

Featured Runner - June 2015

Name: Britni Gettinger

Age: 32

Occupation: Behavioral Clinician, Meridian Health Services

When and why did you start running?

I started running in February 2013. Like most girls, I had a dress I wanted to fit into; so I hit the gym and pavement hard. I quickly realized, after a lot of encouragement from my family and friends, that I'm not half bad at this running thing. The dress is a thing of the past and running has become my go to outlet.

Why do you run now?

I run for various reasons. I run for my health, my sanity, and to be able to eat pizza. I'm extremely competitive, and I enjoy seeing how much I've improved over last year. That drives and motivates me more than anything. I cannot wait to see what all I can accomplish on my own two feet. Mostly, I run for those who can't.

What is your biggest running/fitness accomplishment so far?

My biggest fitness accomplishment was this past April I competed in a Spartan race with some awesome team mates. It was mentally and physically challenging, it's amazing what a person can accomplish with the right group of people surrounding them. My biggest running accomplishment is, just recently I participated in the Bourbon Chase, a 200 mile relay with a team of 11. We conquered the course in just over 27 hours and placed much higher than I ever anticipated. I ran a total of 14.5 miles within 6 hours on very minimal sleep. If you know me, you know I'm not a distance runner, so this was a big deal for me! I even managed to make my last leg my fastest leg, proving to myself that I am mentally tougher and stronger than I was ever willing to believe. My next goal is to participate in the upcoming Indy Mini. I can't believe I just said those words.

Describe your typical running week.

I typically run almost every day. I don't have a set schedule. I can't even tell you how far I'm going to run on a given day. I mostly just decide as I go and base it on how I feel. I enjoy taking new routes around town so my runs aren't so monotonous.

What other activities do you use to supplement your running?

I'm in the gym a lot. Kate Schamel has the best ab class on Monday's at Family Fitness Works, as well as Wednesday's Just Win class. It is very challenging, but I love it. I like to lift more than the boys, especially on leg days, and I will try anything once.

What is your favorite running-related snack/product/gadget?

Yeah, I have the fancy Saucony running shoes, and sweet Garmin watch (thank you Leslie) but nothing really compares or gets me through a race faster than one of Kim's at the warehouse café, delicious peanut butter vegan protein bars waiting on me at the end.

What are your pre-race rituals?

Last year, I thought the people that ran before a race were crazy. 'What are they doing?!' I would think. Now, I'm one of those crazy people. I go for a nice warm up and stretch. I typically have a cup of coffee on my way to a race. I'm also the weird girl you may have seen brushing her teeth before a race. I like to have a fresh mouth before running. In the end, as long as you have yourself and a pair of shoes, that's all you really need, right?

How do you get through a tough run?

With positive affirmations. There are several things that run through my head while running. I tell myself, 'I am defending age group champion and someone wants to take that away from me.' (I won't let you.) 'The faster you run, the faster you're done.' I know I have people waiting on me at the finish line, and I want to impress them. If I'm feeling fatigued, I focus on my form and my breathing, I think about what feels good, and what hurts, most of the time nothing hurts and it's just my brain that needs to catch up with everything else.

What is your favorite thing about running?

Can I say pizza? I probably should say, the way it makes me feel. There is nothing like finishing a run and realizing what you just did, you didn't think you could do last year, last month, or last week. I like to watch my times improve over last year's times. But in reality, I just love food.

How do you motivate yourself on days you don't want to run?

I think about my long term goals and what I need to do to obtain those goals. Not every run you go out on is going to be worth gold. You can't let those runs get you down and put you in a rut. If I absolutely do not want to run, I will substitute in some cross training.

Who is your running hero and why?

I have several people that inspire me to run and become a better runner such as, Chelsea and Dave, however they are just that, inspirations, not my heros. If I had to pick a hero, I would pick my amazing, strong willed, and caring sister in law, Leslie Gettinger. Not only has she been Elite 8 status for several years in a row, she is the one that made me commit to running all the races last year with her. She is a fantastic mother of two and still manages to put up with my brother, which is an accomplishment in itself. She juggles a home, a family, a job and has still managed to run three half marathons this year

alone. She's my go to when I have a running catastrophe, usually involving clothes, and is the first to brag on me even though she's in my same age group.

What is your biggest running-related pet peeve?

Maybe it's due to my competitive nature, but I can't stand when someone talks while running. I don't mean just a few encouraging words, that's great. Often times encouraging words from strangers stick with you more. I'm talking about full blown conversations. The only thing I can think is, 'if you're talking you're not running hard enough, run faster!'

Are you a morning or evening runner?

Sleep is a close second behind food for me, therefore, I am an evening runner every chance I get.

Are you a solo or group runner?

When it comes to everyday running, I shy away from groups, because I feel uncomfortable. We have some very strong runners in our area and they intimidate me, so when I run in a group with them I don't feel worthy. I have one of the best running partners any girl could ask for. He knows what I'm capable of doing and pushing me to my limits even before I know what they are. He motivates me and makes sure I'm focused on my goals, I'm not sure what I would do without him. It's great to have someone to provide some feedback and ask questions to and I ask a lot of questions!

What is your favorite type of run?

One of my favorite runs is running through the city at night. There is something about the lights and darkness that let me zone out to and just enjoy my run.

Fill in the blank:

I love running because: *it's my thing; I didn't start running because someone else was running, I do it for me. If you don't like it, or aren't supportive then please step aside.*

When I run I think about: *everything from form, to accepting my award, to what I'm going to eat when I'm done.*

The hardest part of running is: *figuring out what I'm going to wear, and hills, although, thanks to Hagerstown I know I can handle any hills I'm up against.*

The best running advice I ever received was: *to think about everything in the positive. You can't think, 'I'm not going to walk' because then all you can think about is walking. Why do that to yourself?*

