

8 8 8 PLAN NEAR REALITY FOR WESTERLY RUNNER

By DON SIKORSKI
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Jay Lustgarten admits he likes numbers. He also enjoys long distance running. So recently the 47 year old Westerly resident kicked off his attempt to combine both disciplines in dramatic fashion, with a plan to compete his concept of a "triple 8" goal of running 8 marathons, including 3 ultra-marathons (races longer than the traditional 26.2 mile distance), in an 8 week span in 2008. Add in the rigors of travel (a majority of Lustgarten's races took place in New York) and you quickly realize this is not a commonplace pursuit.

Lustgarten's race schedule has also proved to be even more challenging than the 8-8-08 format requires. His quest began at the Richmond Rockets 6 Hour Ultra Marathon in Staten Island, NY on Saturday, September 20th. Lustgarten completed 34.8 miles of running for the day; a distance many runners don't cover in a week of training. Yet the very next morning, Lustgarten was back on the roads, competing in the Yonkers Marathon on Sunday over a very challenging course. A mere week later, Lustgarten would return to New York and another 26.2 mile run in the Hampton Marathon. If the marathon distance intimidates, consider that just 6 days after Lustgarten's marathon effort, he would complete the Ted Corbitt 24 Hour Run, also in New York, logging a total of 81.2 miles to finish 26th place in a field of 65 finishers. Pennsylvania was his next stop on Columbus Day Weekend for the Steamtown Marathon. With an 8 day recover from his 24 hour effort, Lustgarten posted his fastest marathon time of the bunch, clocking in at 3:55:01 to finish in the top half of the field. Lustgarten next ventured to Newport, RI on October 18th (a bit closer to home) for another marathon, running 4:07:43 in the Breakers Marathon. He would follow that effort up with another 6 Hour Run the very next day. Lustgarten posted a total of 33.8 miles to finish in 14th place in that event. He will be running in today's Cape Cod Marathon to complete the schedule.

Lustgarten's logic behind his decision to attempt such a feat is simple. "It's probably the only opportunity I'll ever have in my life to do something like this," Lustgarten explained. "I feel like to have to take advantage of every opportunity. It's now or never". Lustgarten's strong will and discipline make such an arduous task possible. His involvement in numerous community cleanup projects demonstrates a strong respect for his training environment. "It's about sharing the Earth's precious resources and the impact we have on this Earth," Lustgarten explains. He is also a strict vegetarian also maintains a rigorous routine that even the fittest of athlete would admire. Three mornings per week, Lustgarten awakens to immediately tackle over 1,300 pushups (1,331 to be exact...remember he likes numbers). "I tell myself that doing 1,300 pushups is hard; races are easy," Lustgarten explains of his philosophy. "The pushups are just like running marathons. The first one is the most difficult. But once you get started, you know you can do it". Still, the rigors of completing so many miles with so little recovery would wreck havoc on most runner's bodies. But through his first seven efforts, Lustgarten has yet to encounter much trouble in recovering physically and bouncing back for the next race. "Maybe I'm lucky," he explains. "20 minutes later, I catch my breath and I'm ready to go again".

A finish in today's Cape Cod Marathon will complete Lustgarten's goal, which will encompass an 8 race total of over 280 miles in a 37 day span. He attributes his perseverance to basic life principles. "I believe that there are two types of people that you can trust: people who run ultras, and people who have been in the Peace Corps," said Lustgarten. "I've done both". Lustgarten also offers a logical explanation for this correlation and the success of ultra marathoners. "Ultra runners know how to struggle, and the know how to persevere," he says. "You just have to take the first step and believe that you can do it".

JAY LUSTGARTEN'S "8 RACE/8 WEEKS IN 2008" SCHEDULE AND RESULTS:

Saturday, September 20 th	Richmond Rockets 6 Hour Ultra	34.8 Miles	6:00:00	19 th Place (93 finishers)
Sunday, September 21 st	Yonkers Marathon (NY)	26.2 Miles	4:34:22	90 th Place (107 finishers)
Sunday, September 28 th	Hampton Marathon (NY)	26.2 Miles	4:05:30	88 th Place (292 finishers)
Saturday, October 4 th	Ted Corbitt 24 Hour Run (NY)	81.2 Miles	24:00:00	26 th Place (65 finishers)
Sunday, October 12 th	Steamtown Marathon (PA)	26.2 Miles	3:55:01	771 st Place (1,582 finishers)
Saturday, October 18 th	Breakers Marathon (RI)	26.2 Miles	4:07:43	287 th (623 finishers)
Sunday, October 19 th	6 Hour 60 th Birthday Run (NY)	33.8 Miles	6:00:00	14 th (141 finishers)
Sunday, October 26 th	Cape Cod Marathon (MA)	26.2 Miles	TODAY	???

Racing Roundup

Next weekend's ING New York City Marathon will also be the final race of The Marathon Majors Series Champions, a new 2 year competitive format aimed at determining the best marathoner in the world, similar to other sport formats. But the scoring system is complex and confusing. While Kenya's Martin Lel, by virtue of his 2007 and 2008 wins in London and his 2007 New York City Marathon win, has already clinched victory on the men's side, the women's title and the \$500,000 championship purse will be decided in the Big Apple on Sunday, November 2nd. But figuring out who is similar to an NFL Week 17 playoff scenario. Defending Marathon Major Series Champion Gete Wami of Ethiopia is currently tied with Germany's Irina Mikitenko with Catherine Ndereba of Kenya still in contention. Mikitenko, who recently won the Berlin Marathon, will not compete in New York. A 1st or 2nd place finish will give Wami the title. She was outkicked by London's Paula Radcliffe in last year's race. Radcliffe is also expected to compete in New York. Ndereba can win the Series with a win in New York if Wami is not the runner-up. Since runners can only total scores from their best four performances, Mikienko needs someone other than Wami or Ndereba to win, which would maintain a tie with Wami.....My wife Catherine had two goals in mind in a fundraising effort for our son Kyle's Medical Treatment Center; 1) to train for and finish the B.A.A. Half Marathon, and 2) to raise a total of \$5,000 or more for the Yale Hemophilia Center. We are proud to report the successful accomplishment of both goals, thanks to the generous support of many friends and family. On Sunday, October 12th, Catherine completed the 13.1 mile race in 1:43:36, a pace of 7:54 per mile and good enough for 716th place in a field of over 3,700 runners. We are truly grateful for the generosity of our friends and family and their support of this fundraising effort.

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