

Running is empowering physically, mentally and socially for any woman.

## **Running Shoes Are a Girl's Best Friend**

**Buy The Complete Version of This Book at  
Booklocker.com:**

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/4386.html?s=pdf>

# Running Shoes

Are a Girl's Best Friend

Margreet Dietz

First edition

Copyright © 2009 by Margreet Dietz

All worldwide rights reserved.

No part or whole of this book may be reproduced in any format, whether physical or electronic, in any media whatsoever without express written consent of the author.

## CONTENTS

### Acknowledgements

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Coach Pat Carroll: That sense of accomplishment is available to anyone</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>"It is really important to enjoy the journey rather than feel like it is something you have to do."</i>	
<b>2. Coach Susan Griffith: Exercise is a critical element to our wellbeing</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>"People who take running up later in life find that it gives them a level of confidence they didn't know existed."</i>	
<b>3. Angela Adamson: It makes me happy</b>	<b>23</b>
<i>"I have three small children, work four days a week, and can honestly say that running is my release."</i>	
<b>4. Anne-Maree Jaggs: Taking care of yourself is not selfish</b>	<b>27</b>
<i>"Cool wind in my hair on a hot afternoon, boosts of unexpected energy, and positive, unsolicited comments from people I least expect"</i>	
<b>5. Running my first marathon was incredible (anonymous)</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>"You end up with some hyperventilating guy slapping around behind you and you slow down so you don't have to call an ambulance."</i>	
<b>6. Becky Pratten: Motherhood provided the inspiration</b>	<b>37</b>
<i>"Running means freedom, self-expression and an identity other than being a mum."</i>	
<b>7. Cassie Smith: Find the courage to try</b>	<b>42</b>
<i>"I give every training run the respect it deserves and try my hardest."</i>	
<b>8. Christina Siu: Always give life a go</b>	<b>48</b>
<i>"Running has also taught me never to say never, and that doing something difficult and facing the challenge is so rewarding."</i>	

- 9. Davina Alston: Boost your confidence** **51**  
*"I love the atmosphere of the events that I compete in; I think the competitive air is really motivating and inspirational."*
- 10. Diane Soffe: Taking charge of your destiny** **57**  
*"I realised there were two options left to me; I could continue to get old or I could do something about it."*
- 11. Fiona Paul: It is my passion** **64**  
*"A great run feels like the hard work is getting easier."*
- 12. Fiona Skinner: Forging lifelong bonds along the trails** **73**  
*"Running has brought me lots of good adventures, challenges and new friendships."*
- 13. Gina Unwin: Determined to run again when told I wouldn't** **76**  
*"I feel very free when I run. I love the endorphin rushes and I think a lot - lots of new ideas come to me when I run."*
- 14. Helen Bruce: It was easier than we thought** **81**  
*"It is all about getting into a routine that you can maintain for the rest of your life."*
- 15. Helen: Running is my choice – and my success** **88**  
*"I used to run at 4:30am so no one would see me as I chased my dream."*
- 16. Karen Scott: I didn't consider myself to be sporty** **93**  
*"The intensity and sacrifices involved in training for a marathon are all worthwhile when you realise, in the last 3km, that you are about to complete the biggest challenge of your life so far."*
- 17. Karey Corrie: Effort brings surprising results** **101**  
*"Running gives me confidence to be true to myself and reminds me to push my own limits regularly, both on the road and in life in general."*
- 18. Katrina Crook: Looking for an age group I can win** **106**  
*"Races gave me the motivation to keep running. I kept every certificate, timing list and T-shirt from the first few years."*

**19. Keryn Clark: Take control of your destiny** **114**

*"For all its connotations with discipline and routine, it is a very user-friendly and flexible sport requiring minimum props and expense."*

**20. Lisa Hurring: A desire to run drove my rehabilitation** **119**

*"It's a source of satisfaction and personal achievement that's always with me, no matter how other aspects of my life might be faring."*

**21. Elizabeth Bennett: Thoughts of a serial marathoner** **127**

*"Running fits in as a matter of routine and as an unquestioned part of every day life."*

**22. Margot McGinness: My time is sacred** **131**

*"I have completed eight half marathons, two marathons and countless shorter events - I still struggle to call myself a runner."*

**23. Shelley Kirkwood: Keeping my mind in check** **135**

*"Any form of exercise has to be a lifestyle. It has to be woven into everyday life so that it becomes one of the things you just do."*

**24. Shelley Maxwell-Smith: The big hill I climbed** **141**

*"I wanted to be one of those fit-looking girls."*

**25. Stacey Harland and Karen Bradley: The power of friendship** **150**

*"When the alarm goes off I just have to get up and go whether I'm in a good or a bad mood because I know Stacey's waiting."*

**26. Stacia Nelson: From reluctance to commitment** **156**

*"My partner used to ask me, 'When was your last run?' if I was a bit irritable. Too funny, he was usually right. I just need to go for a run."*

**27. Susan Trodd: Coping with menopause** **162**

*"At 54, I decided that I was not going to let preconceptions of age stop me and to return to the interests of my youth - one being running."*

**28. Vicky Baxter-Wright: When my walking buddies didn't show 166**

*"A good run can also just be about the conversation we have as we run. Sometimes I've had to stop because I was laughing so much."*

**29. Victoria: Positively energised 171**

*"They think I'm obsessed with this running drug. That I do too much, it influences my social life too much and takes too much time away from them."*

**30. Virginia O'Connor: Pulling on my running shoes 177**

*"I had decided I wanted to run until I was at least six months pregnant but my body had other ideas and I chose to listen to it."*

**31. Aimee Barrett: The habit that I need to feel positive 181**

*"I feel it's what the human body has been designed for."*

**32. Anne Marie Halton: A great run makes me feel invincible 183**

*"I have more energy, am more motivated to take risks, I feel like I can do whatever I set my sights on given the right preparation."*

**33. Anne Jones: My life feels poorer without it 186**

*"Nothing quite equals the good feelings and the lift to my spirit that I get from running."*

**34. Caroline: Planning to ensure my training fits 190**

*"The realisation that slower runners are still real runners is one of my best experiences involving running."*

**35. Cathy Sheaff: Great legs are a good enough reason 194**

*"I haven't worked out what makes it a good run - if I did I'd plan to only have good runs."*

**36. Chris Jones: A long-time walker picks up her pace 196**

*"Running is to me proof that I have willpower - inner strength."*

**37. Colette Woodliffe: One too many glasses of champagne 199**

*"Running is supreme as it is freedom for body, mind and soul."*

- 38. Deborah Kemp: The confidence will surprise you** **203**  
*"I ran 18km and I just could not believe it. I knew then that I could do a half marathon and it felt great to realise I had reached a new level."*
- 39. Eileen Varty: Taking on more challenges** **207**  
*"I had a Birmingham hip replacement and went through a stage of maybe never running again which was totally devastating."*
- 40. Elizabeth Adams: A marathon wasn't my objective** **210**  
*"Many people are amazed when you say have run a marathon."*
- 41. Jan Roberts: My brother said I wouldn't last** **212**  
*"I am 48 and in very good shape. My mom says I have the body of a 25-year old. I say, 'Mom, I work really hard at it'."*
- 42. Laura How: Freedom for my spirit** **215**  
*"I not only think about the health benefits, I also feel them as my body changes and I become stronger."*
- 43. Manda Milling: A training program helps me focus** **219**  
*"My husband says I'm much nicer after I have been running."*
- 44. Margo McLay: I realised that I like to compete** **223**  
*"I like the feeling of satisfaction that I get when I complete a significant race such as a 10km or a half marathon."*
- 45. Rhonda LeBrocque: The healthier my body the better my life** **226**  
*"People think it is too hard but until you start you don't realise that it isn't that difficult at all and you don't have to be fast to be a runner."*
- 46. Ros Holcombe: Being fit, looking good and staying young** **230**  
*"He encouraged me to try the China Coast half marathon and I thought he was nuts. But I did it."*



**47. Shannon Daley: A priority because I make it one** **233**

*"Sometimes I will feel exhausted before a run but when I get back I am completely energised."*

**48. Sharon Varley: My pace sustains my love for the sport** **236**

*"I love how I feel as a result of running - mentally and physically. It's a real outlet for me. It helps me keep a positive perspective on life"*

**49. Stephanie Yeung: An energy boost to brighten my mood** **238**

*"It taught me that hard work and patience pays off at the end and I apply it to all aspects of my life."*

**50. Sue Cameron: Feeling fabulous helps get us out the door** **240**

*"Being only a novice, I found any sort of training sessions a form of hell and motivating myself to get out the door really tough."*

**51. Suzie Oswald: I run races with my husband and daughter** **241**

*"More people would run if they took the time to take it easy first."*

**52. Tara Baumann: Fitness, friendship, enjoyment and challenge** **245**

*"When I run I find myself in a space that I really like to be in."*

**53. Toni Hackwill: Seeing the social benefits** **249**

*"Running has improved my quality of life. I am happier and I have set goals to train for."*

**54. Tina Fiegel: An ultra-runner yearns for more** **252**

*"They think I'm doing too much at my age or don't understand that even slow people can do races. But I have running friends."*

## CHAPTER 25

### **The power of friendship turned two women into marathoners**

*"When the alarm goes off I just have to get up and go whether I'm in a good or a bad mood because I know Stacey's waiting."*

Karen Bradley and Stacey Harland live in Withcott, Queensland. These neighbours struck up a friendship about eight years ago and began meeting for morning walks. They also joined a gym together. In mid-2004 Stacey suggested they add running to their exercise routine. "I enjoyed the distance running events at primary and high school. I didn't ever win any races or break records but I got the odd second or third and represented my high school at the Darling Downs zone cross country. I had always been interested in doing a marathon and loved watching it on the Olympics but never really gave it much serious thought. I ran for exercise for a couple of years here and there, nothing ever too serious," Stacey says.

Karen, on the other hand, had zero interest in running. She liked their morning walks and resisted Stacey's suggestions to pick up the pace. "I've never been a runner – I didn't like it at all. When another friend did the 10-kilometre race at the Gold Coast in 2004, Stacey got all inspired and thought we should train to do the same thing the following year," Karen says.

Despite Karen's reluctance to try running, Stacey persisted. "She kept nagging me to. I resisted greatly, however she finally wore me down," Karen says. So Karen and Stacey began adding short stretches of running to their morning walks. "We started slow – just adding a bit of running to our walking, then a bit more running and a bit less walking," Stacey says.

Slowly but surely the two working mothers in their 40s built up their running stamina. It wasn't long before they had a chance to test it. In early 2005, their gym organised a 5-kilometre fun run and breakfast. Stacey and Karen decided to

participate. "We were a bit nervous and wondered if we could ever run that far as we hadn't done that distance before," Stacey says.

They finished the 5km race and loved the resulting feeling of accomplishment. The two women also noticed others runners doing that 5km stretch a second time. "We were totally amazed that some people turned around and ran it again. We were in awe. This helped us with our motivation. If they could so could we," Stacey says.

They had considered doing that 10km race their friend had finished the previous year at the Gold Coast, which had been the catalyst for their running. By following a training program the two friends achieved their goal and finished the Gold Coast Marathon 10km event in July 2005.

Finishing that first 10km within a year of becoming a runner at the age of 40 is still one of Karen's best running memories. "I was just on such a high from the whole race experience and in total awe that I had actually run 10km - and all with best friend Stacey of course."

The elation of achieving another goal immediately sparked ideas for the next challenge. "We were just so happy that we'd done the 10km. We high-fived after we crossed the finish and said, 'Next year the half'," Stacey says.

Both Karen and Stacey have busy lives, with jobs, partners and children. They have to make time to do their training which can be a challenge. But the mental and physical rewards they get from running motivate them to stick to the training programs they choose. They run four times a week, usually early in the morning. "Sometimes it's a bit of a juggling act. On weekdays I usually get up at 5:30am for a run while everyone's still in bed and then I'm back home in time to get ready for work and kids to school. Sunday long runs can sometimes be difficult to fit in, depending on other weekend commitments, but the majority of the time I can manage to fit this in first thing Sunday mornings," Karen says.

While it may sound hectic, Karen finds the effort worthwhile because it allows her to focus on, and do something for, herself which in turn benefits her whole family. She says, "Running is me-time. Since I've had children I haven't really had much time on just me. I started running 3 1/2 years ago, and at times I feel guilty if I'm going on a long run, or going away for the weekend for a fun run - although that doesn't happen very often. However, as the children get older it's getting easier. Running is something I can do. I don't have to be good at it but I can do it and when I want and how I want and I get such great benefits, both physically and emotionally, from it."

Stacey agrees. "I find time to fit running in around everything else. It is a chance for some me-time and a chance to have a chat with my buddy about all that goes on in our lives. The topic depends on what issues are pressing at the time. We find we can have a good talk while running. It is amazing how quickly you can get to the top of a hill while releasing all that anger. Otherwise we just chit-chat as we go. We are great friends and can talk to each other about pretty much anything."

And nothing is a bigger help to get up early when everyone else at home is still asleep than knowing that a running buddy is waiting for you. Karen says, "When the alarm goes off I just have to get up and go whether I'm in a good or a bad mood because I know Stacey's waiting to meet me. Which is a great thing because otherwise I know it would be way too easy to turn off the alarm, roll over and go back to sleep. I definitely wouldn't be where I am now with my running if I didn't have a running partner."

The early starts make them feel that they are getting more out of life. Stacey says, "We do often make the effort to look around as we are running - seeing the wildlife, listening to the birds in the pre-dawn light, looking at the views and watching the sun rise. We also think about all the extra hours of living we have had, being up and about rather than still asleep in bed."

Their new lifestyle has brought benefits to their health, and that of their family members. Stacey says, "I'm sure it has health benefits besides weight management. I know I'm a lot fitter than other girls my age in my touch team, plus all the other benefits that might not be obvious at this point in time such as reduced risks of osteoporosis, cancer and arthritis."

Karen says, "Running has a great affect on my quality of life. I have an interest now and it is such a positive and healthy one. I eat whatever I want - which probably isn't a good thing - but it's good to be able to not have worry constantly about what you eat. I feel well, fit and more confident with my body image. My running has had a positive impact on my family. My partner, being an ex-footballer, used to run from time to time but he is running quite frequently now and will probably enter some races this year. My children also sometimes want me to go on a run with them. Especially when it gets to school cross-country time they get very committed. I'm sure they would not be interested if it wasn't for my running, so that makes me feel great."

Stacey says, "My children will often ask me how far I ran when I get back all hot and sweaty. My son once said he wanted to be a runner just like mummy. My husband thinks it's good I get away for the odd weekend here and there to participate in a running event."

Both Karen and Stacey are now dedicated runners and have many other motivations to keep up their training regime. Karen says, "It is the great sense of achievement after a run, especially after doing a PB or finishing a race in your goal time; the extra time I get to spend with my best friend; the fat-burning and fitness benefits. It's a whole new exciting interest in my life."

Both women say they usually feel better after a run. After a great run, Karen says she feels elated, on a high and so glad she made the effort to do it.

Stacey says, "If we've just done a personal best for a time trial, or had a good speed session, you can't help but feel pleased with yourself. I also like the days when you feel you could just keep running – it's very motivating."

Stacey expects to keep running until they're no longer interested or no longer capable. "I don't know when that will be or which will be first. I do know that if Karen decided she didn't want to continue it would be a thousand times harder for me to keep running."

The single-most important thing about running to Stacey is testing herself. "I started running mainly for exercise and fitness but I want to see just how far I can run. I have goals I still want to achieve," Stacey says.

The two runners keep finding newer and bigger challenges. As they pledged at their first 10km finish in July 2005, they returned to the Gold Coast in 2006 to run the half marathon. They did it again in 2007, and ran many other races in between.

In 2008, they decided it was time to up the ante yet again. They enlisted the help of running coach Pat Carroll in March and prepared for the Gold Coast marathon, held at the start of July. With their new program, they ran four times a week including one long run. Four weeks before race day they did their longest run ever which they clocked at 32.7km. Stacey says, "I felt strong and spritely the whole way and entertained the thought that maybe I could push myself for another 9.5km. So hopefully I have another day like that on July 6. Karen wasn't so lucky - she struggled the whole way from our first few hundred metres. But that too is testament to her determination in that she kept going and going."

Those long runs come with a clear benefit. "Funny how anything shorter than three hours now seems easy. We have been talking and we feel we need another goal to focus on after the Gold Coast or else life will seem a little bit hollow. Though sleeping in for a couple of weeks will be nice," Stacey says.

Running has changed their lives. "If (when) we complete the marathon at the Gold Coast we'll be able to say 'If we can do that – we can do anything'. It has given us a can-do attitude," Stacey says.

Stacey and Karen did run their first marathon a few months later: as planned, they ran the entire 42 kilometres 195 metres side by side and crossed the finish line together. They ran their second one in July 2009, each setting a big PB.

Running is empowering physically, mentally and socially for any woman.

## **Running Shoes Are a Girl's Best Friend**

**Buy The Complete Version of This Book at  
Booklocker.com:**

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/4386.html?s=pdf>