. I had a 17 minutes PR in the swimming segment of the race but we know there is still a lot of room for improvement. Thanks to all my friends and members of my local clubs North Texas Striders, LGRAW, Lifetime Outdoor Cycling, GMS and all other great cyclists I met during my training, who encouraged, supported and/or shared with me some long hours on the road and the water racing and logging my workouts. And finally and most importantly thanks to my church for keeping me in your prayers at all times.

I picked up my training right after recovering from a mayor bike crash in mid January. I was a little nervous but I knew I had to get over it right then or never.

Workout log since February 14th to June 30th – 22 weeks

127952 yards swim
2380 miles bike
525 miles run
22 core/strength
315 hrs total

June 26th: - Packing

The race journey actually began with the packing. Thanks to Pastor and Ladonna for my beautiful card. This really touched my heart. I'm taking it with me. Well, we're talking about a WOMAN packing for an IM race overseas and a two week tour. I needed a check list for the check lists...!!! Finally with The Puchis help disassembling the bike and marking all the pieces I got it done after 5 hrs. The Sander's stopped by and audited my luggage and made sure I had it all. The big question then: HOW I was going to handle a 45 pound bike case plus a 55 pound suitcase plus a 20 pound backpack through 3 international connections with TSA and customs inspections, followed by a trip by train from Vienna to Klagenfurt all by myself!!! Yes Tom, women need a little more than a light backpack with two pair of shorts for a two weeks trip!

June 27th – Departure from DFW

32 Hours later I arrived to my final destination, so excited and amazed by the beauty and gorgeous scenery along the mountains of Austria! My hosts Manfred (a manager of the company I work for based in Klagenfurt) and Ingrid his wife were waiting for me at the train station. It felt great. Since then they adopted me and spoiled me for the entire week. They fed me, entertained me and made sure all my special IM needs were met. They transported me and my bike everywhere during the week and race day and adjusted their lifestyle around my race schedule. What an amazing and generous couple.

The next day my IM co-worker Alex, based @ KLU took me for a bike ride to check out the course. That was fun! We certainly didn't see the worse part! The following day I met a lot of my co-workers based in the city and attended to their local triathlon and post race party followed by a salsa dancing! After a couple of hours of dancing the threat of blisters made me stop and we all went home!

The perfect relaxing week logging my light workouts and living a Pro-athlete life! But of course nothing is perfect, as we went for a social open water swim I got a big splinter in my foot. Not only me but my host family were in panic as this was a major threat to my race performance! In so many attempts to get the splinter out we made the spot worse and it became a huge open sore. Cordula, a friend of the family brought a miracle lotion that made it come out the next day. Uff... Thanks, Cordula! However they took me to the doctor who saw me immediately and treated me for skin damage and a potential infection. And why should I be surprised! Doctor Magret didn't even want to charge me for her services as she stated that was her contribution to the IM! As you can see, there was no excuse for me to slack in this race. Thank God by the next day everything was just perfect. I was just relying then in mother's nature generosity for good weather on race day.



Cont. on next pg.

My 2nd Ironman —Karnten—Austria—July 3rd, 2011 cont. Sonia Soprenuk

Friday my Colombian girlfriend Deisy who lives in Dublin arrived in town to spend the weekend with us and cheer me on during the race. So I had the largest and sweetest support team ever as my company was a big sponsor of the race and was in charge of the major aid station in the run and bike course. Saturday after checking bike and pre-race meeting we went to drive the rest of the bike course... the most beautiful and green scenery I've ever seen. However, I knew from Tom Sanders and Mo-Ping that the hills were extremely difficult but just until you see it you really don't believe it. Well, they weren't kidding. The two steepest hills are absolutely insane.... what did I get into...??? Why did I pick this IM...! Am I going to make it...? I'm really concerned now if I can make it within the official cut off time of 17 hrs. Oh boy, who told me to do this...? Plan B: dismount the bike and walk the hills. But there was no way I could cross under 17 hrs. The hills aren't just steep like walls, they are just too loooooooooooooooooooooong...! Plan C...? No... don't even think about it... CAN'T QUITE. I'm in big trouble... too late...oh God please help me. OK. Calm down. I know my church is praying for me. I also did my homework. I didn't skip any training workout during my training. It has to help right...??????????? I hope so.... Then go home and carboload. Yummy... Austrian home made pasta. What a fest! Everything is ready for race day. My American flag outfit, bike and run bags packed, hydration bottles filled, my alarm set, got in bed and ask The Lord for strength and mercy.

Sunday July 3rd – Race Day !

Two hrs of sleep last night. No bueno. We got up at 4:15am. My usual pre-workout breakfast: oatmeal, bread and coffee and a banana. We arrived to the transition at 5:15am and it's already crowded. I'm very tense. I can't stop thinking about "Rupertiberg Hill". My support team members are all over the place so this feels very hommy. Nice. I'm liking it so far... Only the bike was allowed at the transition spot... ah??? I loaded my bike with drinks, bars and gels and pumped the tires. Bike bag and Run bag are in different areas. No pre-swim allowed...bummer! No body marking...! Weird ! What's wrong with this European IM!!! ... how I'm going to know who I'm passing...if I ever do...??? I'm getting very nervous... I need more electrolytes... announcements in 7 different languages, people from all over the world... Why I didn't I take at least German lessons back in Texas...??? Next time...Temperature is just perfect so far...

Guten Morgen in Kalten Klagenfurt ! It is 6:15 am, sunny and 45 degrees. Hopefully the water is a little warmer than that! I'm going for a 20 minute warm up run. I met more people from my company. Nice... everyone is watching me... the pressure is ON! Lovely warm up run. I feel more relaxed now. Wetsuit on, done. Test is about to begin! I'm so ready. Lord help me. I know my church is praying for me. I lined up in the back. The water is absolutely beautiful and clear. Blue color! More announcements. If I just could understand. Ops... they were in EnglishJ what did they say..? Ah, I forgot to set up my garmin on multisport mode. How did I forget that...??? I can't see... how do I do this...? 1 minute to the start... oh well, I'll forget about the watch and go by effort. The gun goes off and the madness begins. For the first time in a race I feel panic in the water, I just can't get started, swimmers are kicking and punching me everywhere and don't have any room to stroke, I'm sinking at every try, I'm drinking water by the liter. I just can't get started and can't stand up. I keep on sinking and getting kicked. I don't want to drink more water and I can't breath!!! God please help me. I've read that at this point is when the majority DNF athletes quite. So I had to make a huge mental effort to relax. About 15 minutes later I began to stroke and 5 minutes later I got in a nice and steady rhythm. I can't believe for a little I'd forgotten how much I do enjoy swimming! The temperature was perfect. I can do this forever. I was in the back of the pack but I could care less, I was great full to be alive and still in the race and within the time frame. After 1500 meters in I picked up the pace and started to pass swimmers until a kayak hit me on my left eye... it really hurt and slowed me down, so the last 500 meters weren't very pleasant but I made it out in 1:51:32 hrs... yeah! PR by 15 minutes!!!

Now let's visit with Rupertiberg. I mounted my bike and prayed God for protection, strength and humbleness. I was certain he was with me. I talked to my Dad and knew he was watching me, and in that instant my heart was pain free for the first time since he left. I felt full of joy and energy and was determined to knock the hills.

My 2nd Ironman —Karnten—Austria—July 3rd, 2011 cont. Sonia Soprenuk

I started my nutrition and hydration early on the bike. My friends were all over the place cheering me on and taking photos. That was very motivating. The crowd was cheering on all the way. They even called out the American flag any time I passed by! I had to learned to ask for WATA instead of water and ISO instead of gatorade, otherwise I would have dehydrated myself! The first 35 km nice rolling hills, nutrition and hydration under control, keeping a conservative speed trying to save my legs for the worse that is about to come. Then you start to read all kind of names written on the pavement in memory of triathletes who had conquered the hills. The more names you find on the road the more difficult the hills get. The climbing begins, gradually increasing the intensity. I feel good but careful not giving it all out since the course is 2 loops on the same hills. Making it the first time is not a guarantee you will make it the second time around. Keep eating. Emptying my bottles to ease the climbing. Ok, this is getting very hard, trying to stay calm and steady effort up hill. The crowd support is unbelievable. They screamed at all times “hop, hop, hop pa’pa”, Sounds like music to my ears! Supa, Sonia everyone screams like crazy, go USA, feels good! OK, I can do this, just a little bit more, almost to the top, keep passing more cyclist, done!!! Yeah!!! Thank you God, really, thank you. Downhill now baby...35 mph with no pedaling. Snack time, refilling bottles, 15 km later I started to read names again on the road, what...? This means trouble... Wasn’t that “Rupertiberg”...? Oh no, it wasn’t that one. The big hill is just about to start. Oh well, calm and slow down. Drink as much as I can and trash all the bottles. Serious climbing begins, the mountains and valleys are majestic! It’s so beautiful, ok just keep focus. I keep passing people, feels good. No extra weight now, keep climbing, all you can see ahead is just endless steeper and steeper hills. The cheering is again all over the place, the crowds come to your bike and run on your side, offering drinks, there isn’t even room for you to ride because they are all over you, but it’s an amazing feeling that energizes your body and mind and gives you a huge boost. I’m going at 13 mph now and breathing so hard, my chest is about to explode and my quads and hamstrings are burning and screaming...!!! I remember the strength workouts Jim had me doing, it feels similar so the pain is kind of familiar. So I know I can do this. I know I’m in The Lord’s hand and whatever He does with me is fine. He knows I’m giving the best of myself and this is all it matters right now. About 3 km later I was at the top!!! I didn’t have to walk and I passed more people. Now the fun begins, 40 mph downhills, then nice rolling hills, lunch time, hydration, 56 miles yahhh! Turn around and repeat the same 56 mile loop. Second time around was the same story but no crowd support! But felt more confident on the down hills and descending for the most part on my aerobars. Finished the bike segment in 6:47:42 (16.48 mph). PR by 41 minutes.



Running: now let’s show the Europeans some good running, baby. This is what I know to do best! First mile loosen up the legs and adjusting my body, second mile in start to set up the pace that I want to remain for the entire marathon. In mile 3 I got to a steady rhythm. Slowing down at every aid station for a drink and snacks. Electrolytes, hydration pills, a little warm, about 80 degrees but nothing I can’t handle. I passed by my Company’s aid station and my co-workers are there waiting for me and cheer me on, they made a beautiful sign with the American flag and my name on it, that was so lovely, my dear co-worker Julia run with me for a little. I was very surprised about how well my stomach was feeling. I kept the nutrition as simple as I could. Eating mostly oranges and watermelon at every station. Water and ironman performance drink every other station and a few gels. I was able to sustain even splits and by the half way of the marathon I knew I was going to beat my own record of 14:49 hrs if I could keep my even splits. I kept on passing more runners. The run course with the exception of 2 passes was totally flat and well supported. Four loops through the lake, Klagenfurt uptown and a beautiful cornfield that reminded me about my hometown Colombia. Well, I have 10 km left and everything starts to ache. The soreness is taking over all my muscles. Each stride hurts so I better hurry up and finish the race before it finishes with me. I picked up the pace almost in tears. The crowd is extremely supportive and didn’t let me give up. They keep yelling out my name and the American flag. There are kids all over the place handing out wet sponges and giving you the high five. Then I realized I only had 2 miles to go. I felt great, picked up the pace and a straight shot to the finish line! Marathon time: 3:56:04 PR by 17 minutes.

What a great feeling when I saw and crossed the finish line at: 12:54:48 hrs. PR by 54 minutes. Praise God! Besten Dank, Austria for the most amazing race I’ve ever done.

Yoga and Running

Jennifer Wilford

Until recently, I ranked yoga somewhere with “also-ran-athletic activities” such as bowling and curling. Give it the Ms. Congeniality Award, step aside and let the real contenders come to the forefront. That all changed as I started offering yoga this summer as part of my You Go Girl running group’s post-run stretching. I was not down with downward dog, my pigeon pose was tighter than my best pair of skinny jeans and the idea of simply moving with my breath made me want to hyperventilate.

Namaste, I suck at yoga. The competitive side of me wanted to sport a T-shirt: “I can run a marathon before I can touch my toes.”

But I knew there was benefit from making my hamstrings less hamstrung. So I opened my mind and my hips, and embraced yoga four days a week. After about three months, I’ve gone from being woefully inflexible to merely tight. Two weeks ago I kicked myself up into a handstand and “walked” a few steps on my hands.

I have found these activities complementary. The benefit to be gained by runners in terms of injury prevention, strengthening muscles and lessening fatigue are critical to overall health. And, there’s something to be said for slowing down, literally concentrating on exhaling. Running sometimes mirrors life – a race from start to finish. But with yoga, it’s easy to push away the “to do” list, if only for an hour, unwind my body and the only pace is my own.

Chicago Marathon 2011

Jennifer Wilford

Pizza perhaps never tastes as good as deep dish pizza in Chicago at Gino’s East.

OK, with one exception – It’s better if you are eating that same pizza after running 26.2 miles.

All right, one more exception – It’s even better if you are eating with with some of your best running buddies.

OK, final exception – The best-tasting pizza in the world comes at Gino’s East, after the Chicago Marathon, with your buddies while drinking a Goose Island (local microbrew) beer.

And there was plenty to celebrate. Three of our Striders set PRs at the Chicago Marathon, Kiet broke the 3-hour barrier running an amazing 2:59:11; Ingrid posted an outstanding time of 3:05:21 and Haley continues to set PRs with a fantastic 3:18:48. Randy battled through some aches and pains to finish in 3:45:14, and I notched a 3:38:48 finish. These times are even more impressive given it was 64 at the start and in the low-to-mid 70s by the finish.

Aside from posting great times, we had a fantastic time in the city. Any Strider considering a marathon, I have to whole heartedly endorse Chicago. The course (flat and fast) caters to experienced runners shooting for a PR as well as beginners who are attempting a first-ever marathon.

As a sponsor, Nike ensures there is plenty of great garb at the Expo. The crowd support – amazing. From Boys Town where residents were dressed as Lady Gaga dancing to “Bad Romance,” to the high school cheerleaders screaming non-stop, to volunteers who had sponges for us at least three stops, to kids handing out oranges and high-fives, the volunteers are uberfriendly and abundant.

The business and residents in Chicago “get” the marathon. When our Strider group went out for pasta the night before, the restaurant gave us 20% discounts just for racing the next day. When walking/hobbling back to my hotel near the race’s start almost every pedestrian to a person congratulated me on finishing the race. The barista at Starbucks insisted I deserved a little whipped cream in my drink because I finished a marathon after all.

Among the amazing scenes in my part of the race – I passed a man who was juggling AND racing, and one of the most inspiring scenes was a blind runner, tethered to a sighted runner doing his part, racing his race, one step at a time.

The only downside is that we couldn’t eat all the pizza we ordered – that deep dish is filling. We need a few more Striders to come along next year to make sure we don’t have leftovers!



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