

Group In Training: *Pharmacy Students Unite!*

Q. Tell us about your group! How do you know each other and how did you come to train together?

A. It all started when, last semester, I was contemplating ways that my pharmacy class (first year - UofS) could promote healthier living in the community. Since I enjoy running anyway, I was thinking of way to work that in.

I thought maybe a few students in the class would be interested in running the Half-Marathon in the Saskatchewan Marathon. As most everyone knows, to complete a distance race such as a Half-Marathon you will need proper nutrition and lots of exercise/training. Bad habits such as smoking or drinking are incompatible. Given that all of these factors are important for maintaining optimal health, I thought it would be the perfect match for our program and promoting healthier living in the community.

From there, things just kind of took off! Shoppers Drug Mart, a partner of the pharmacology department, offered their enthusiastic support and the interest from my classmates was overwhelming. I passed a sign-up sheet around class one day – expecting maybe 10 people to be interested – and got back a sheet filled with close to 40 names. We went on to add about 15 additional names after inviting the second and third year students aboard.

Q. What kind of Marathon experience is represented in your group? (i.e. do you have former Marathoners, first-timers, walkers, general athletes?)

A. I would estimate that about half of the people in our running group have run in other formal races in the past. A few have run a half-marathon, which is what we're training for, but mainly the experience consists of a few 10K runs. I would say that for about 80% of the group, myself included, this will be the first half-marathon.

One of our group members had no experience with running prior to our group. When she started training last semester, three kilometres seemed like a difficult goal. I'm happy to report that she has now makes it 12-13 km on her long runs! By May 30th, she will be ready to run her first half-marathon and we'll all be there cheering her – and each other – on.

Q. What's your training regimen?

A. Most of us are following the training program outlined in John Stanton's book, *Running: From Start to Finish*. We run four to five times a week with a long run on Saturday or Sunday. During the winter, most of us ran inside on a treadmill or on the track at the Physical Activity Center (PAC) at the University.

Q. Why did you pick the Saskatchewan Marathon?

A. We picked the Saskatchewan Marathon because of the course. Over half of the route is along the river so it offers some nice scenery while you run. Also, most of the pharmacy students live in the area so it is very convenient to be able to run here in Saskatoon.

Q. What does your group use its Facebook page for?

A. Our group doesn't have a Facebook page.

Q. Any advice for other groups thinking of group training?

A. Just get out there and have fun! It has been really nice to run with others in my class because it's an opportunity to socialize outside of a classroom setting. We have really had a lot of fun preparing for this race as a group.

Have a question or comment for this Group Leader? Send [Rob](#) a quick note!