

## THE COFFEE'S DONE!

I have enjoyed beyond words writing for the Sandpiper all these years. I truly feel as though it's been a privilege for me to express my opinions to the fine members of the Daytona Beach Track Club. And I'd like to state that all my writings have been merely my opinions. I always loved what Socrates said, which was "A wise man is one who admits he knows nothing". I have tried to keep that within my belief system. I think the day I know it all is the day I better retire! Well, I am retiring from writing the Sandpiper, but not for those reasons! I'll never know it all... Far from it. I think it's merely time to move on. My priorities regarding racing and training have changed, and I am basically at a different point with this right now. I also think that it's time for the Track Club members to get some fresh opinions. I hear myself all the time, and I know how boring that can get! I can honestly say that I'm sure I have learned more in these seven or so years than you have from what I've been writing.

I'd like to take this final opportunity to call out for some help with the Track Club. As all of you know, we are a volunteer board, and we can always use help. It's amazing how we just keep chugging along. But it takes the chuggers to keep it moving. When I came to the club, we had outstanding leadership and direction. We still have a board with excellent leadership. I really am impressed with our president Richard Wendt for his almost single handedly getting the Paul deBruyn moved to Ponce Inlet. The hurdles were terrific, but he somehow got it done. The Track Club appears to be cyclical. We lose some great leaders and we get some new ones. Personally, I think the turnover needs to be a little quicker, and that we get in some fresh blood every two years. So I ask that if any of you out there would like to become more involved with the Track Club, whether to serve on the board of directors, an officer role, writing articles, or anything that you think you have to offer, please contact us. It will be welcomed.

I'd like to close with a little story. This past week at the Paul deBruyn, I orchestrated the kiddie dash, which my daughter Joanna (who is 3 ½) ran, along with about 6 other kids. I was so excited. I was looking at all the kids with their number 1s pinned on their shirts and yelling into the megaphone, "Remember kids, there are no winners and no losers. The only thing that matters is participation". I had to chuckle and make sure that came out of my mouth. As I said, we never stop learning, and this is a valuable lesson that I'm fortunate enough to become aware of. You see, for the longest time, I believed that "no winners/no losers" statement intellectually, but my ego was all caught up in the "how well I do game"... The game of placing and competing. Competing against oneself is fine, but when it becomes too focused on placing and beating others, I feel it's unhealthy. That's where I was, and I don't mind telling on myself. My ego caused me to lose the joy I had for training and racing—but not running. I simply got burned out. I remember my first triathlon I ever did at Cypress Gardens, and I was simply happy to be among the pack. I was thrilled to have completed the race and be among my peers of triathletes. The results came up, and I really didn't care. I only cared that I did it and was among a group that did. Somewhere after that race, slowly and steadily, I lost that perspective, and the ego stepped in. EGO basically means separation of yourself from others. So I got too focused on beating others, and it took the joy away. This summer, I realized I was burned out on racing, did some soul searching, and determined that this was the cause. Again, intellectually I've always known the only thing that matters is that we're staying fit and healthy, and we're all

winners. But that ego (inferiority complex turned into superiority complex) can be a tricky thing, and makes you (me) think you're (I'm) doing it out of friendly competition. A lot of people do compete in this manner. Some of us take our joy away by making it more than it is. So now, my training and priorities are different. I'm getting in my easy runs because I'm back to running because I love to run. I'm running again simply out of the love of running, the great feeling I get, the way I can relieve stress. I'm doing a lot of walking too, which I enjoy. And I've traded my carbon fiber racing bike in on a hybrid that I can hook a trailer to and pull Joanna around the neighborhood. That is my training right now, and I haven't felt this good, fit, and healthy in years. So I've come full circle, and now see the light... That life really is about participation and not competition. So my racing days are over for now, and I wish you all the best and hope you maintain a running program that makes you feel good, and don't let that nasty ego burn you out!

Happy Trails!