

CENTRAL GAUTENG



MASTERS ATHLETICS

NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2019

FROM THE CHAIR.....

I am sure we all took a bit of a breather from athletics, but it is time to get back on track.....or field, or road! My call to you is not to stagnate, but to take on a challenge to explore, dig deeper and get out of your comfort zone! We all get 'those' days of 'I cannot do this anymore', but truth is that you can and you can do more. I woke up a bit late this morning and when I checked my WhatsApp messages, one of the messages from a friend said: 'Purpose is the best alarm clock'. Very true! Is it not ironic that during the week it is hard to get out of bed early, but on weekends when you have leisure time and allowed the sleep-in mornings, you are up early?

Not many of us have the pleasure to take long extended leave periods and for this reason you have to make time for 'switch off and relax' breaks. This must be done at a planned date and time. Check your calendar/diary for the month at the beginning of the month: Diarise a date and time to do things that make you happy. This does not have to be costly or cost anything at all, but a time that you can completely switch off from the cruel reality of your daily hustle and bustle.

I never thought of athletics as an art, but you have to read the next article written by Jean-Michel de Senneville on the preparation for World Masters Athletics Champs in Toronto next year..... it is goose bump accurate and heighten your sense of being alive and bring about the urge to find the real purpose of 'YOU' on this earth.

I do have a pet hate (I know one should not hate), but no hate for a person, just a hate for false promises. If you cannot keep a promise, rather say nothing, because false promises, makes a false 'you' and a false you cannot be truly happy. True happiness comes about when you are true to yourself and others. So rule number one in life: Stick to your promises. By this simple rule, you will instill discipline in your life..... and through discipline comes most good things in life!

Keep training and keep to your training schedule, even in those not so good days. Keep warm and take those winter vitamins!

Zelda Claassen – CGMA Chairperson

WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2019:

- STADIUM UPGRADES:

Both the Pilditch and Germiston Stadiums are in the process of undergoing upgrades. How lucky can we get? Just in time for the 2020 SA Masters Championship that will be hosted at the Germiston Stadium.

- SA Masters Champs:

This will in all probability be on the 7, 8 and 9th of May 2020 at the Germiston Stadium. More info on this in the next newsletter when we will have a definite date.

- Remaining athletic meetings for 2019:

3 August 2019: Throws and Jumps Competition: Pellies Park, Bloemfontein

10 & 11 August 2019: Mercantile Athletic Meeting, Sugathadasa Stadium, Colombo

26 October 2019: SWD Champs, De Jager Stadium, Oudtshoorn

8 & 9 November 2019: Free State Provincial Champs, Free State Athletics Stadium, Bloemfontein.



RIAAN'S STORY ON HIS WAY TO SUCCESS:

Riaan van Niekerk was introduced to Central Gauteng Masters Athletics through CGMA Secretary Pam Immelman in 2016. The two met at the Boksburg Stadium one day whilst they were both training. Riaan, at the time, was trying to get back to what he loves: athletics.

Riaan did cross country at school and his main track event was the 800meters race. Asking him about his parents sporting abilities, he replied that although his parents did not actively competed in sport, but they were always there to support him. His sister got 'Transvaal' colours for cross country in her younger days.

Riaan got married to Wilma in 1995 who is a wonderful dance teacher, but running is not her favourite sport. Riaan's son does not like running, but his daughter loves track and field events. She has been chosen as the Vitrics Ludorum and excels in the 100m, 200m, long jump and Tripple jump events.

His training consists of a maximum of three sessions per week, as he suffers from shin splints if he over-trains at this stage. He participates in the 100m and 200meter events currently, but he plans to also participate in the long-jump from the next masters athletics season.

He says he only has two goals with regards to athletics:

1. To fully enjoy the race with the awesome people who participates in his age group.
2. To try and better his previous race times..... And maybe get to run within the required times for National Colours.

His advice to younger athletes can also be extended as some advice to Masters Athletes:

- Never give up on your dream and always strive to do your best.
- They must not be motivated by the place they achieve in a race, but they must always give their best

Like every athlete, Riaan has also experienced some high's and low's in his athletic career:

- One of his low's he experienced was when he could not do his tenth Comrades Marathon due to an illness he contracted before the race. Two weeks before Comrades in 2000, he contracted hepatitis which nearly took his life. It took hi 11 years to get to a point where he could actually run 1 km without stopping or walking, but he was determined to pursue and he started training in 2016 with 'Oom Pikkie'. After Oom Pikkie's passing, he started with coach Dino who helped him to regain his strength to run within provincial qualification times.
- His highlight would be the second place he achieved in a half marathon and a very fast time of 34.4 minutes in a 10km race.

Riaan competing in a 200 meter race



Riaan with wife and kids



Riaan competing in a 100 meter race:



Masters, WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO?

The reason we need to know this is because it will greatly help us succeed in whatever we choose to do. It will facilitate our focus as it will dissipate any doubt or hesitation we may have about being on the right track. We won't be drifting in and out of things. Instead, our mind will be free to concentrate fully on the work and goals that we have set ourselves to do – our training towards a precise achievement within a set time-frame. How many athletes have never asked them this basic question? They then tried to identify the very fundamental reason why they keep training so hard, day after day? When I recently asked this question to a group of about thirty young athletes whose lack of discipline was frustrating their coach – a friend of mine. Nobody answered! And that is when I suggested they dig deep into themselves to discover if through their training, they were in fact trying to impress a girlfriend or boyfriend, their friends, their parents, their family, prove their self-worth, “beat” someone, win a medal, get some recognition in the media or whatever. Total silence!

I proceeded to tell them that no one apart from themselves needed to know their personal motivation. But, in my particular case, it is simply the fact that the place I feel the most relaxed, happy, satisfied and motivated is when I am on the field, training, challenging myself and fine-tuning my speed, technique, dynamism, strength and everything that can improve my performance. Hence, my sponging everything that comes my way. Be it a word of advice or anything I see or feel.

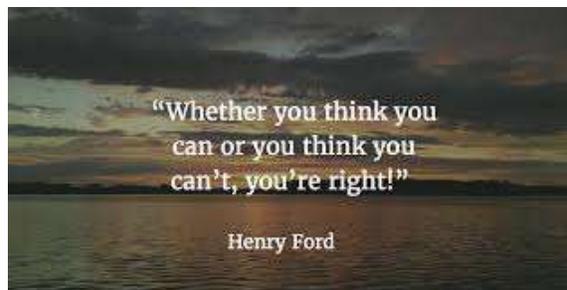
Like their own youthful energy for which I am extremely grateful to them and without which I would not be able to do as much or very much. I told them that I considered myself very privileged to still be able to mix with them, do what they do and not see or feel an old man. They applauded! And my coach-friend has apparently had no problem since! Have these athletes done some introspection and come a step closer to finding their core motivation? Be it very simple, strange or extremely personal? May be even an illusion, a vision or something which has perhaps given them an uplifting feeling of self-worth, achievement, success or special pleasure sometime in their life? But unfortunately trapped under layers of acquired social codes or blurred by the wrong preconceptions of people and things? Of course, it necessitates an effort of personal liberalization!

When you discover what really motivates you, my advice is to hang on to it, make it yours, give it more time and the reward can be exhilarating. The people around you will call it your “passion” and be charmed, may be even envy your enthusiasm. This will in turn fuel your energy to do what you love most – the best way for you to be successful in whatever you have set yourself to do. . You will be reconciled with yourself. You will be your own best friend. Ready to accept yourself as you are, taking control of yourself, appreciating your capabilities, trusting in your potential, and working on your self-improvement. And don't allow anyone to regard it as egoism.

As it is merely self-respect. So, enjoy the discovery of your core motivation, the new relationship with yourself and working together with yourself towards your betterment. Most of all: have fun!

NB. A wonderful French Pole Vault, World Record Holder, Olympic Champion, Gold Medalist at the Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games, Pierre Quinon (born: 1962) surprisingly asked his coach on his way back home on the very evening of his wonderful achievement, “So what?” And he fairly soon afterwards dived from his apartment window! My view is that apart from suffering from serious depression, he had perhaps failed to recognize and value his prime motivation. And he was anxiously suffocating at the idea of being reduced to a mere statistic on a record list, with nowhere to go. Without a proper job, some financial support, friends and above all, some on-going public recognition, high-level athletes do find it difficult to reinsert them in society. We must all of us Masters, be aware of this and make an effort to encourage our Government and the Authorities to seriously look into this matter and provide at least an Athletes' Pension Scheme. I am with you!

This article was written by:
JEAN-MICHEL de SENNEVILLE, M70 World Masters Pole Vault Champion



MENISCAL INJURIES IN ATHLETES:

1. Basic anatomy

The knee joint is made up of 3 bones - the femur, the tibia and the patella (the kneecap). The femur and tibia form a hinge joint that enable our knee to bend and straighten, so that we can walk, run, climb and dance!

The meniscus is the cushion that is made of cartilage and it sits between your femur and tibia. It acts as a shock absorber for all the forces that are transferred through your leg. It also stabilizes the knee joint and gives it lubrication too.

The meniscus is separated into a lateral meniscus and medial meniscus. The lateral meniscus lies toward the outside of your knee, and the medial lies towards the inner side of your knee. The medial meniscus, typically, takes more strain than that of the lateral one as it bears more of your bodyweight.

2. Mechanism of injury

The meniscus is injured when the knee joint twists when the foot is anchored to the ground. The femur twists on the tibia, or vice versa, causing a large shear force on the meniscus that result in the menisci tearing or breaking. When the tibia twists inwards, the lateral meniscus will mostly likely get injured, and when the tibia twists outwards, the medial meniscus will most likely be affected.

3. Signs and symptoms of damage

Signs and symptoms of meniscal damage can include:

- Pain at the time of the impact
- Localized swelling
- Instability
- Bruising
- Pain at the joint line (space between the femur and tibia)
- A feeling of "locking", "giving in" or "buckling"
- Inability to bend or straighten the knee through its full range

It's important to remember that S&S of meniscal injury can gradually get worse over 24-48 hours due to swelling and loss of range of movement and functionality

4. Management

Depending on the degree of damage to the meniscus, the injury will be managed conservatively or surgically.

Conservative:

Conservative management for a meniscal injury will include:

- Management of the pain and swelling via the PRICER principle. This will include following a protocol of Protection, Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation and Referral.
- Strengthening of the musculature supporting the knee joint is imperative. This will "offload" and support the knee joint, allowing the meniscus to heal.
- Strengthening of the quadriceps, hamstrings and calf muscles are most important.
- If your medial meniscus is damaged, strengthening of your inner thigh is most important: adductors, vastus medialis, medial hamstrings
- If your lateral meniscus is damaged, strengthening of the muscles on the outside of your leg are important: vastus lateralis, lateral hamstrings.
- Your glute muscles are also the most important group of muscles to aid in correct locomotion!

Failure of conservative management is considered after 6 weeks, or earlier depending on the loss of daily functional activity and pain of the individual, as well as the sportspersons competition schedule.

Surgical:

Surgical management is indicated in severe meniscal tears - such as a bucket-handle tear. The surgeon will either cut or repair the damaged meniscus.

After initial injury and surgical repair, keeping the limb non-weight bearing for 4 weeks is advised. After 6 weeks, the meniscus should be fully healed, and rehabilitation should commence, in order for one to return to sport

