

# The Starting Line

newsletter of the falmouth track club • June 2017

## A Mile at a Time...

By Carl Gustafson

I returned to Cape Cod in 1987 and was out of shape both mentally and physically. I drove my car to West Dennis Beach and parked. My intention was to run the beaches' one mile drive and to return. I ran to the first life guard stand was winded. My running turned to walking. I did a very difficult mile. I sat down in my car with my feet on the ground outside and wondered about how this happened. I was initially very disappointed in myself and my performance. I moved my legs into the car and by the time I was backing the car out I had promised myself that I would return tomorrow. I would do the same or slightly more. I would work on getting better.

Since then I have learned a lot about running and moving forward. One of the things that I have learned is that my life is about moving forward one mile at a time. I cannot run the next mile until I finish the current mile. The last mile is gone. Focus on this mile. What can I do? I do not know, but I still like to find out.

I was thinking about this when I was driving down for my second "Three Days at the Fair." I got the bug for multiday running when I ran a marathon a day for five days in five different states in the process of finishing my 50 states. You move slowly. Talk to other people. You have plenty of time to think. You end up covering a lot of ground. I like them. So I want to tell you why and what I have learned.

I signed up for the Three Days with the hopes of running 50 miles a day. I ran 101 miles before stopping this year, the same as last year. My goal was not accomplished from a distance standpoint. My goal was accomplished in figuring out what I need to do in order to move forward for a mile and then to do another mile. I also got a cool belt buckle each time and that is really nice swag!

Here are some things I have learned:

Feet: There are a great number of books out there that will be helpful. My favorite book is: Fixing your feet by John Von Hof. There are so many tips for injury prevention and treatment.

One of the things I did for this race was to buy an electric, rechargeable foot file. It took several months to smooth down years of callous on my feet. What has happened in the past is that I would blister under the callous. I had

much better luck this year with only two blisters.

Another blister preventative, for me, was finding the right thing to put on my feet. I found "Trail Toes" which I found works much better than Vaseline or Body Glide.

I also found what I consider the best running socks. These are Balega Blister Resistant socks with wicking moisture properties and mohair. I did not think they would work but for me they have.

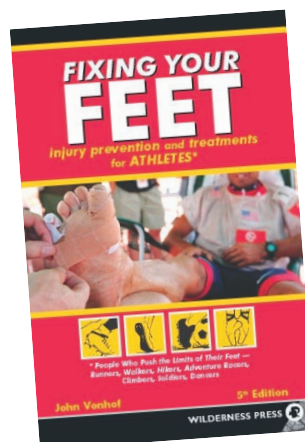
I run using Sports Legs as an anti-cramping measure. When running hard I take three tablets every three hours.

In the Heat: I take Salt Stick to replace electrolytes when I am sweating a lot. I have learned that keeping cool on hot races is tricky. I use a white hat with high reflective properties that has a neck protector. I place ice under the hat as available. It really helps. I use a runner's cooling towel. If it is a multiple loop race, I use several and keep one soaking in a cooler with ice. I wrap it around my wrists to cool down.

Food? I try to stick to real food. I tolerate most foods except long distance races have the strangest ideas of what might be helpful. My go to is a pb and j. I like to pre-bake cut up potatoes with a light oil, salt and some simple seasoning. Oranges go down well. Hard boiled eggs are good, buy my other protein choice is a turkey sandwich on multi grain bread. My drink of choice has become NUUN products. It is carbonated which makes for a lot of burping and I end up apologizing after a water stop but it is worth it. Very digestible and it seems to work well. I always think I will want a snickers bar and bring them. I don't eat them then, but like them later. Recovery seems best for me with a chocolate milk. I tolerate the milk well and the chocolate does not seem to hurt!

Caffeine: I no longer drink coffee but return to it during long runs. Then 12 ounces really gives a bump of energy. I will limit it to one or two, max, a day during long runs.

The mental mile: There are so many



continued on page 2

# Vegan Powered

By Christine and Mark Goff

Why choose to go vegan? The health benefits? Environment? Your conscience? There are plenty of positive aspects to veganism, for yourself and the world you live in. So what's stopping you from adopting a vegan diet? It isn't what you could gain. It is probably what you'd have to give up. Most folks simply aren't willing to give up meat and dairy. If you're reading this you have at least a passing interest in running. It's very likely you have a serious interest and run competitively. Maybe running is integral to your life and you're prepping for your next marathon. Or 50k. Or ultra. Whichever category you fall into we hope you'll consider going vegan. We chose vegan because for us, it works.

Let's back up a little and provide some background. We have been vegan since September 2015. Neither of us are elite runners (maybe someday) but we are vegan runners who have reached personal bests since we gave up meat and dairy. We became vegan after watching the documentary *Forks Over Knives* (seriously, check it out) and haven't looked back. We're not the preachy, "holier than thou" vegans who lecture you and make the rest of us look bad. We're just normal folks who eat tofu and kale instead of steak and eggs. Our kids love eggs though.

So how do you fuel your body without animal

products? Where do you get your calcium, your protein without milk and chicken? A vegan diet provides all the nutrients your body requires but the hard part for many people is accepting the alternatives to foods they've been eating their whole lives. At one point it seemed hard to give up milk. Imagine losing milk with cereal or milk with cookies. Then our newborn had a dairy allergy. We stocked up on soy milk and never looked back. Imagine trying tofu for the first time at age 30! Being apprehensive is an understatement! And the idea of a salad without bacon bits and way too much ranch dressing wasn't appealing. When alternatives are tried then you may find that you enjoy them just as much if not more! A vegan diet will give you all the same things that you had before and more. Mark states: "I believe my diet change is largely responsible for my improved running performance."

No matter what you choose to eat, meal planning is universal for serious runners. So what does a vegan eat in the days leading up to a race? Pasta is still a big component. Yes, you can eat pasta but need to cut out the butter. You can compliment pasta with a salad with lots of leafy green vegetables and a light Italian dressing or a quick beans and rice dish. A good snack is fruit or a vegan bar like a "Lara Bar." A good breakfast for running days is

continued on page 3



## A Mile at a Time...

continued from page 1

times when I find myself thinking I am done. If I can just get to the next thing that I have to do then I found that I was not done. Somehow my body regroups and gives me a little more. If you cannot run for yourself, think of someone else who cannot be there or cannot run that mile. I run for them. It gets me started and then before I know it the next mile is done!

Compression gear: I have gone back and forth on compression calf sleeves during, after and continue to go back and forth. Sometimes I find that they create cramping issues. Compression shorts and tights seem to work well and are less intense than calf sleeves. I think, despite many years of trying, that the verdict is still out for me.

After a run: I use many rollers,...for feet, calves, thighs and back. I do this as part of typical stretching and use these every night on multi-day events.

I find that an Epsom soak for my feet is amazing. I found an Epsom cream that is working great, but now am having trouble finding it to buy it again.

I alternate ice (first) and then hot water soaks on multiday

events.

If it goes well: Then I am in good shape on the way home! The past two years, especially this year, I was able to go to spin on the Tuesday after an event and the track on the Wednesday. I am not wringing everything out of my soul. I am going hard and pushing myself. I set goals and have acceptable standards.

This year at the 3 Day the heat was 96 the first day and 87 the second day. It finally broke the night of the second day. The heat just simply is deflating to my energy stores. When it finally got cooler I pushed to get to 101. I used about 52 hours to run 101 miles. I could have used the remaining time to sleep, regroup and push more. I was happy. I returned home to other things that were important.

What does a multi-day event bring? Happiness. You get to visit with other people, learn more about your body, find new ways to push yourself, and have plenty of time to think things through in order to regroup.

Would I recommend it for everyone? I would recommend a mile at a time. That is all we can ever do. Do a mile. Learn something. Tell someone else you did a mile. Maybe they will do a mile too! Keep moving forward as you are able.

## Vegan Powered

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

oatmeal with soy milk, berries and bananas. For quick carbs, most bagels are vegan too. We have found that the food we eat as vegans makes us less lethargic throughout the day and provides more sustained energy. It's lighter somehow while still giving the body what it needs to refuel. We have definitely noticed a quicker recovery from a run or workout faster while eating vegan.

Being vegan is not for everyone. It's a big lifestyle change. We encourage you to give it a try. If you aren't ready to dive in with both feet try it for one meal. Then

substitute a meal a day for a week, take baby steps and see if it works for you.

*Mark and Christine live in Falmouth with their two kids, which they raise vegetarian. They have been vegan runners since September 2015 and have done numerous races. Mark has accomplished 2 half marathons, the Falmouth Road Race, a few 10 milers, and a handful of 5ks. Mark is currently training for the Cape Cod Marathon. Christine has done a handful of 5ks and had a vegan pregnancy. Christine is training for her first half marathon in October.*

## RACE Cancer's May Challenge & the Highly Contagious Running Epidemic

by Lindsay Benson

I happened to be cleaning out the "promotions" folder in my Gmail app during the last week of April when a message from RACE Cancer caught my eye. Having participated in their Winter Challenge in January with FTC's Frozen Track Club, I clicked the link and joined the challenge. The Winter Challenge had helped me to develop some new, positive running habits, including making an early morning run part of my daily routine. Since the January challenge ended, several friends have commented that they would like to participate the next time, in order to help them to tackle their running goals. But, let's face it: The Winter Challenge isn't exactly the easiest way to ease into a running routine. I can still remember counting the days until February 1<sup>st</sup> after sneaking in a run before the predicted blizzard "got too bad," and after slipping and sliding my way through an abbreviated route over ice-covered roads. Starting a daily running challenge, with a 6-day/week running routine already in place, in 60-degree temperatures seemed like the perfect way to not only challenge myself to eliminate my rest day for four weeks, but also to encourage my friends to increase their training.

After signing up to participate in the challenge, I posted the link to social media, along with the message: "It's not too late to join me for the RACE Cancer Foundation May Challenge – walk or run at least one mile/day during the month of May!

Whip yourself into shape for race season (plus, get your name on the official challenge t-shirt)!" Three others signed up, two friends from my hometown, Alicia and Kristy, and my sister-in-law, Lisa. Lisa had committed to running the Cape Cod Marathon Half, but had not started training for it yet. Alicia has been running with me for years, but describes herself as "an on again, off again runner, with general goals to improve [her] overall fitness." Kristy wanted to start training for a half marathon in coming year to celebrate her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Several weeks ago at the Wednesday night track workout, Carl shared an article that he had read, "Exercise May Be Contagious," by Megan Brooks. Brooks' research indicates that "the daily-recorded exercise patterns of more than 1 million runners suggests exercise can be contagious. Knowing how far, fast, and long fellow runners run, as shared on a global social network, can influence a person's running

habits." Brooks' theory can certainly be applied to the RACE Cancer challenge and similar online groups through which runners compete with and/or support one another. Given this information, as well as my past experience with FTC's Frozen Track Club, I created a Facebook page for our May Challenge group. Participants were instructed to post their runs to the page daily, along with a screen shot of the GPS map of their



continued on page 4



run and a post-run photo (if you followed FTC's Frozen Track Club during the Winter Challenge, you know that my post-run selfie game is strong). Beginning on day one, and continuing through this article's submission date, each member of the group has met their goal, posting their runs and walk to the group page, along with some pretty awesome maps & photos.

That's not to say that the challenge has not been without, well... challenges. Time has been cited as a universal challenge. Lisa works as a nurse. She shared with the group that when she has to work a double, she is stuck at work until 2 a.m., and then has to rise at 6:00 a.m. to get her daughter on the school bus. On those days, she has indicated that "the

thought of running even just a mile is daunting."

Kristy, a self-described busy social butterfly, also had difficulty sneaking her runs into her daily schedule. She generally tried to log her miles during her lunch break, either outside or at the indoor track at work; but when that didn't work

found very creative ways to meet her daily goals. Kristy posted her laps around the DCU Center in Worcester during her brother's graduation, and around Mohegan Sun Casino during a weekend trip with her husband. Alicia juggles a busy work schedule as an attorney, her volunteer hours at multiple community organizations in Worcester, and planning for her August wedding. I typically take Saturday or Sunday as a rest day, mostly due to our family's busy schedule. Forced to relinquish my rest day, I logged a few weekend runs with the dreaded jogging stroller.

In preparation for this month's newsletter, I asked each of the participants in the May Challenge whether or not they agree with Brooks' theory that exercise habits can be influenced by participation in a social media group. In effect, can individual running actually

be a group sport?

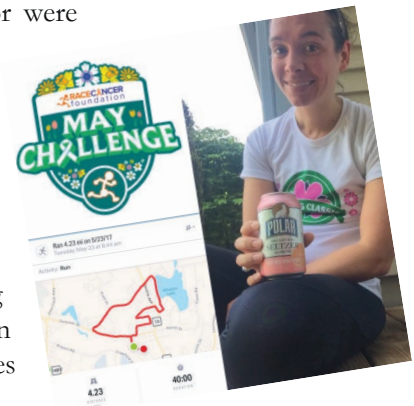
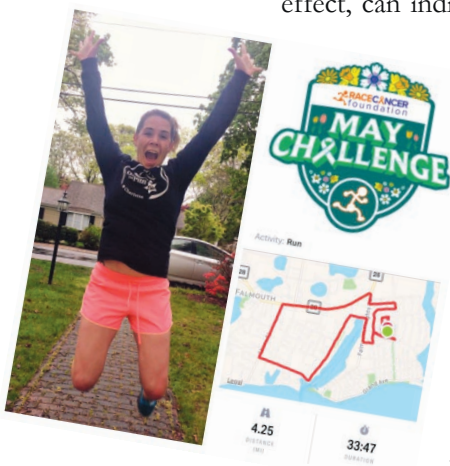
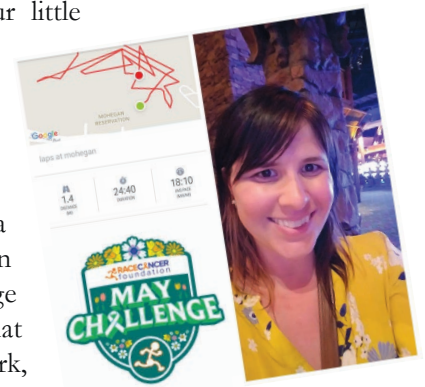
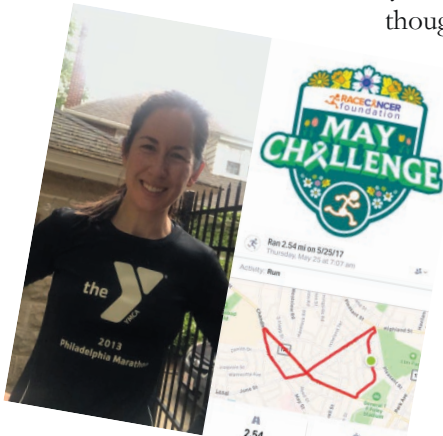
The response was overwhelmingly, "yes." Lisa noted, "I would not have run any amount if it were not for this challenge and the group that we have here. Because of this group, I sometimes look forward to my runs and try to push

myself further." Likewise, Kristy states, "Yes. I would agree with that theory. Our little group definitely pushed me to get moving, even on my laziest days. Hopefully in our next challenge, I will be closer in keeping the pace and running even more." Alicia, a self-described "snooze button pusher," credits the challenge for helping her to realize that she can get a run in before work, a meeting, or whatever starts her day. She cites the group's

social media posts for making routine running more interesting and interactive: "The most fun thing about the experience was getting Facebook posts from our group, thinking, who will post first? What will her picture be today? What route did she take today? The most exciting thing was running three races in one week with the challenge coordinator, Lindsay." As for me? I thought I had this challenge in the bag. But, I discovered that I was pushing myself more, as well. During my morning runs, I typically followed a 2-3-mile route. Prior to this challenge, my highest monthly mileage total was 92.35 miles. I found myself thinking, as I was plodding along my daily routes, that I could do better. I was going to post these runs to the group, and seeing as we were participating in a challenge, I actually needed to challenge myself. I increased my daily mileage to 4-5 miles, while maintaining my 7:46 pace. I won my first 5K on day 14, and am on pace to reach 150 miles for the month. Success!

So, CAN running be contagious? While this may not be an exact science, the data from my group's May Challenge supports Brooks' theory. Whether the runners in our group were just beginning their training or were looking to increase their pace or distance through a little friendly competition, the May Challenge universally encouraged us to meet (and surpass) our running goals for the month. And, we had a little fun while we were doing it... For more information on the RACE Cancer Race Series visit [racecancer.org](http://racecancer.org)!

*Lindsay "Blizzard" Benson is a former summer-person, who returned to her Massachusetts roots after spending eight years in Charlotte, NC. She lives in Falmouth Heights with her husband and three sons. Lindsay is the lower elementary (K-4) Therapeutic Intervention Program (TIP) teacher for Falmouth Public Schools. When she's not teaching, Lindsay enjoys running, hiking, reading Elin Hilderbrand novels, and working on her post-run selfie technique.*



# Serendipity

By Marc Waxman

Like most marathoners, I talk to other people about my race experiences, but it's safe to say they just aren't that interesting to anyone but me. However, sometimes life gifts you with a story that is worth telling. I think this is one of them.

On November 3, 2016 I ran the NY Marathon – my 18th marathon at the time. Within a minute or two of crossing the finish line I thumbed across my ring finger, as I often did, to feel my wedding band. It was gone. My brain wasn't quite fully working yet, but I realized I wasn't that surprised – as usual, I had lost weight during training for the marathon, and the ring had been become more and more easy to slide off my finger. The ring itself didn't have much monetary value, but I had been married over 18 years, had the ring the whole time, and it certainly meant a lot to me. I don't know why, but in the moment I realized it was gone, and in the time after, I never felt like the ring was really lost.

Flash forward a couple weeks, and I had emailed with the NY Road Runners Club to see if the ring might have somehow been turned in. No ring. I remained patient and emailed again a few weeks later. No ring. More than a month passed and then an email from NYRRC – someone found a wedding band, and could I identify mine. This was easy – while the ring is very plain, there is a line from a poem inscribed in it (more on this later). Turns out it was my ring. I figured a couple emails to arrange shipping, and the ring would be back on my finger. Not so simple.

More than a month passed before I could get another email response from NYRRC, and I didn't know any information about the person who actually had the ring. Finally, after several more follow-up emails and a phone call, NYRRC passed along the email address of the finder. This would be straight forward now, right...? Apparently not. After one pleasant email communication with the "ring finder," silence for almost three months! By this time my wife was so convinced it was never coming back she bought me a \$20 wedding band.

But..., almost five months to the day after the marathon, I got this email:

*Hi Marc,*

*I'm so sorry for the obscene delay in my response. I just returned home from a two month trip through rural East Africa, where I was without service.*

*Do you live in the NYC area? I'd be happy to return your ring over a quick cup of coffee. If not, I can certainly mail it to you if you give me the address.*

*I can't begin to tell you how happy I am that this wedding band will make it back to its rightful owner. The universe has our back on this one.*

*Hope to hear from you soon. Cheers!*

*Rose McAdoo*

I don't live in the NYC area, but I was planning on being in the city on April 29 to help support a ChiRunning® clinic by founder Danny Dreyer. I figured I could wait a few more weeks.

Of course, it turns out Rose is a runner and had plans to run a race in the Bronx Zoo the day I was going to be in NYC. We were both determined to meet – Rose's day included traveling from Brooklyn to the Bronx to Manhattan (walking from the West Side to the East Side), and I ducked out of the clinic to "sprint" from Central Park down to 84th and Madison. We hugged sincerely, took selfies, and talked only briefly since I had to get back to the clinic. She put the ring back on my finger, and she handed me an envelope, the contents of which I read later. Below is the letter that was inside. When I read it to my wife, she cried, believing, like me, that the universe has always conspired for us to be together, and here was the universe at work again, through a very special woman named Rose.

Some stories are worth telling. Below is Rose's story of my ring.

As you high-fived my group of friends at the NY Marathon in November your wedding ring flew off and landed at my feet. As a chronic loser of all material things I knew that wearing it was my only chance at returning it to you - which I knew I'd be able to do. Since then, your ring has made dozens of wedding cakes on the waterfront in Brooklyn, it's been on my many first dates across New York and London, it's celebrated many refugees gaining their asylum in this country, it's installed large green roofs on Manhattan skyscrapers, it's reconnected with family and friends, it's hosted holidays, it's attended weddings in Maui and upstate New York, it's helped me crowd fund \$5000 for my company, Whisk Me Away Cakes, and it's accompanied me on a huge solo journey through East Africa. It lived with the Maasai tribe, slaughtered animals for meat, searched for water, and cooked over an open fire in the bush. It lived with my refugee friend's family in Rwanda, sorted and dried an annual harvest, connected with countless strangers, and drank many cups of tea in mud huts. It crossed the border on foot to summit a volcano in Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It wandered old alleyways on the island of Zanzibar and connected many stories of food history with those of Arab, African, and Indian dissent. It accompanied me on Safari through Tanzania watching sunrises and sunsets on the plains of the Serengeti. It prepared a feast with a huge family in Casablanca, Morocco on a 20 hour layover. It lifted pastries to my mouth under the Eiffel tower at night.

And it restored my faith in the fact that we live in a small, ultimately good world. As it's inscribed: "And found at last."

I'm so thoroughly happy to return it to you. Congratula-

tions on a successful marathon!

Rose McAdoo

Yep – my wedding band, which is now securely back on my finger (currently held in place by the smaller \$20 band my wife got me) has done all those things and been to all those places. I personally may not be all that adventurous, but my ring is!

Rose – The inscription in the ring certainly was apropos to the journey it went through. But, I want to make sure you know why those words were in there in the first place. I sometimes tell this story to folks, and they politely feign listening, but I have a feeling it's an important story to tell you....

My wife and I met in graduate school. According to her I leaned on her during a small group discussion in a class we had together. I don't remember that, but I do remember noticing her in a way I had never noticed anyone before. I think all I need to say is that about six months after that "lean" we were married. On our last day of class together, our professor read a poem to the class which he did at the end of every semester. The poem is by May Sarton and called "In Time Like Air" (see below). You will notice the inscription in my ring. My wife's ring is inscribed with "Is all dissolved." I will leave the literary analysis to you.

Rose – I could list out all the random events directly or indirectly connected to the ring. But, when looked at as a whole, they aren't random; this story reminds us that there is underlying purpose and connection to life. Thanks for wearing my ring, bringing it on your journey, and returning it.

Run on,  
Marc

In Time Like Air  
by May Sarton

Consider the mysterious salt:  
In water it must disappear.  
It has no self. It knows no fault.  
Not even sight may apprehend it.  
No one may gather it or spend it.  
It is dissolved and everywhere.

But, out of water into air,  
It must resolve into a presence,  
Precise and tangible and here.  
Faultlessly pure, faultlessly white,  
It crystallizes in our sight  
And has defined itself to essence.

What element dissolves the soul  
So it may be both found and lost,  
In what suspended as a whole?  
What is the element so blest  
That there identity can rest  
As salt in the clear water cast?

Love, in its early transformation,  
And only love, may so design it  
That the self flows in pure sensation,  
Is all dissolved, and found at last  
Without a future or a past,  
And a whole life suspended in it.

The faultless crystal of detachment  
Comes after, cannot be created  
Without the first intense attachment.  
Even the saints achieve this slowly;  
For us, more human, less holy,  
In time like air is essence stated.

*Marc's mission is to help others develop their best selves. At his core, Marc is a teacher. Over the past several years Marc has combined his deep education experience with his passion for health and wellness to work with people of all ages. Marc offers services in running coaching. And, he is a Certified ChiRunning and ChiWalking Instructor.*

*Now residing in Wrentham, Marc grew up in Worcester but has enjoyed visiting Falmouth throughout the past 30 years (his parents spend much of their time at their place just off Sippewissett Road).*

*Marc is an avid runner with regular podium finishes. He is especially proud of his 2:51:50 PR in the 2017 Boston Marathon and successful completion of two 50-mile ultra-marathons.*

## **Certified ChiRunning Instructor Marc Waxman will be conducting a half-day workshop in Falmouth the morning of July 22!**

The Chi Running Essentials workshop includes several hours of instruction in a single 1/2 day course.

Since 1999, ChiRunning has helped thousands of runners transform their technique - reducing, preventing and recovering from injuries. Runners of all ages and levels have improved their efficiency and performance, and now find running to be pain-free, easier, and enjoyable. The main principles of ChiRunning include: Relaxation • Correct alignment and posture • Landing with a midfoot strike • Using a "gravity-assisted" forward lean • Engaging core strength for propulsion • Connecting the mind and body to prevent injury

More info about ChiRunning here: <http://www.chirunning.com/what-is-chi-running/>.

Marc's ChiRunning instructor bio is here: <http://www.chiliving.com/learn-it/certified-instructor/134461/>.

And, his personal website can be found here: [www.113enterprises.com](http://www.113enterprises.com).

To register contact Marc at [coachmarc113@gmail.com](mailto:coachmarc113@gmail.com) ASAP.

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