

STARTING LINES

[NEWS, VIEWS, RACES, PLACES, GEAR & MORE]

Up and Running

A year after a near-fatal accident, **Lisa Buohler** hasn't lost a step

BY LISA MARSHALL

When race organizers announced they would be keeping the 2012 Boston Marathon course open an extra hour due to record-high temperatures, Lisa Buohler reacted with more relief than worry. "I thought 'Yay. That's great! With six hours, maybe I can at least get a finisher's medal,'" she recalls.

Even that was a lofty goal for a 42-year-old mother of two who, just last September, was lying in a Florida hospital on a morphine drip, her liver lacerated, lung bruised, and back crushed after an SUV rear-ended her on her bike. It was only 16 days before Boston that her doctor had cautiously cleared her to start running again "as long as she took it easy."

So, when she crossed the finish line on April 16 in 3:48:51—on a day so hot that 4,300 registered runners opted to not even start—she surprised even herself. "I was shocked," she says. "To this day I am still asking myself 'How did I do that?'"

Friends and doctors suspect the answer to this question, as well as how she survived her grisly collision without permanent brain or spinal cord damage, lies in the shape she was in before her accident. "She was just remarkably fit," says friend and training partner John Blewis. "Literally one of the most determined athletes I have ever seen."

Born in Manchester, England in 1969, Buohler moved to the U.S. in 1991, started a family and launched a career as a personal trainer and nutritionist in Lehigh Acres, Fla.

It wasn't until age 37 that she took up running. But after winning her age division in her first road race, a local 4-miler, she caught the bug fast. Soon she was ticking off respectable PRs (17:27 for 5K; 39:35 for 10K; 1:27 for the half-marathon), and com-



✦ Florida's Lisa Buohler missed the ING New York City Marathon last year because of a near-fatal bike crash, but she'll be on the starting line for this year's race on Nov. 4.



How she survived without permanent brain or spinal cord damage, her doctors believe, lies in the excellent athletic shape she was in before her accident.

peting in the 5,000-meter run at the World Masters Athletics Championships.

In 2010, she ran her first marathon in Athens, Greece (3:26), and easily qualified for the New York City and Boston marathons. Meanwhile, she was also quickly ascending the ranks of duathlon, too, earning a spot on the U.S. team for the 2011 ITU World Duathlon Championships in Spain last September. "I was at the best fitness level I had ever been at in my life and I felt like I was ready to earn a space," she recalls. "I had no idea body was preparing for a very different challenge."

On Sept. 14, two days before she was to leave for Spain, she took her Trek Speed Concept 9.9 out for a test ride. She was nine miles out, when an SUV came up behind her, barreling its right headlight into her left buttock—severing the muscle into two pieces on impact. She was thrown 20 feet and crashed so hard it cracked her helmet in three places and left her cartilage in her elbow exposed.

Five of her vertebrae were fractured, as was her sternum, patella, pelvis and several bones in her foot. She was bleeding internally, and had bits of carbon from her mangled

bike embedded deeply into her wounds. She had no idea how bad it was. "I remember saying 'How am I going to get new shorts by the time I'm supposed to leave Friday?'"

Buehler would spend six days in the ICU and 12 weeks in a back brace. The New York City Marathon was out (she was able to defer to this year's race on Nov. 4) and Boston also looked unattainable.

But she started to regain her fitness the moment she could walk, and on Jan. 2, she ran her first mile, clocking a 7:15, before pain curtailed that day's effort. "She had a focus like she was competing again," Blewis recalls. "It was a surreal moment."

Unbeknownst to her doctor, she started signing up for races, "just to be around that running atmosphere." She walked the Walt Disney World Half-Marathon in January, then ran/walked the St. Petersburg Rock 'n' Roll Half-Marathon the following month and the Sarasota Half-Marathon on March 12.

On March 31 her doctor cleared her to run again, and within days she worked her way up to six miles, by far her longest running effort in seven months. She vowed to be at the starting line in Boston, run as far as she could, then walk until the course closed. "I didn't even try to talk her out of it," says husband Sebastian Buehler. "It wouldn't have worked anyway. I just told her to listen to her

body."

She did, and her body told her to keep running, despite temperatures in the upper 80s. "I was amazed at how good I felt," she says. But at mile 20, her legs and feet started to ache. "I just thought, at this point in marathon, everyone is hurting," recalls Buehler. "I'm just going to push through it. When I reached the finish, I was in disbelief."

A month after her amazing finish, Buehler was plotting her return to duathlon (she competed at this year's world championships last month in France) and started thinking about running the New York City Marathon.

With ongoing physical therapy and copious amounts of stretching and massage, she was able to up her training to 40 miles per week as of early September. But she still aches a lot and admits running fast jars her spine.

"People ask, 'Are you sure you didn't set your recovery back by running Boston?'" she says. "I say 'No, it made me so much stronger mentally, and it was just such an amazing experience.' I don't regret doing it at all."

Her only regret: That she didn't run it 3 minutes and 51 seconds faster. That would have gotten her to the magical mark of 3:45:00, the updated qualifying time for her age group for the 2013 race. But given her tenacity and fitness, it's a good bet Buehler will find her way back to Boston by 2014.



NEW YORK STYLE

● New Balance will debut a New York-themed version of the 860 v3 moderate stability shoe in mid-October. Inspired by graffiti art, it includes a silhouette of the city skyline, the names of all five boroughs and an apple on the heel. The shoe will be sold online (\$110; www.newbalance.com) and at the Nov. 1-3 New York City Marathon expo.

Courtesy of New Balance; Courtesy of Lisa Buehler




VERMONT'S 273-MILE LONG TRAIL IS THE OLDEST LONG-DISTANCE TRAIL IN THE UNITED STATES

DID YOU KNOW?

- In August, Montana's Nikki Kimball ran the length of Vermont's 273-mile Long Trail in a record five days, seven hours and 42 minutes amid stormy weather. "The overall experience was amazing, and I learned so much about myself, the trail and my crew," said the Chittenden, Vt., native, who was raising money for Girls on the Run. "But the bigger goal for me was to inspire women and girls of all ages, and to show that there's an equal place for women in endurance sports."

Quick Hits with Diane Van Deren

Diane Van Deren can run for days without any sleep, covering hundreds of miles in severe conditions and environments. A former professional tennis player, the 52-year-old mother of three from Sedalia, Colo., started running to help stave off epileptic seizures, for which she underwent a right frontal lobotomy in 1997 that robbed her of some brain function and memory. Van Deren has competed in some of the world's most grueling ultra races, having won the 2008 Yukon Arctic Ultra 300 in Canada (amid temperatures of 50 below zero) and also climbed the highest peak in South America—Argentina's 22,834-foot Aconcagua. We caught up with The North Face-sponsored runner to talk about her most recent epic run: Completing the nearly 1,000-mile Mountains-to-Sea Trail Endurance Run where she traversed the entire state of North Carolina in 22 days.

How did you endure this epic run? I trained 15-30 miles every day in the mountains, and put 30 pounds in a pack to simulate what it would be like if I were running with my sleeping bag and gear. Mentally, I just had to go at it one day at a time. It was so intense. I couldn't think about getting to the finish because it was intangible at the time—all I could think about was the present moment. I've run through rivers, rocks and ice all over the world, and the Mountains-to-Sea Trail is, without a doubt, the hardest trail I've ever experienced.

What kind of support did you have? I never ran alone. I can't read maps because of the surgery so I always had somebody with me. Chuck Millsap from the Great Outdoor Provision Company handled everything for me—from logistics to actually running with me. It's like he set up base camp right there on the trail. The crew I had could outdo anybody at Daytona; they were amazing.

What did you enjoy most? What was so meaningful was the harmony of everything that I've believed in as an athlete. It's about discipline, drive and passion. It's not a sport about ego, but rather the friendships, trust and respect you earn on the trails.

What was the most emotional part? One of my guides was a man who'd just returned from serving in Afghanistan. He told me he'd never gotten lost while on duty, and he was there to take care of me. On Memorial Day, he had a friend drive him 3.5 hours just so he could run with me again. We passed a memorial and that really hit me.

How important is running to you? There's something called a premonition that you have before you're about to have a seizure. Back when I was still having seizures, I realized I wouldn't have them if I was running. So whenever I'd have a premonition, I'd throw on my running shoes and run.

—Celestia Calbay



Keeping Time

From entry-level heart-rate monitors to technologically advanced GPS models, here's a roundup of the latest sports watches to fit any runner's budget.

1. POLAR RC3 GPS, \$350

Previous Polar watches used a detached GPS unit, but it's built into the RC3, a super-slim model that's fairly user-friendly to program and feels almost weightless on the run. It has a large display that's easily readable at a glance, except under the direct glare of the sun. www.polarusa.com

2. NIKE+ SPORT-WATCH GPS, \$199

This easy-to-use training model is a great entry-level watch for recreational runners who need a simple unit to track distance. It's powered by Tom Tom navigation, which can take a moment or two to acquire satellite feeds, but it offers two options for tracking (GPS or foot pod) and will remember the settings for the next run. www.nike.com

3. TIMEX MARATHON GPS, \$99

Powerful GPS data-tracking tools and traditional running watch functions are packed into this relatively small device. It tracks distance, pace, speed and calorie burn, has the ability to save up to 30 workouts and can take hands-free splits with the flick of a wrist. www.timex.com

4. SPORTLINE CARDIO 660, \$60

The 660 is a simple device with a stop-watch, timer, alarm and basic heart rate monitor. Although not as feature-rich as other more sophisticated watches, this affordably priced watch can store data from the previous day's workout. www.sportline.com

5. MAGELLAN SWITCH UP, \$349

Although it's designed as a multisport training watch for runners, cyclists and triathletes, runners will appreciate the settings available for road, marathon and trail, where they can set auto pause (which is useful in places with frequent stops) and can maintain satellite signals in areas with a lot of trees. www.magellangps.com

6. GARMIN FORE-RUNNER 10, \$130

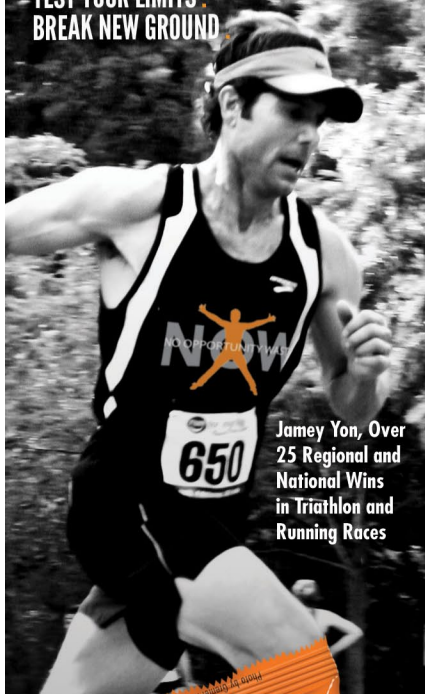
Designed as an entry-level GPS for runners, the sleek Forerunner 10 tracks distance, time and calories burned. It's easy to program and can go a few days without having to charge the battery. www.garmin.com

—Celestia Calbay

Photos by Scott Draper

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STARTING LINES [ETC.]

Tale of the Tape: Chicago vs. New York City

The Chicago Marathon and New York City Marathon have long been the most prominent fall marathons in the U.S. Here's a quick look at how they stack up against each other.

 OCTOBER 7 CHICAGO	VS.	 NOVEMBER 4 NEW YORK
Pancake-flat, ideal for a PR	COURSE	Surprisingly hilly, especially because of the bridges
www.nbcchicago.com (livestream)	RACE-DAY VIEWING	ESPN2 (See Back Page for more)
Running through 15 unique neighborhoods	PLUS	A diverse mix of non-stop cheering fans from start to finish
In recent years, the hot weather	MINUS	Crowded pre-race mayhem on Staten Island
35,755 (No. 2 in the world)	TOTAL FINISHERS IN 2011	47,133 (No. 1 all-time)
8,743	SUB-4-HOUR FINISHERS IN 2011	15,166
6	RIVER BRIDGES	5
Moses Mosop, 2:05:37, 2011 (m) Paula Radcliffe, 2:17:18, 2002 (w)	COURSE RECORDS	Geoffrey Mutai, 2:05:05, 2011 (m) Margaret Okayo, 2:22:31, 2003 (w)
Paula Radcliffe's 2:17:18 world record in 2002 (since broken)	ALL-TIME MOMENT	Rod Dixon passing Geoff Smith at the 26-mile mark to win in 1983
Kathryn Martin's U.S. record for the 60-64 age-group in 2011 (3:10:27)	TOP RECENT U.S. HIGHLIGHTS	Meb Keflezighi's win in 2009 and PR effort in 2011 at age 36
Rod Blagojevich (3:22), Anthony Edwards (3:55), Tanna Frederick (4:08)	PAST CELEBRITY FINISHERS	Lance Armstrong (2:46), Sean Combs (4:14), David Lee Roth (6:04)
Northside vs. Southside Challenge (2.62-mile high school XC race)	SIDESHOW	Five Boroughs, Five Beers (drinking a beer in each borough during the race)
Deep-dish—one slice fills you up	POST-RACE PIZZA	Thin crust—served with attitude
(m) Dathan Ritzenhein, Wesley Korir, Tsegaye Kebede; (w) Liliya Shobukhova, Lucy Kabuu, Florence Kiplagat	TOP ENTRANTS 2012	(m) Meb Keflezighi, Abdi Abdirahman, Scott Bauhs, (w) Amy Hastings, Julie Culley, Janet Bawcom

Illustrations by iStockphoto.com/Ceneri; Source for statistics: Running USA.