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# LEITH LASSES



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LEITH HARRIER AND ATHLETIC CLUB

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## SEPTEMBER'S Roundup

Just like August, September's events too fell the way of Covid cancelations or postponements and while we wait in the wings, October running events too are slipping from our grasp - sigh. Fortunately on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September our Leith Harbour Free (on course two from the molar) was one event we could get off the ground, albeit on a very blustery morning (some of us may be relishing in the avoidance of battling the gales on what was to be the original Dunedin Marathon date!). Plenty of Leith Lasses came out of there bubbles for the Sunday morning run, well done to Orraith to took out her age grade course record. Our Leith Harbour Free event further exceeded itself where we hosted another running on 30 September for a Thursday evening trot along course 1. A healthy turnout of 52 runners battled the ever-present harbour winds again. Many thanks to the LHF organisers for getting these events off the ground for us in these uncertain times.

Track season began with a hiss and roar in the 3000m Spring Challenge on September 24. Siobhan and Rach took on the tough field of runners for the 7 and a half lap killer. Although apprehensive to start, the two had a ball of a time, proving track is really not as scary as it seems! Well done.



## FACEBOOK GROUP

Join our new Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2294110900731278>

On this group you are able to post you own running content, images and chat where we hope for a much better member interaction, conversation and voice.

- Ask questions or give recommendations
- Organise a group run
- Shout out to great performances
- Share a thought, recipe, tip, review....
- Have a laugh

The list is endless, don't be shy, post as you please!



# IMAGERY & MENTAL REHEARSAL

Back in the 80's when *Suinn et. al.* proved a link between visualisation and athletic performance in Olympic downhill skiers, the skill of imagery in sport Psychology was born. In Suinn's study, it was found that the skiers practising Imagery by just sitting in their room imagining the ski-run in their mind, had the muscles in their legs fire in the *exact same order* as if they were outside physically downhill skiing!

This conclusion, and other similar studies, tell you that if you practice yourself being successful at a skill in your mind, you can train your muscles to fire in the order you want them to when you actually physically execute the skill; you can build your performance just by practicing effective imagery. Pretty impressive stuff to think about for runners honing in on their technique or biomechanical efficiency!



**Why is this relevant to running races?** Imagery can not only be used to practice and develop skill sets, but you can also utilize imagery just before a performance – and this is where it comes in for us as runners.

Using imagery in this way, prior to the actual event, is called mental rehearsal. You are rehearsing in your mind what you want to happen and how you want things to go as you are about to perform. You can implement mental rehearsal as a part of your warm-up – imagining your success can help you relax and feel confident as the event is about to begin.

As we touched on last month, the mind unfortunately focusses on the negative. If you're going into a race with thoughts and images in your mind of: *I don't want to come last, everyone is so much faster, I'm not fit or strong enough, this will hurt, I don't have the body for this, etc.* A negative loop in our minds is created and we've written ourselves off before we even get to the start line. When we've seen ourselves fail in our minds, we can all but avoid bringing it to fruition in our performance.

We need to change to a positive loop mindset; we need to see success in our minds. Mentally rehearsing our race in a positive way will better see us more successful. We need to rehearse feeling our muscles power over the course, our lungs heaving to nourish us with our oxygenated fuel, our technique tall, straight & strong, our pace calculated and fitting for the distance, then finally a sprint to the finish to see a PB on the clock!

# NEVER TOO LATE!

*"The best time to plant a tree was 30 years ago.  
The next best time to plant a tree is today"*

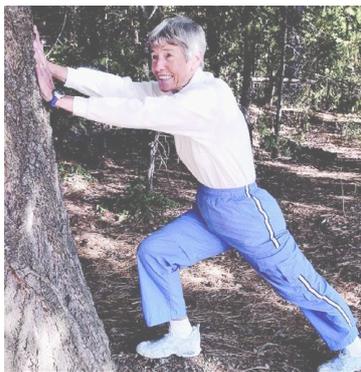
Helen Klein was 55 when she took up running; then an ex-smoker and retired from being an over worked emergency nurse and mother of four. She began when her husband was challenged to a 10-mile race where she wanted to join in on his training; from there the love and habit for running began. Below she is pictured at age 80.

Klein's running resume is impressive, the following being a mere snapshot of her achievements:

- 75 age-grade world records for events from 1 mile to 100 miles
- Competed in over 200 ultra marathons
- Olympic torch bearer
- First female ultra runner to be inducted into the USA Track & Field Hall of Fame
- Oldest person to finish a 100 miler

Now 98, Klein remains fit with daily walks and strength work. She states; "I refuse to sit down."

"Age is just a number", and the stats are proving this locally and worldwide, particularly so for females. In the recent NZXC champs the MW grades sported 50 finishers whereas the SW and younger grades had 46 finishers. Furthermore an article in the Wall Street Journal finds runners over 50 represent the fastest-growing age group participating in the marathon. In the space of just a few years, the number of marathon finishers age 50 and older nearly tripled!



A book Klein recommends is "Fitter After 50" by Ed Mayhew.

## Heading out for a dash over Flagstaff?

Remember to enjoy the newly lush vegetation and scenery. September marked two years since the unforeseen blaze on our beloved trail!



# EARLY BIRD OR NIGHT OWL – What’s the best time to run?

It’s an age-old question we runners battle with but, without any shadow of a doubt, the answer is very simple: **the best time to run is anytime you can fit it in!** And in this crazy modern world we live in one can only hope to fit it in where we can.

Having said this, we do still ponder what time will give us the best bang for our buck. Throughout history, the bulk of Olympic and world records are set in the period from 4pm – 8pm and science explains to us why: In this time our body temperature is at its highest. This gifts us with an increase in blood flow meaning more oxygen and nutrients to the muscles, better lubrication of joints, increased energy and stamina, lower risk of injury, increase in speed of nerve impulse and better breakdown of glycogen to list a few.

Regardless of the science, whenever you choose to run, experts agree that making it a habit is the most important part of scheduling your workouts so don’t get hung up on it! But, in a nutshell, the below comparisons give a great insight to the benefits and drawbacks of our daily running schedules and what may or may not be of benefit to you.

TIME OF RUN	BENEFITS	DRAWBACKS
MORNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best for fat burning</li> <li>• Good for muscle building</li> <li>• Lowers blood pressure</li> <li>• Good for fighting Depression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher risk of injury</li> <li>• Higher risk of cardiac event or stroke</li> <li>• Low energy levels</li> <li>• Lower lung capacity</li> </ul>
AFTERNOON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best time for muscle building</li> <li>• Best time for longer runs</li> <li>• Enhances reflexes and alertness</li> <li>• Good for resetting circadian rhythm e.g. jetlag, night shift etc</li> <li>• Low risk of injury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May not suit work or schooling hours</li> <li>• Not good for hotter climates</li> </ul>
EVENING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best time for speed work</li> <li>• Good for lowering nocturnal blood pressure</li> <li>• Good for reflexes and alertness</li> <li>• Lowest risk of injury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delay sleep in some (but may enhance in others)</li> <li>• Vision in low light and running in peak traffic</li> <li>• Struggle with competing commitments</li> </ul>

## What Fuels the Kenyans?

They may have genetic and physiological advantages over the rest of us but what are they eating that also helps?

**Ugali** is the national dish of Kenya and the hard porridge fuels their athletes. Perceived as a bland taste, the starchy dish in fact has a mild popcorn-like taste to many.

The “delicacy” is easily made with 4 cups of water, 2 cups of cornmeal and 1 teaspoon of salt.

In large saucepan, boil water and salt then gradually stir in cornmeal. Reduce heat and cook until mixture thickens, add more water if needed. Mould into palm sized balls. Usually served as a side dish.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

9 October: Silver Stream Spin

10 October: Hill City open 10km

10 October: Southland Festival of Running

16 October: First track meet

16 October: Balclutha Half Marathon

21 October: Twilight track meet

28 or 31 October: Leith Harbour Free

Every Tuesday: Chris Sole’s training group, approx. 5:20pm from Caledonian and fields

Every Thursday: Group run from Tomahawk, approx. 5:20pm.

Every Saturday: 5km Park Run 9am at the Botanical Gardens

