JESSE ITZLER
ATLANTA’S RENAISSANCE RUNNER

TRAVEL YOUR OWN ROAD TO GOLD

PEACHTREE: THE GATEWAY RACE
EXPERIENCE IS EVERYTHING

THE NEW
WAVE INSPIRE 15

Over 15 years ago runners came calling for a go-to shoe for the moderate over-pronator. The answer from Mizuno back then and today is the Wave Inspire. The latest iteration offers a new upper with softer fit and a more wearable look. Also, equipped with the latest Mizuno Wave technology for an energetic and cushioned, yet stable ride.

MEN’S

WOMEN’S
Because the path to excellence starts here. PNC is proud to be the Official Bank of Atlanta Track Club.
According to U.S. News & World Report, more than 80 percent of New Year’s resolutions fall by the wayside by mid-February. From what I gather, the high failure rate owes to the inability or unwillingness to change a mindset or formed behavior – so no, it’s not because the new Pilates teacher isn’t any good, your new coach is too grumpy or the gym equipment isn’t the latest and greatest. It’s because only 20 percent of “resolvers” want it badly enough to put in the effort required.

We’re sure that percentage is a lot higher for our members and participants, so here at Atlanta Track Club we’re always trying to build a better mousetrap, one that results in incentives that are long and excuses that are short.

As we approach the start line of 2019, we’re excited about our offerings in the New Year. From our Road to Gold Olympic Marathon Trials test event to a new name and new course for the Publix Atlanta Marathon to the 50th Running of the legendary AJC Peachtree Road Race, we have many reasons for you to renew your membership, lace ’em up with frequency and reach as many finish lines as possible in 2019.

As I see it, the Club’s staff and Board of Directors should lead by example. And I believe the best way to force yourself forward toward a goal is to write it down publicly – there’s nothing like the fear of public shaming as a motivator. So with that in mind, our resolution is to collectively cover at least 50,000 miles in 2019, the year of the 50th AJC Peachtree Road Race.

Basic math tells me that will require an average of just over 20 miles a week from each of us. We can’t wait to lead the way in proving that New Year’s resolutions can be met, and maybe even exceeded.

What’s your resolution? Tag us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and let us – and the rest of the world – know!

NOTE TO OUR STAFF AND BOARD: Oops, I forgot to tell you about this 50,000-mile commitment. Must’ve slipped my mind. But don’t worry, we’ve got this.

Rich Kenah
Executive Director

Word from the Director

Chris Hollis
Project Manager
“In 2013, I ran the Boston Marathon six months after completing chemo and in honor of two close friends who had lost their battles to cancer during my treatment. Liz, the person I sat next to at work for two years, was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor the week after my diagnosis; Steve, the father of one of my best friends, was diagnosed with terminal colon cancer the week before my diagnosis. Both had passed by the time I was able to compete in Boston, about 13 months after our initial diagnoses. This was also the bombing year so, to say the least, that was an emotional day.”

Winnie Lok
Events Manager
“It was the fall of 2017. North Face Endurance Challenge Series in Kettle Moraine State Forest in Wisconsin. What was supposed to be an easy, nontechnical first 50K turned out to be more challenging when the weather became an unseasonable 90 degrees. What was supposed to be a frolic through beautiful Wisconsin meadows turned into a slow, painful march to the finish. BUT what was amazing was the camaraderie that developed between all the runners and the staff and volunteers: We all went out of our way to take care of each other and buoy our spirits the best we could. I finished with Brad the sweep and my new friend Patricia in just under 9.5 hours and it was a day I will never forget.”

Chris Dierkes
Director, Finance
“The TCS New York City Marathon in 2018 – it had been 20 years since I had run this race in 1998, when it marked a turning point in my life and started my love of running. Going back and racing it 43 minutes faster as a 52-year-old and having my wife and son supporting me on the course was tremendous!”
Celebrate Publix Atlanta Marathon Weekend at the Georgia Aquarium

Marathon participants will receive free entry into the Aquarium on Saturday, March 16. Half Marathon and 5K participants will receive discounted entry all weekend long.

Register at AtlantaTrackClub.org
Register for all events online at atlantatrackclub.org. Grand Prix registration opens one month prior to each event.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

1. **TUESDAY JANUARY**
   **RESOLUTION RUN 5K, MILE & DASH**
   10 a.m., Piedmont Park
   - Get a healthy start to 2019 at the first starting line of the year
   - Part of the Grand Prix Series presented by Piedmont Healthcare
   - Post-race healthy snacks & food vendors
   - Kids 14 and under can run the Mile and Dash for free as a part of the Kilometer Kids Youth Running Series

2. **SUNDAY JANUARY**
   **IN-TRAINING FOR PUBLIX ATLANTA HALF MARATHON, FIRST SATURDAY GROUP RUN**
   8:00 a.m., Atlanta Track Club Office
   - Kickoff to 16-week program that prepares participants for the Publix Atlanta Half Marathon on March 17, 2019
   - Runners will get into pace groups and stretch prior to heading out for the run in waves
   - Participants should plan to arrive early to sign in and join their pace group
   - New this season: Customizable online training log, personalized to your fitness level

3. **SATURDAY JANUARY**
   **SOUTHSIDE 12K**
   8:00 a.m., Wolf Creek Amphitheater, College Park
   - Part of the Grand Prix Series presented by Piedmont Healthcare
   - Event starts and ends at Wolf Creek Amphitheater, a music venue built on the site of the 1996 Summer Olympics shooting range
   - FREE for Atlanta Track Club members, only $10 for nonmembers
BRING THE FAMILY FOR PUBLIX ATLANTA MARATHON WEEKEND

REGISTER FOR THE PUBLIX ATLANTA KIDS MARATHON MARCH 16, 2019

RENEW YOUR ATLANTA TRACK CLUB MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Get a head start on the New Year by renewing your membership for 2019.
Get Social

This month:
There’s a first time for everything, and for these four runners the Invesco QQQ Thanksgiving Day Half Marathon was their first 13.1 miler. By the looks of these posts, it won’t be their last. Congratulations to Kevin, Lyric, Haley, Austin and all the rest of our holiday runners!

Italyssa727 • Follow
Atlanta Thanksgiving Half Marathon

Italyssa727 Lyric started her thanksgiving off right! First race in the books 😊 Thanksgivinghalf Marathons
atlantatrackclub So proud! Tell her we said congrats
mamaofreddx dancer88 Go Lyric! Congratulations
jladon22 Awesome job girl! Go Lyric😊

austinflugan1 • Follow
Georgia State University Stadium

austinflugan1 Happy Thanksgiving 🍁🦃 This one HURT, but finished my first Half Marathon 😁😁 connort177 Atta boy victoriaaagin 😊 retrekermom So proud of you atlantatrackclub Congrats on your first half and the triple peach!
michellelanier66 Yay!!

kpranoto • Follow
Georgia State University Stadium

kpranoto What a test of mental toughness! 13.1 miles is no joke! I wanted to stop running and give up so many times, yet at the same time, I so wanted to finish with a good time. It might not have been the best run of my life, but it was definitely my longest. Keep believing in yourself! invescohalfmarathon thanksgivinghalf HALFMarathon Runatl Keeprunning
ac flit Congrats KPP
najehshworld Congrats 😁
pam_duro Kevin! You are my hero! atlantatrackclub Congrats on the finish

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THE RENAISSANCE RUNNER

By Jay Holder
When Itzler was in his early 20s and burst onto the Billboard 100 with his rap single, “Shake It Like A White Girl,” he was running two miles a day. By the late ’90s, around the time he turned 30, he had launched a successful career as a writer and performer of sports-related theme songs, including the Emmy-winning NBA theme “I Love This Game,” and was running marathons.

In 2001, he left music and founded Marquis Jets, a company that sold part-ownership of private jets. And he started running ultramarathons.

Next up, Itzler sold his private-jet business to Warren Buffett and partnered with fledgling ZICO Coconut Water, selling it a few years later to Coca Cola. He was flying high in his racing, too, taking on skyscraper climbs such as the Empire State Run-Up at the iconic New York City landmark.

Currently an author and motivational speaker as well as part-owner of the NBA’s Atlanta Hawks, he regularly runs Atlanta Track Club races and has expanded his running interests into a new extreme challenge: Weekend climbing events whose total elevation gain equals that of Mount Everest.

The home Itzler shares with his wife, Sara Blakely, runs on an infinite supply of good ideas and a mastery of the art of time management. On this particular day, Blakely, the founder and owner of Spanx, is rushing out the door. Itzler isn’t home yet. He’s at another meeting. But a staffer is in the living room packaging copies of his latest book, “Living with the Monks,” and was running ultramarathons.

Itzler arrives and launches into a list of ideas to improve the Atlanta Hawks Fast Break 5K presented by Sharecare, the race Atlanta Track Club produces each February with the Hawks. He has an idea for a double marathon – run a marathon on Saturday, wake up Sunday and run a marathon again.

These are the kind of ideas that might make a race director uncomfortable.

These are the kind of ideas that have made Itzler a very rich man.

“I’m an idea guy. I love newness. I love challenges,” said Itzler. “I learn best by jumping into the unknown. Just trying things [where] I don’t know what the outcome is going to be.”

That’s how he got into running. A friend was training for the New York City Marathon, and Itzler didn’t think it was possible for a person to run 26 miles. So, he tried it. Unlike most of his ventures, it was a flop, at least as far as he was concerned. Itzler, then 26, completed the 1994 ING New York City Marathon in 4:12:56, a respectable time, but he describes the race as “a terrible experience. I was like, ‘I’m never doing this again’ and then a week later I’m like ’I’m going to do that every single year until I’m 50.’” The TCS New York City Marathon database shows 12 official results for Itzler, with a personal best time of 3:58:54 in 1997.

Itzler will be the first to confirm the impression you get when scanning his LinkedIn profile: This guy gets bored easily.

“That’s always been my thing,” he said. “What’s next? Where’s the challenge?”

These are questions he’s been asking since childhood. Itzler recalls growing up in Queens and sneaking into the nearby U.S. Open tennis tournament. “I never had a ticket,” he said. “The first time we were able to crack the code and figure out how to get into the venue, my friend wanted to go watch the match at Center Court and I wanted to go back and see if we could sneak in another way.”

For Itzler, boredom is almost always preceded by passion. Right now, he’s working on a documentary about unhealthy breakfast cereals, a topic that he frequently addresses on social media. (“The serving size is half a cup! Who is eating just a half cup of anything?” he yelled incredulously as he explained the project.) Each episode of the 60-part series will be a one-
minute video on Instagram. That’s not enough time to get bored, but enough for him to convince you that what’s floating in your milk could kill you.

When Itzler got bored with running marathons and decided to go longer and harder, he had to step outside his comfort zone and find inspiration. So he invited a Navy SEAL to move into his home for a month and become his personal trainer. “When you immerse yourself or become friends or interact with people that are completely opposite of you, there’s so much to learn,” said Itzler. The SEAL, who was also an elite ultramarathoner, inspired Itzler to sign up for the Ultracentric 24-Hour Run in Grapevine, Texas.

He completed 100 miles in just under 24 hours. A new Jesse Itzler was born.

Beginning at that finish line, Itzler became the “100 Mile Man.” That’s his handle on Twitter. He launched a brand incubator called the 100 Mile Group. He wrote a book called “Living with a SEAL” that became a New York Times best-seller. The focus, tenacity and tolerance for pain it takes to prepare for and complete a 100-mile race are main talking points in the motivational message he delivers to high-paying corporate clients.

For a man who has spent his entire life running away from labels, it was running that eventually caught him. It’s been nearly 25 years since he took his first strides toward today, but Jesse Itzler the runner and Jesse Itzler the entrepreneur are now Jesse Itzler the running entrepreneur.

His climbing events, known as 29029 Everest, were born from the notion that other runners were, like him, looking for the next challenge. Participants have 36 hours to scale a mountain until they accumulate 29,029 feet of total climbing – the height of Mount Everest. The events are designed for athletes who are tired of chasing a clock, perhaps too busy to put in the hours it takes to train for an Ironman and willing to pay top dollar for something different. “A lot of people want to have a you-versus-you competition,” explained Marc Hodulich, Itzler’s business partner in the 29029 events. “It’s a new story to tell. You go into the office and tell your coworkers. You put it on Instagram.”

Dubbed a “vacation endurance event,” the climbs are held annually at Snowbasin Resort in Utah (13 summits equal Everest) and Stratton Mountain in Vermont (17 summits equal Everest). Hodulich describes them as “not just a challenge but a weekend of connection.” Participants are provided luxury tents, healthy meals prepared by world-class chefs, entertainment and seminars from speakers such as Colin O’Brady, who is currently attempting to walk across Antarctica unsupported.

In the 29029 challenges, you can climb as much or as little as you’d like. There’s no stopwatch. Even with an entry fee of $5,000, all of the 29029 events have sold out.

Hodulich met Itzler by chance. Their sons played football together, and when Itzler saw Hodulich running to practice he struck up a conversation. Now, they aren’t just partners. They’re friends. Hodulich’s official title is Chief Resume Builder, taking Itzler’s ideas and using his Wall Street business background to bring them to life. “He has a confidence that he’s never going to run out of good ideas,” Hodulich said. “He doesn’t want to get through life on autopilot. He sees opportunities in things that can make his life better.”

Itzler’s wife, Sara, put it this way, in an interview with The New York Times last summer: “Jesse is a very happy human. It’s real and beautiful and it’s who he is. He’s full of ideas and adventure and has this zest and love for life. I admire that.”
For a man who spent most of his life in the hustle and bustle of New York City, he’s come to love his adopted home of Atlanta. He moved here permanently after he and Blakely were married in 2008. The man once so closely associated the New York Knicks that he wrote the theme song the team still uses today says he’s a true Hawks fan now. “I am a New Yorker so it’s in my DNA to be fast-paced,” he said. “I am an action junkie and this is a little slower. But as I get older, I think that might be a good thing.”

Now 50, time is more important than ever to Itzler. He quit watching football after doing some rough math and determining that by the time he turned 80 he’d have logged 30,000 hours in front of the television.

“I’m always calculating,” he said, aware that the average American male lives to be 78 and that if he can free up one hour a day, he’ll get 10,000 hours back. That’s more than two years, and that’s like living to be 80. “There are times to analyze and reverse engineer your life, which I do a lot, and then there’s a time to just be like ‘whatever.’ And I kind of pick and choose what’s the right balance.”

Itzler approached finding balance the same way he did finding fitness – total immersion. Last year, he shaved his naturally curly hair and moved to a remote monastery in upstate New York for a month to live with Russian Orthodox monks, the experience chronicled in his latest book. He says that, more than anything, the monks taught him to put down the phone, step away from social media and be present.

Being present for Itzler means setting aside time for himself and for his wife, three sons and daughter. When Itzler’s not scaling a mountain 17 times, he’s sticking to his routine of running and walking 10 miles a day: 40 minutes here, an hour there. Chastain Park is his favorite place. That’s when he clears his head and makes space for new ideas. He never listens to music as he goes. “That’s my form of meditation,” he said. “It’s a time where I can really check in with my own gut.” On the weekends, the walks are a family affair. He said the kids, all under the age of eight, look forward to it all week.

And although the monks reinforced the importance of presence, fatherhood laid the foundation. Itzler has a rule: He never says no to a baseball catch. “My kids want to throw the baseball, they want to build a fort … those are key moments. I don’t know how many baseball catches I am going to have. When those moments happen, I’m very aware of them and I take advantage of them.”

In that Times story, his wife also recalled that years ago her father said that marriage is the most important decision and the easiest one to make. “I didn’t understand that at the time, but do now,” Blakely added. “The person you marry has the greatest impact on your daily happiness.”

If you started reading this not knowing who Jesse Itzler is, he’s OK with that. If you’re this far and still don’t know exactly what he is, he’s good with that, calling it the best compliment he can receive.

“I just want to do as much as I can in my short time on earth,” he said. “I want to have the longest resume that I can. When my time is up, I can say ‘I did it.’”

Whatever the next line on the resume is, it will almost certainly be adjacent to a running accomplishment. Maybe it will be another 100-mile race – Itzler won’t rule that out. Or maybe it will be running a 5K with all four of his kids. Either way, running isn’t going anywhere.

“I don’t look at it as exercise,” he said. “I don’t look at it as a chore. It’s second nature.”
As we turn the calendar to 2019, it’s time to kick off a new edition of Atlanta Track Club’s Grand Prix Series presented by Piedmont Healthcare. Now entering its 42nd year, the Grand Prix will provide Atlanta Track Club members with 10 races in which to test themselves. In the series, Club members earn points for both performance and participation; only Club members are scored but all runners are welcome. If you’re curious about how the races came to be, which ones are free and where they’ll be, read on.

**Resolution Run 5K, Mile & Dash – January 1, 2019 – Piedmont Park**

Atlanta Track Club has long made an effort to kick off the New Year on the run, but before the mid-1980s the first race of the year, the Frostbite 5K & 15K, wasn’t held until mid-January. In 1986, however, that race was renamed the Resolution Run and has since taken place on January 1. Though the location has roved across the metro area over the years – from West to Northwest to Northeast – the race has now found a home in Piedmont Park and will take place there for the second consecutive year.

No matter the weather – and last year it was in the 20s, the coldest temperature ever – nearly 3,000 runners will begin their year at this race, running a course that loops from Oak Hill, out onto Piedmont Avenue and back into the park on the way to finishing near The Meadow. Expect a postrace celebration of health, fitness and resolutions.

**Southside 12K – January 12, 2019 – College Park**

As part of an effort to ensure that Atlanta Track Club events and programs are held in every corner of Metro Atlanta, the Southside 12K debuted last year in partnership with the South Fulton Running Partners, and is the newest addition to the Grand Prix Series presented by Piedmont Healthcare. Looking for a PR? The 12K distance of this race, which is free to members, paves the way.

**Hearts and Soles – February 2 – Decatur**

Despite taking place near Valentine’s Day, from 1984-1989 this race sported not only a name but also a concept devoid of romance – The Women’s and Men’s 4-Mile Separates. After the Bonne Belle 10K ended in 1983, the Separates continued to provide women the chance to run on a course free of men, as the races were contested back-to-back on the same day.

But since 1990, the name has remained the same, offering runners the chance to gear up for or wind down from Valentine’s Day depending on the exact date. Throughout this decade, the course has become a Club favorite as a free, flat and fast opportunity to lay down a speedy AJC Peachtree Road Race qualifying time for those hoping to be seeded in the event. This year, expect a celebration of heart health and an opportunity to donate your soles to those in need.

**Singleton 4 Miler – April 27 – Norcross**

Named after Tim Singleton, the legendary founder of the Peachtree, this 4 Miler has been one of the Club’s oldest and most-treasured races through many incarnations. The first edition was contested on September 22, 1973, in Stone Mountain, with Singleton as race director. In 1976, the race – a 10K at that point, with a new venue – was named in his honor. That race would cease to exist in 1983. A year later, Stone Mountain became the Singleton 5 Miler and 10 Miler. Over the decades, the race would...
frequently feature Singleton – who moved to Houston in the early 1970s – returning to hand out awards.

Though the locale and distance have frequently changed, the appeal remains as this free-for-members race begins and finishes in the charming Thrasher Park in Norcross. Look forward to a celebration of Earth Day at this year’s edition as we celebrate the blooming spring.

All Comers Track & Field Meets – May and June – Cheney Stadium and Emory University

“We must admit one phase of our program has been neglected,” read the April 1973 edition of Wingfoot Magazine. “This is providing competition, other than road races, for athletes who are out of college.”

And so the All Comers Track & Field Meets were born, 45 years ago. That summer, the Club began hosting free, open-to-all track meets on weekday evenings at tracks around the city. Ever since, over six straight weeks in the summer, All Comers meets allow runners of every age to come and test their mettle on the oval. This year, two Grand Prix Series events will be contested as part of All Comers – the 100-meter dash and the shot put. Join us each Tuesday night from May 7 to June 18 and try out every event you ever dreamed of attempting.

Decatur DeKalb 4 Miler – August 3 – Decatur YMCA

The first Decatur DeKalb 4 Miler was held on July 15, 1972, in partnership with the Decatur YMCA. Forty-six years later, runners follow up the Peachtree with this race, looping them through Decatur neighborhoods on a sweltering, humid summer morning. For many, it’s their first free race as new Atlanta Track Club members after their experience at the Peachtree prompts them to join.

Atlanta’s Finest 5K, Mile & Dash – August 17 – Pemberton Place

Atlanta Track Club’s founding members once had an array of truly eccentric race names – Jog Days of Summer, the Run Around the Park, Haunted Hustle – but the “Fuzz Run” stands out. Until 1998, the Fuzz Run benefited the Police Athletic League, and although it took a hiatus until 2003 the race was relaunched that year and dubbed Atlanta’s Finest 5K, benefiting the newly established Atlanta Police Foundation. Originally held at Piedmont Park, the race now begins at Pemberton Place and in 2018 hosted the USATF Masters 5k Championships, which gave runners the chance to see some of the fastest masters runners in the nation duke it out. Just as in 2003, the race is also an opportunity to see the latest and greatest technology at the Atlanta Police Department’s disposal, including helicopters, bomb-detecting robots and squad cars.

Wingfoot XC Classic – September 21 – Sam Smith Park

Over the Club’s history, there have been a variety of events designed to create a cross country-style racing environment. There were meets at Stone Mountain, in Piedmont Park and, finally in Canton, Georgia, before the Club in 2015 settled on the Wingfoot XC Classic.

This event is now the region’s largest cross country meet, featuring more than 180 teams from across Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Tennessee. In the morning, high school runners take center stage in the championship, varsity and junior varsity divisions, creating one of the most intense mornings of racing on the state’s race calendar. The evening session then allows middle school runners to hit the hay bales and race, before a community race under the lights takes place. Following this free race, Grand Prix Series runners receive a free barbeque sandwich and can listen to some live music under the Cartersville stars, creating an atmosphere unique among the year’s races.

PNC Atlanta 10 Miler & 5K – October 20 – Atlantic Station

In its eighth edition in 2019, the PNC Atlanta 10 Miler & 5K caps the Grand Prix Series with a race at Atlantic Station held on what is typically one of the most beautiful mornings of the year. The race runs through Midtown and Buckhead as the sun rises over the skyline, then heads down Cardiac Hill, site of the challenge to name the King and Queen of Cardiac Hill – the man and woman who climb the hill the fastest.

Grand Prix Finale – December – Downtown Atlanta

The Grand Prix Finale & Volunteer Awards Banquet has been part of Atlanta Track Club since 1987, celebrating the runners at the end of Atlanta Track Club’s “race year,” which used to end on September 30. But since the Club’s calendar was altered to match the calendar year, the banquet has taken place in December and offered members a final free event to celebrate a year on the run and the volunteers that made all of the Club’s events possible.

In 2019, this will be held in conjunction with an Olympic Team Trials – Marathon training run, with details to be announced.
CHASE YOUR GOLD

Run the roads that will carry six Americans to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics

ROAD TO GOLD

This 8.2 mile race will be the first event using the streets for the 2020 Olympic Team Trials – Marathon. It’s your chance to literally follow in the footsteps of future Olympians.

Registration includes:
- Finisher’s medal
- Commemorative scarf

Centennial Olympic Park

Register at atlantatrackclub.org
It’s been more than two decades since Atlanta hosted the 1996 Games, but Atlanta Track Club will soon offer the city a new Olympic experience: Road to Gold: An Atlanta 2020 Test Event. This 8.2-mile race will be held March 2, 2019, and will take runners and walkers along the final lap of the planned course for the 2020 Olympic Team Trials – Marathon. On February 29, 2020, the city is set to host the Trials, an event that will determine the six athletes who will represent the United States in the marathon at the 2020 Games in Tokyo.

The concept for Road to Gold was developed to test the course from an operations perspective and to allow Olympic hopefuls the chance to sample the Trials venue. “We recognize that these athletes want to see the course sooner rather than later,” said Rich Kenah, Atlanta Track Club’s executive director. “It made the most sense to have them actually compete on it with thousands of others from the running and walking community of Running City USA.”

Road to Gold is one of two chances for Olympic hopefuls to run on the Trials course, but the only competitive opportunity before race day in 2020. An additional light lane closure of the course will take place in early December 2019.

Atlanta Track Club Elite members Bridget Lyons, Lacey Krout, Matt McDonald, Wilkerson Given and Laurie Knowles all plan to compete in Road to Gold to get their first experience on the Trials course, as well as their shot at prize money. A prize purse totaling $7,700 will be awarded to the top five women and top five men. “Turning my regular run into a race is going to be awesome,” said Krout, who just ran 2:38:53, a huge personal best, at the California International Marathon. “Having the support of Running City USA, Atlanta Track Club and all the runners here in Atlanta will make it feel more like family out on the course.”

The course starts near Centennial Olympic Park and touches major landmarks: the 1996 Olympic rings, Georgia Capital, Jackson Street Bridge, Fox Theater, Margaret Mitchell House, The King Center and Ebenezer Baptist Church. Participants will run what is essentially the final lap of the four-loop Trials course.

“We really wanted the greater running community to have a better understanding of what the Olympic hopefuls will be going through,” said Chris Hollis, Atlanta Track Club special projects manager. “Where Road to Gold participants will do the lap once, Olympic hopefuls will do it four times.”

The official Trials course has been measured, finalized and revealed to the Long Distance Running Committee at USA Track & Field and has a planned release date to the public of January 2019.

The future of Road to Gold? “We think [it] will be a legacy of the Trials and we anticipate keeping it on our calendar of events for 2021 and beyond,” said Kenah.
THE GATEWAY RACE

By Marcus Budline
When Randy Shreiner decided to register for the AJC Peachtree Road Race lottery last March, he didn’t realize it was a decision that would fundamentally alter the fabric of his life. How could he? He weighed 265 pounds and had never run before, so the chances of becoming a road racing fanatic were slim.

“I just wanted to have some kind of goal to shoot for,” he said. “I was way overweight and I needed something to push me.”

But he also didn't realize that the Peachtree tends to have a life-changing effect on its participants. Every summer, it turns paraders into walkers, walkers into joggers and joggers into runners through some combination of celebration and commiseration under the July 4 sun. When Shreiner crossed the finish line and made the turn into The Meadow, he could feel that shift starting to take place. Four months, 70 pounds and 18 5Ks later, he recognized what happened: The Peachtree was his gateway race on a journey to health and fitness.

In 1970, the concept of a road race on July 4 was, frankly, crazy. There’s a reason only 110 people showed up to race down Peachtree – those weirdos and diehards were the sum total of the few people unconventional enough to actually enjoy running.

“It was mostly a cult,” said Lee Fidler, who was third in 1971 and is still a member of Atlanta Track Club.

But, as the years ticked by, the race continued to grow, augmented by a running boom that followed Frank Shorter’s 1972 Olympic gold medal in the marathon. The Peachtree emerged as a citywide jumping-off point for that boom, growing to 25,000 participants within 10 years.

That explosion continued over the decades, hitting 40,000 participants in 1990 and 55,000 before the turn of the millennium. For many, the Peachtree served as an introduction to the concept of running outside of gym class; for others, it was an event that marked the culmination of a year of training. Now at 60,000 participants, the race has become an Atlanta institution and has emerged as a midyear goal for Atlantans looking to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

“A huge number of our trainees come to the program with no running experience and use the Peachtree as a turning point for their lives,” said Sue Payne, Atlanta Track Club’s director of outreach and manager of the In-Training for Peachtree program. “Amy [Begley, the Club’s coach] and I love seeing those transformations start with us and seeing the impact Peachtree can have.”

That growing impact is evident both in the numbers – the training program has swelled from 300 to nearly 900 participants in the last decade – and in the stories Payne and Begley hear on a regular basis.

Among the successes is Pennie Eddy, who trained for the first time in 2015 and lost 140 pounds. Peachtree morning was her first time riding MARTA, as she had previously been too...
uncomfortable taking public transportation. And former NFL player Hugh Douglas experienced a Peachtree transformation when he joined in on the race as a way to connect with Atlanta after becoming a host for 92.9 The Game, and has since become an avid runner and Peachtree enthusiast.

But it’s Tina Tait’s story of how training for the Peachtree changed her life that’s reverberated more than any other. After hearing for many years from friends about the joy of the Peachtree, Tait – weighing 250 pounds at the time – decided to take the risk and register for the race in the spring of 2010 so she could experience it for herself.

“The Peachtree is one of those bucket list things that people have in this city whether they’re young or old,” Tait said. “It’s an iconic thing in this city where everybody stops and everybody watches.”

Additionally, Tait’s interest was piqued by the In-Training Program, which she saw as a way to guide her toward race day. Having never been comfortable in big groups, she took the leap and instantly felt right at home, even at the back of the pack.

“I was by far the biggest person there,” Tait said. “But the Run Leads were so encouraging and amazing that I never really felt awkward. Having been an overweight person my whole life, I wasn’t used to being treated like that and that was really the first time I felt like [someone] wanted me to succeed.”

After three months of preparing, Tait viewed the race itself as a parade that would reward her for months of training. But as she was making her way down Peachtree, Tait found herself not only in the process of conquering the July 4 tradition, but having a strange thought as she looked around: She wanted to be like these people. She wanted to feel healthy and enjoy the act of running.

Within six months, she underwent a vertical sleeve gastrectomy to kick off her weight loss. She began running regularly. And by the next July, she ran the Peachtree again, this time weighing 170 pounds and finishing in half the time of the year before.

Since then, she’s gone on to run three full marathons and 15 half marathons, and has had her story featured across the country, even making an appearance alongside Al Roker on the “Today” show for undergoing the transformation. Along the way, she’s continued to cite that first Peachtree experience as the true gateway moment for her journey.

“There was just something about seeing all those runners that made me want to be just like them,” she said. “I wanted to cross that finish line and be happy, not feel like I just barely made it.”

This simple story of trying the Peachtree and becoming hooked on running is a common tale: On July 4, 2018, 148 people registered to become Atlanta Track Club members; on July 5, 367 more did the same, making a commitment to a healthier lifestyle within 36 hours of the race’s conclusion. Among them was Shreiner, who epitomizes the gateway Peachtree creates each summer for so many participants.

Heading into the race, Shreiner’s longest run had been two miles. “My goal for the race was just to finish,” he said. Pumped up on adrenaline, he was able to do the first 5K of the Peachtree in 32 minutes, but slowed in the second half to finish in exactly 1 hour and 15 minutes. As he crossed the finish line, he didn’t just feel healthy: he was cruising and wishing he would have pushed a little harder.

He took that motivation home and signed up for an Atlanta Track Club membership at 7:38 p.m. that night. What came next was a flurry of event registrations and a commitment to running that lifelong runners would struggle to match.

Since July 4, Shreiner has done a 5K nearly every weekend. On its own, the tally is mind-boggling: four races in August, five in September and six in October, including a weekend in October where he pulled off three 5Ks in two days. But on top of that has been a significant improvement in his time, as he started at 32 minutes and now holds a personal best of 23:48.

“When I started my goal was a 10-minute mile,” Shreiner said. “So when I ran a 23:48, that meant a lot because I never thought I’d be able to do that.”

Over that stretch, Shreiner has dropped 70 pounds and seen his shirt size shrink from an XXL to a medium. He’s fallen in love with running simply for the feeling of accomplishment and the chance to compete against himself. He traces it all back to the Peachtree.

“It kick-started my running life,” he said.

This is another in a series of 50 stories celebrating the upcoming 50th Running of the AJC Peachtree Road Race. For more, visit peachtree50.com.
In an unprecedented display of strength, Atlanta Track Club dominated USATF’s Masters Grand Prix Circuit in 2018. Eight men’s and women’s teams from the Club wound up among the top three point earners in the series, with awards presented December 8. The eight podium spots eclipsed the previous high of six.

Atlanta Track Club first-place teams: women’s 40-49 and 70-79, men’s 60-69; second-place teams: women’s 50-59 and 60-69, men’s 40-49; third-place teams: men’s 50-59 and 70-79.

Atlanta Track Club individuals, first place: Sonja Friend-Uhl (45-49), Kris Huff (50-54), Cynthia Williams (60-64), Kirk Larson (65-69), Carol Rhodes (70-74), Jim Askew (80-84); second place: Catherine Radle (75-79); third place: Brent Fields (45-49), Laurie Wharton (50-54), Ken Youngers (60-64), Cynthia Lucking (65-69), Ed Bligh (75-79).

A look at four members who ran especially well during the year:

**Alan Black** (5th place, 45-49)

After being sidelined by hamstring tendinopathy for almost two years, 45-year-old Alan Black hit his stride again, highlighted by the overall title at the USATF Masters Road Mile National in August. Yet Black is a team runner first. “I love it when we’re on the podium, knowing that I contributed to it,” he said. Married with five daughters, Black works nights for Georgia Power, meaning more time with his family but less for sleep and training. “I always try to find that window of opportunity to get a run in, either during my dinner break or on the treadmill at home,” he said. “I like to set an example for my family that having goals and dreams doesn’t come easy.”

**Kris Huff** (Winner, 50-54)

Undoubtedly the best-traveled member of the club’s masters team, Kris Huff proved superior in her age group by a comfortable margin in her final year as a 50-54 participant, which suggests she’ll be a 55-59 force during 2019. An accomplished marathoner, Huff’s really long miles nevertheless come from her work as an international flight attendant. “I usually take a short nap after a flight and then run,” she said. “Oftentimes it’s hard to wake up! But the plus side is beautiful, different scenery.”

**Laurie Wharton** (3rd place, 50-54)

A strong final race in the 2018 Grand Prix propelled Laurie Wharton onto the podium, a sweet ending to a difficult year in which Wharton suffered serious injuries from an accident last spring. As a nurse midwife, being on call for 24-hour periods is challenging. “My running schedule is not consistent,” she explained, “but that works well for me. I’ve never taken my running too seriously and it’s never felt like a chore. I run because I love it.” A Peachtree veteran with 38-straight July 4th finishes, Wharton sums up her perspective on running in five words: “It’s always worth the effort.”

**Andrew Sherwood** (4th place, 75-79)

He could easily pass for 59, but Andrew Sherwood recently celebrated his 79th birthday. He began running at a Scottish boarding school in the early 1950s, but after one semester of cross county at Oxford gave up the sport until moving to Atlanta and joining the masters team in the mid-1980s. Sherwood, who worked 50 years in international business, never let a busy life get in the way of his running. “Over the years running has helped me stay healthy, get over jet lag, cut down on stress and have fun exploring new cities and countryside,” he explained. Now, Sherwood is looking ahead to helping form an Atlanta Track Club 80-89 team in 2020. “I still find running as enjoyable as ever,” he says. “My long-term goal is to finish a marathon at age 100, but I have to get there first!”
2019
The Year Of COFFEE
AL-FALAH ACADEMY HAS FAITH IN KILOMETER KIDS

By Marcus Budline

As Muslim-American athletes and Olympians such as fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad and 400-meter hurdler Dalilah Muhammad have risen to prominence over the past decade, a wave of interest and focus on sports and athletics in the Muslim-American community – particularly among Muslim-American girls – has continued to swell within this country. Their inspirational stories of battling for acceptance as athletes keep spreading, and millions of children are watching, learning what it means to incorporate Islam into athletics and compete at the highest level.

At one of the newest additions to Atlanta Track Club’s Kilometer Kids program, the Islamic private school Al-Falah Academy, this trend is on display. Led by Reshelle Abdulmalik, the school of just over 400 had more than a dozen elementary school students participating in the program in its first semester.

“I think they loved the program,” said Abdulmalik, whose students recently wrapped up their season. “I think they enjoyed just being able to get out and run and get out all the energy from sitting in the classroom.”

Since opening in 2008, Al-Falah has continued to recognize the importance of extracurricular sports in the lives of its students. The Academy has a longer school day than the average public school, so when the school began introducing sports about four years ago it was a huge hit, according to Abdulmalik’s assistant coach, Maajida Coleman. When it started this year, the Kilometer Kids program in particular filled a void for younger children, who frequently don’t have the same array of extracurricular opportunities as the older students.

And as with everything the school does, faith is incorporated in some way, with each practice finished by a group prayer. That relationship between faith and athletics is important to the school, and Coleman noted that a focus of the school’s sports programs is to show that it’s possible to be a practicing Muslim while competing in athletics.

“We want to let them know that it’s OK to go for that option,” Coleman said.

Abdulmalik concurred, noting that it’s important for students to see that they can “still maintain [their] modesty and still be accepted into the broader culture and participate in these types of events.”

Coleman noted that athletes such as Dalilah Muhammad, the 2016 Olympic gold medalist, and retired NBA all-star Shareef Abdur-Rahim, who won gold as part of the 2000 U.S. Olympic team, have been part of students learning that lesson.

Earlier in November, the school hosted “Character Day,” and a number of students dressed up as Muslim members of the sports community.

“There are so many Muslims in sports and that’s always something for them to look up to for inspiration,” said Coleman. “It definitely wasn’t always there, and they didn’t have same popularity as they have now.”

As that popularity continues to increase and the number of successful Muslim athletes continues to rise, the students, parents and teachers of Al-Falah will be watching and learning, inspired by Muslims incorporating their faith into their athletics in the same way the school teaches. That, plus the fact that running games can also be just plain fun, should keep the program growing and the Al-Falah athletics community thriving in years to come.

Said Coleman: “I think there is really going to be inspiration [for] our parents to sign up their kids.”
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Register at atlantatrackclub.org
A corporate attorney for one of Atlanta’s most reputable law firms, King and Spalding, Jon Chally is an Atlanta Track Club member who serves pro bono as the Club’s attorney. When he’s not in the courtroom, he’s on the roads, with a 3:10 marathon and 1:28 half marathon to his name.

What fuels your running and why do you run?
Running is a family endeavor for me. My parents were caught up in the ‘80s running craze (in fact, the first race I ever attended was an AJC Peachtree Road Race in the early ‘80s that my mom finished). My sister and I started running to follow in my parents’ footsteps, and it has been a significant part of my life for years. My wife logs more miles than I do at this point, and I'm now working hard on the next generation – trying to get my kids to run, as well.

I run for the physical benefit, to be sure, but it’s much more mental for me. It’s a great outlet for stress relief, and it allows me to declare an accomplishment virtually every day: “I got my run in.”

With a stressful job that requires some presumably long hours, how do you find time to run, and why is it important?
Running, and some form of physical exercise, is as much a part of my day as eating and sleeping. It’s just become part of what I do. It takes some creativity sometimes, including some very early morning runs before trips to the airport, but if running is important enough – and it is – you can fit it in around a very busy schedule. I might have skipped out on more sleep than is advisable, but I’ve always been able to squeeze in a run when needed.

Have you always been a runner?
Yes, always. I don’t run quite as much as I used to – injuries led me to more cross-training – but I don’t think I’ll ever give it up. It has come to define me, at least in part.

Where is your favorite place to run in Atlanta, and why?
Having traveled and used running to explore lots of cities, I can attest to the fact that there are tons of great options for running routes in and around Atlanta. I’ve spent more miles on the Silver Comet Trail than anywhere else. We live right at the trailhead, and I can jump on it, go for miles and really clear my head. Piedmont Park is a great option as well, particularly if I need something close to my office, and I’ve spent many weekend hours exploring trails at Kennesaw, too.

How do you find the running community in Atlanta?
It’s fantastic. Perhaps I’m biased, because of my involvement with Atlanta Track Club, but I think we are lucky to have the Club fostering such a diverse and committed running community. Take the Peachtree, for example. We live in the South and experience brutally hot summers, but one of our city’s defining events is a 10k run on July 4th. Imagine that. Many running organizations barely attempt to put on events at that time of the year, but it is our city’s signature. Our city comes together to support tens of thousands of runners slogging through the humidity to run over 6 miles.

Do you have any particularly favorite running memories from running with Atlanta Track Club?
My first marathon was the Atlanta Marathon (formerly held in October). I was finally ready to knock off the marathon distance, and I selected this one because it didn’t require any travel and I was excited to see so much of the city on foot. I probably didn’t appreciate all of the hills – including Cardiac Hill as we got closer to the finish – but it was excellent. Still haven’t beaten my time in that event, unfortunately, but I’m glad to say that an Atlanta Track Club event was my first (and best) marathon.
Ah, Asheville. A land of striking mountains, funky beers and lavish estates; a city that hasn’t yet needed to campaign to keep itself weird because it still is; an isolated community sandwiched between two national forests, known more for its vegan festival and meditation centers than for intense cardiovascular training.

But also … Asheville! A land of striking running paths, funky terrains and lavish post-run celebration options; a city that hasn’t gotten its due as a running destination; an incredible running community sandwiched between two national forests that gives you all the trail running, hiking and biking you might need for an intense weekend of working out.

Which version is the true Asheville? For your purposes, both. On a Runcation here, you’ll find your way exploring that dichotomy between a chilled-out mountain oasis and a revved-up weekend of cardio, making for an ideal weekend getaway. Additionally, you’ll find the cooler climate a welcome respite from the brutality of Atlanta’s weather patterns, particularly if you venture up north between March and November.

If you’re looking to get in some activity on all the terrains Asheville has to offer, we’ve already nailed down the perfect itinerary for your 48 hours in the city. (For more options, visit ashevilletrails.com).

**Friday**
Get into town by midafternoon and drop your bags. But then quickly open them up and dig out your Mizunos, because the first activity on any Runcation to Asheville is to explore downtown on foot. Make your way down to Pack Square and take a self-guided running tour of the 1.7-mile Asheville Urban Trail, making note of places to investigate further later in the weekend. Then tack on some miles by either looping on downtown streets that pique your interest or by heading down Biltmore Avenue and winding through the forest-lined streets of Reservoir Road and Samuel Ashe Drive. Head back to town, freshen up, and then enjoy a mellow evening of drinking and eating. Our recommendations? Burial Beer Co., followed by a stunning meal at Cúrate.

**Saturday**
Get out the door early to beat the large groups heading out to Looking Glass Rock and get started on the 2.7-mile ascent. The trip up to the bald-faced top offers just the right level of difficulty for a weekend trail runner, beginning with a gentle climb and slowly steepening and narrowing toward the top.

Throughout the climb, you’ll stay focused thanks to well-spaced switchbacks, some wonderful foliage lining the trail and the consistent twittering of North Carolina’s wildlife. Make sure you throw an extra layer on just before you break above the tree line, as the peak is completely unprotected. But as long as your teeth aren’t chattering, it’s impossible not to love this sweeping view of the national forest. Post-run, make the quick trip to Oskar Blue’s Brewery for celebratory beers and lunch before either exploring nearby Brevard or heading back to town. To relax in the evening, we’d recommend the Battery Park Book Exchange for some champagne in a vintage bookstore (could a store embody modern Asheville any more than this?) followed by a walk to All Souls Pizza and a trip to Old Europe Pastries on your way back home.

**Sunday**
Wrap up the Runcation with a final jaunt on the French Broad River Greenway. Somewhere between running the BeltLine or along the Chattahoochee, the French Broad River Greenway 2.7-mile path offers the right environment for a relaxing Sunday morning run to take in the fresh air along the river.

Perhaps the most important recommendation of all is to cap off your last run by visiting Biscuit Head before you head home. Jams abound at this massively popular spot, where you’ll find biscuits topped with everything from pulled pork to andouille sausage to sweet potato coconut gravy. This is what Runcation is all about.

Let us know your favorite place to go by tagging and using #atlantatrackclub #Runcation on social media.
Injuries aren’t inevitable, but the cards are stacked against runners: Studies show that up to 50 percent will experience an injury on an annual basis, and novice runners are even more at risk. Still, the benefits of running far outweigh the occasional problem. So what can we do to keep you running and out of my office?

First, forget the old mantra, “no pain, no gain.” Pain is an important signal that something is wrong. Don’t run through it: Not listening to your body can worsen an injury, cause other injuries and prolong recovery. I prefer to see you in my office at the onset of an injury, when I might recommend physical therapy, cross training or a slight modification to your training routine. Runners should always let their bodies set the pace.

Novice runners face a much higher injury rate than experienced runners, often because in their eagerness to improve they add on the miles or intensity too quickly. Avoid excessive or very rapid increases in training; rather, gradually push yourself harder to help stave off injury.

When I see an athlete, it’s important to assess not only their injury but also what may have led to it. From intrinsic issues such as anatomy, gender and age to extrinsic issues like training, strength, mechanics, nutrition and shoe wear, there are countless variables. Trying to determine whether they can “work through” an injury versus significantly modifying their training can be difficult. It depends on the athlete’s goals, the timing of their next race and the severity of the injury.

Some tips for the most common running injuries I see in my office:

**Iliotibial band syndrome (ITBS):** An aching, burning pain over the lateral (outer) knee that occasionally radiates up the thigh toward the hip. Usually, runners will complain of pain primarily when running, but also sometimes when using the stairs and standing from a seated position. Acutely, resting and ice can be helpful, and oral anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) may be of benefit. (Always contact your physician before taking these medications.) If running still hurts, consider swimming or cycling using a lower crank resistance. Runners who have pain only at certain paces, or very mild symptoms, may continue to run. If you are limping, stop. Ultimately, to fix the underlying issue we need to correct strength and mobility deficits, possibly by working with a physical therapist.

With **runners knee**, also called **patellofemoral pain syndrome (PFPS)**, most runners will complain of pain around the patella (kneecap) that worsens with running, squatting or while going up or down stairs. Much like with ITBS, modifying training and therapy to address muscular imbalances are typically quite helpful. X-rays and MRIs are not typically required to make the diagnosis. We can often determine if your pain is from PFPS based upon history and physical exam alone.

For runners with shin pain, it is important to distinguish between shin splints, also called **medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS)**, and **stress fractures**. These conditions can feel similar, with pain along the shin when running, but the prognosis is very different. Runners with pain along the shin that persists after runs, especially if there is a point tender area, should see their physician to investigate for a potential stress fracture – which requires rest from impact activities until it is fully healed. Although runners dread this diagnosis, we can often find alternative lower-impact activities, like swimming or cycling, to help you stay active while you recover. Regarding shin splints, the pain is typically more diffuse and located over the inner part of the shin, without a point tender area. Early in the course of shin splints, pain is worse at the beginning of exercise and gradually subsides. As it progresses, the pain may persist after exercise. This can also be true to stress fractures, so if pain is persisting, see your doctor.

**Plantar fasciitis** is the most common cause of rear foot pain in runners. Pain typically presents over the heel, worse with first step in the morning and with push-off while walking and running. Stretching exercises, done either at home or with a physical therapist, can help. If the pain doesn’t lessen with home exercises and stretching, consult your physician.
SERVING UP A LOOK AT THE NEW YEAR

By Alissa Palladino MS, RDN, LD, ACSM-CPT

Here are three questions I’ve recently received as we all make a fresh start on our diets and exercise routines in the New Year!

What are you, as a dietitian, resolving to do in 2019?

My life resolution for the New Year is to be more mindful. And this applies to eating as well. Mindful eating is a concept that is simple in theory but actually quite difficult in practice since it’s the opposite of how most of us tend to eat (dietitians included!) When we eat while driving, working, watching TV or scrolling on our phones, we are eating mindlessly. This can contribute to overeating and making food choices that are inconsistent with our health goals. Mindful eating, on the other hand, means actively paying attention to what we are eating – slowing down, chewing thoroughly, noting how food tastes and how we feel while eating. Research shows this practice can help us enjoy our meals, feel more satisfied and tune back into our bodies’ natural hunger and satiety cues, ultimately fostering a positive relationship with food.

If I resolve to eat more fruits and vegetables in 2019, what should be at the top of my list as a runner or walker?

This is a great resolution! If there is a single change that I as a dietitian would recommend to anyone looking to improve their health it would be to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their daily diet. When it comes to fruits and veggies, the more the better and the more variety the better. The different colors in fruits and vegetables each represent a different antioxidant with unique health benefits, so strive to “eat the rainbow!” All produce is beneficial, but those with the highest antioxidant content include blueberries, strawberries, apples, plums, oranges, pomegranate, artichokes, broccoli, kale, beets and spinach. Antioxidants promote health and prevent disease by protecting cells from oxidative damage. Active people need even higher levels since exercise is a stressor, so if you’re really looking to optimize your health, focus on these.

What is the “superfood” everyone will be talking about in 2019?

I don’t love the term “superfood” since it suggests that a single food can have some magical impact on health, when in reality the overall dietary pattern is far more important. That said, there has been a lot of interest recently and a growing body of research into how nutrition affects gut health, and how gut health affects overall health. I see this continuing in 2019 and, as a result, consumers will likely be interested in foods that contain probiotics (“good” bacteria) and prebiotics (fuel for probiotics), as these are known to positively impact gut health. Fermented foods such as kefir, Greek yogurt, sauerkraut, kimchi, tempeh and kombucha are among the best sources of probiotics and thus may become increasingly trendy. We will probably also see more and more foods fortified with pre and/or probiotics.

Alissa is a Registered Dietitian at Good Measure Meals where she helps people achieve their health and fitness goals through individual nutrition counseling. A veggie lover and avid runner, she believes the best form of exercise is the one you enjoy and the best nutrition plan is one that fits into your lifestyle. For information about nutrition consultations, meal plans, and more healthy recipes and tips visit www.goodmeasuremeals.com
People ask me all the time if I’m running these days. I wish I could say yes; I’ve struggled with this since retiring from my running career. So, at the moment anyway, it’s a case of “do as I say, not as I do.” I’m in awe of people who successfully fit running into their busy lives, and proud of them.

I’ve also learned a few things by watching how they do it. The first step is finding a goal that makes it a priority to fit in workouts. If the goal is not important, then fitting in your runs won’t be a priority.

The next step is taking a look at your week. When do you have time for runs, walks or workouts? Will you need to move things around, or get up early?

Then, set up a support system. Who do you need to help you with your goal of fitting in exercise or getting in more miles? Family, co-workers or friends can all be helpful. Do you need to go to bed earlier for early runs? Can you take turns with your spouse in taking care of the kids? Can you talk to your supervisor at work about coming in an hour later and staying later to get a morning workout done? What friends will meet you for runs or workouts? Is there a training group to join?

The fourth step is putting your plan into action. My advice is to start slowly with changes and new fitness programs. Build up consistency and then add intensity, days or time to the routine. In the process of starting a new routine, don’t be too hard on yourself. If you miss a few runs, you haven’t failed. You’re on a journey that will have ups and downs. If you have a flat tire, does it stop you from ultimately getting to where you were going? No, you find what caused the hole and either patch it or replace the tire; you fix the flat and keep going.

If you’re short on time, there are ways to make every minute count. For example, if you have only 30 minutes to exercise, use the first 10 minutes to warm up. Use the next 15 minutes to do a tempo run or short fartleks of 30 seconds hard/30 seconds easy or hill repeats, then use the last five minutes to cool down.

Even when you’re in a rush, make sure to fit in the big five stretches of quads, hamstrings, calves, glutes and hip flexors. They can all be stretched while brushing your teeth, drying your hair, brushing your hair, eating, etc. Fit those in when you can during the day as well.

I’m inspired every day by the dedication of Atlanta Track Club members toward getting in their run or exercise during busy days. Now I need to follow their example to get myself back into a good routine!
Jack Filan, a senior at Cambridge High School, and Brynne Sumner, a senior at Woodstock High School, were named Athletes of the Year by Atlanta Track Club at its Powerade All-Metro Cross Country Banquet on December 4.

Also announced at the event was the Club’s 55th edition of the Powerade All-Metro Cross Country Team, honoring 42 runners from the Atlanta area with first-team, second-team or third-team designations.

Filan, a senior at Cambridge High School, received the Jeff Benton Award as Boys Runner of the Year after a season that saw him place second in the 6A GHSA State Championship Meet and run a season best of 15:11. He will run next year at Ole Miss. Sumner, who will head to Villanova in the fall, received the Ray Buckley Award for Girls Runner of the Year after winning the 7A GHSA State Championship in a time of 18:36.

“Going into my senior year, I had nothing to lose,” Filan said as he looked back on his season. “I just gave it everything I had.”

“It means so much,” Sumner said. “I was not expecting this at all. There are so many great runners in the Atlanta area and it’s just amazing to receive this award.”

The athletes received their awards from special guest host Carrie Tollefson, a sports broadcaster who competed at 1500 meters in the 2004 Olympic Games.

“There are so many down times in this sport and that’s where you learn what you’re made of,” Tollefson said to the 42 athletes. “Celebrate the great times like tonight, but also remember what the down times teach you.”

John McCusker and Ben Dehnke were among 11 State Championship-winning coaches also honored at the banquet. McCusker, of Atlanta International School, received the Paul Koshewa Coaches Dedication Award for winning his first GHSA State Championship after a 44-year coaching career; Dehnke received the Jerry Frasier Coaches Dedication Award for his 14-year coaching career at Brookwood High School.

Publix Atlanta Marathon, Aquarium Team Up
Atlanta Track Club and Georgia Aquarium are joining forces to welcome runners and walkers to Publix Atlanta Marathon Weekend, including the Publix Atlanta Marathon, Half Marathon & 5K and the Publix Atlanta Kids Marathon, this March. Participants in the full marathon will receive a complimentary ticket to the Aquarium for Saturday, March 16, with their race registration. Discounts for participants in all distances as well as family members and volunteers are available for the entire race weekend.

The Aquarium will host a pre-race pasta dinner and gathering on Saturday, March 16, for race participants and their families, who will be invited to purchase vouchers for the pre-race meal to be served at the Aquarium’s café. Atlanta Track Club will provide a space inside the Aquarium for runners to meet and greet, receive pre-race massages and relax before the race.

“Georgia Aquarium is proud to provide a place for the runners and their families to gather and enjoy time together during race weekend,” said Will Ramsey, vice president of sales at Georgia Aquarium. “The Publix Atlanta Marathon is a great event each year and we are thrilled to be a part of it.”

The Club recently announced two other additions to Publix Atlanta Marathon weekend. On Saturday, March 16, the first Publix Atlanta Kids Marathon will take place, giving children 14 and under the chance to run a 2.62K race, 262-meter dash or 26.2-meter dash. Additionally, the Club has launched a “Cheer Zone” initiative, in which Atlanta residents along the Publix Atlanta Marathon course can apply to host a marathon watch party, with a $262 Publix gift card supplied by the Club to those selected.
## Boys

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<th>Second Team</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luke McNeil</td>
<td>Brookwood HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myles Collins</td>
<td>Archer HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamari Miller</td>
<td>Marietta HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zach Jaeger</td>
<td>McIntosh HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Cherono</td>
<td>Grayson HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devin Wade</td>
<td>Whitefield Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Nyman</td>
<td>Starrs Mill HS</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noah Hayes</td>
<td>Hillgrove HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Voss</td>
<td>St. Pius X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caleb Hall</td>
<td>North Forsyth HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Wallace</td>
<td>Westminster School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachary Roe</td>
<td>Westminster School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowan Wiley</td>
<td>St. Pius X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zack Truitt</td>
<td>Landmark Christian</td>
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</tbody>
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## Girls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Team</th>
<th>School</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brynne Sumner</td>
<td>Woodstock HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellie Hall</td>
<td>Marietta HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackie Addy</td>
<td>Holy Innocents’ Episcopal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naima Turbes</td>
<td>Westminster School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makena Gates</td>
<td>Creekview HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madelyne Cadeau</td>
<td>South Forsyth HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Maley</td>
<td>Marist School</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashley Sechrest</td>
<td>Cambridge HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mckenna Croft</td>
<td>Douglas Country HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace Ellsworth</td>
<td>Hillgrove HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June Mwaniki</td>
<td>Marietta HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reagan Mahoney</td>
<td>Atlanta International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Fegans</td>
<td>Landmark Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyah Hernandez</td>
<td>Milton HS</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maggie Yankovich</td>
<td>St. Pius X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabby Parsons</td>
<td>Union Grove HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haley Hooper</td>
<td>Lovett School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoe Smith</td>
<td>McIntosh HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abigail Robertson</td>
<td>Walton HS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ani Henderson</td>
<td>Marietta HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cara Joyce</td>
<td>Atlanta International</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11Alive to Broadcast AJC Peachtree Road Race Through 2021

WXIA-TV will be the Official Television Partner of the AJC Peachtree Road Race through 2021. The agreement extends the partnership between Atlanta’s NBC affiliate and the world’s largest 10K that began in 2016.

WXIA-TV, known to viewers as 11Alive, will continue to produce and air live coverage of the annual July 4 race as well as pre-race and post-race news and human-interest coverage on its newscasts, websites and social media channels.

The 2019 AJC Peachtree Road Race will mark the 50th Running of the iconic event. 11Alive is planning a special broadcast on July 3 highlighting the history of the race in addition to the more than four hours of live race coverage and a prime-time special that air on July 4.
WHEREVER YOU GO

NORTHSIDE IS THERE

EVERY STEP OF THE WAY