

Run Strong, Stay Hungry: 9 Keys to Staying in the Race

Jonathan Beverly

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As an aging runner whose love for the sport is unabated, Jonathan Beverly became curious about other runners who, like himself, have come to realize that even though their personal bests will never again be what they were back in the day, are able to say, “Today is the one day we’ve got, and we’ll seize it with more passion than a teenager.”

When he was a nerdy thirteen-year-old, too small for football, and lacking the coordination for baseball or basketball, Beverly went out for cross country. Now in his 50s, the *Running Times* editor still runs, putting himself in league with other lifelong runners who, no matter the season, put on their running shoes and challenge themselves to get fitter and faster, even if that doesn’t mean the same thing it did in their youth. Many of them still compete.

One thing that differentiates those who sustained their fire and ability to run through the decades from those who quit is their ability to manage their expectations, he says. Namely, be consistent, listen to your body, train wisely, self-identify as a runner, value improvement over glory, and feel joy in your sense of fitness, speed, and power regardless of the actual pace you run.

Beverly’s interviews with aging runners, from average folks who run for the love of it to former Olympic athletes, touch upon what it is that keeps them running despite the effects of time, injuries, lifestyle changes, and responsibilities to family and career. The result is a book that’s as much about life as about running.

Lifetime competitors accept that today, though not perfect, may be “as good as it gets,” writes Beverly. “And it is enough.”

KRISTINE MORRIS (November/December 2017)

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