

Hmm... what can I do to improve my running?

Racing to the river isn't a bad way to spend a lunch break, is it? Keep up Xav!

I'm trying!

# THE NEED FOR SPEED

THIS MONTH SEES ONLINE EDITOR RHALOU ALLERHAND PICKING UP THE PACE

OK!

OK?

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**A**s the self-styled office fun runner, I've always been rather proud of my lack of competitive drive. I often find myself surrounded by speed aficionados here at running mags HQ (particularly in the *Men's Running* half of the office), who seem to spend every waking moment planning their next attack on the almighty PB. As a dedicated fun runner, this never appealed to me.

I may not be the fastest runner in town, but several months after running my first marathon, I'm still in possession of mind-altering super powers and continue to feel invincible. But strangely, over the past few weeks acquiring superhuman self-assurance is not the only post-marathon development. There's been a subtle shift in the universe and I've also started to mutate into a speed freak.

## THE RACE IS ON

It all started about a week after race day. One minute I was skipping around the park enjoying a peaceful 5K run, and the next, someone overtook me and I was possessed with an all-consuming urge to speed up and leave them for dust. So I did – and afterwards I felt bloody amazing.

The next time it happened I was running the Glasgow Women's 10K, and despite maintaining

that there are more criteria for a good race than speed (I stand by this!), my killer instinct took over and I was suddenly determined to complete the 10K in under an hour. I managed it (58.23 – not bad for a tortoise) and felt so ecstatic afterwards that I knew the tide had turned.

To test out this curious new thirst for velocity, the following week I did something totally unheard of – I went for a run with a boy. Although we're a happy magazine team, in the workplace the boys and the girls tend to run separately, and I've never hit the tarmac with a chap before, always assuming we had different goals.

But in keeping with my newfound thirst for adventure, I bravely set off for a run with our art director Xavier, and the penny officially dropped. When Xav runs, he runs fast. I suspect he slowed down a bit for my sake, but having someone faster and fitter beside me really helped to raise the bar. I was determined not to look like a total girl, so I ran harder than usual and the rewards were plentiful. Not only did I get a triple surge of extra endorphins and the thrill of running further than normal, but I got back to the office quicker, too!

## THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

I finally understand why the boys spend so much time calculating their race times and worrying

about beating their PBs. Yes running is amazing, yes the post-exercise endorphins are euphoric no matter how fast (or slow) you run, but add in a little speed and a dollop of competition to the equation, and the intensity is multiplied tenfold. I got that marathon rock star feeling all over again just from a half-hour run, and didn't even need the roaring crowds to get me there.

I'm still determined to represent the happy runners in face paint and neon leg warmers. But ambling around the park is no longer enough. Gone are the days of gently plodding along to disco. It's now all about speeding off into the distance with the wind in my hair and my fellow runners eating my dust! You can do both, right? Watch this space. ☑

**'TO TEST OUT THIS CURIOUS NEW THIRST FOR VELOCITY, THE FOLLOWING WEEK I DID SOMETHING TOTALLY UNHEARD OF - I WENT FOR A RUN WITH A BOY'**

## RHALOU'S HOT RUNNING PLAYLIST

- Ain't Nobody Chaka Khan
- Juicy Fruit Mtume
- 80's Joint Kelis
- A Little Samba Ugly Duckling
- Dr Beat Miami Sound Machine
- Got To Have Your Love Mantronix
- You Got The Love Rufus & Chaka Khan
- This Beat Is Mine Vicky D
- Let Me Know Roisin Murphy
- Genius Of Love Tom Tom Club
- If I Was Your Girlfriend Prince

