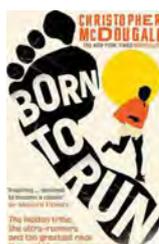




GINTA VILIUNAS

Runner, writer of some of the funniest race reports I've ever read, adventurer, Honorary Consul General for Lithuania, Owner of a complete set of medals for the World Marathon Majors, infectious in her enthusiasm for life.



BORN TO RUN

CHRISTOPHER MCDUGALL
(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

This is a book for runners, for travellers, for thrill seekers, for scientists, for endurance athletes and for anyone interested in cutting-edge aspiration and achievement by pushing limits, ignoring conventional wisdom and going beyond their comfort zone. McDougall is a professional writer and it shows. This is a totally absorbing, highly entertaining book with crazy, extreme characters and the Tarahumara, an elusive Indian tribe of the greatest ultra-runners in the world. They run through the desert (many of them, barefoot, long before it caught on, elsewhere) in harsh, inhospitable conditions, and they love doing it.

Share McDougall's experience of connecting with his own inner ultrarunner as he joins a band of determined extreme athletes who prepare to race fifty miles through the Copper Canyons in Mexico against the Tarahumara. Science also gets a serious look-in as MacDougall takes us to the labs of Harvard for investigation.

McDougall is a gifted wordsmith: he writes with ease, humour, inspiration and zeal. This is a gripping read. A 'heads up': have your running shoes ready: once you have read this book, you may never want to stop running.



THE PERFECT MILE

NEALE BASCOMB
(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

'Three athletes, one goal and less than four minutes to achieve it.'

A beautiful story, breathlessly told...

Most of us know the answer to the trivia question: "Who was the first athlete to break the four minute barrier for the mile?", but how many of us know the names of, and the back stories to, his rivals?

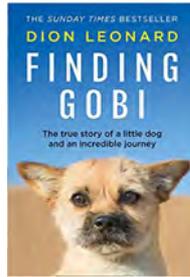
This excellent first book by skilful storyteller Bascomb is a tale about struggle, about achievement, about disappointment, about hard work, about triumph, about challenge.

In short, it is a tale about life, through the filter of running.

You don't have to be a runner to enjoy this book. I have lent my copy to friends who don't run for the bus; they have found it a compelling and genuinely gripping read.

Read about the lives of American Wes Santee, Englishman Roger Bannister and Australian John Landy as they endeavour to do what was thought, in the early 1950's, to be such a stretch that it was downright dangerous. You will be treated to a ringside seat at the three men's vastly individual journeys.

Bascomb builds tension by drawing together their many attempts at the elusive 4 minute barrier... until it wasn't.



FINDING GOBI

DION LEONARD

(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

Schmalzy? Yes.
Absorbing? Totally. Compelling? Pretty much.

We follow ultra runner Dion Leonard through his (at times, it must be said, rather indulgent) discourse through the world of extreme multi-day events. He kicks off with a six day, 155 milerace through the Gobi Desert. He describes the frustrations of this adventure in a totally foreign country: he does not speak the language nor does he understand the way things tick. Nevertheless, with the dogged determination possessed by an ultrarunner, he perseveres. Leonard peppers the book with references to his own achievements and insights into his childhood, how and why he got into running and why he and his wife, also an ultrarunner, run these races. Leonard's ubercompetitive instinct is a feature but it gives way to a tale of finding a dog.

The story line is pretty simple (as is the writing style): Athlete runs in big race in the Gobi Desert. Athlete finds super-cute little dog in the Gobi Desert. An unlikely combination, dog adopts athlete and – incredibly – runs many kilometres alongside him. No surprises when athlete names the dog 'Gobi'. Despite himself, athlete is completely enchanted by Gobi. A very challenging but oddly compelling tale ensues which challenges the athlete's determination, affections, financial resources and a whole lot more. I will not spoil the story for would-be readers any more than the title of the book already does, but this is a great holiday read for any distance runner, whether they love dogs or not.

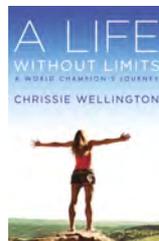
It has "Make me into a movie" written all over it.

DAVID HAZLEWOOD
FOUNDER, KNIGHTSWOOD HOUSE

I started running 9 years ago following the birth of kids to ensure I was fit enough to play with them and to set a good example.

Things moved beyond that and I've now run 13 marathons across 4 continents, including Boston, New York and London. I love the feeling of complete and utter exhaustion at the end of a race where you know you have given everything – and then you plot how to do better next time.

www.knightswood.com.au



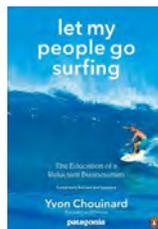
A LIFE WITHOUT LIMITS: A WORLD CHAMPION'S JOURNEY
CHRISSIE WELLINGTON

(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

Chrissie Wellington would have to be one of the most unlikely Ironman World Champions. She came to the sport late, having travelled extensively and worked for aid and development organisations in some of the poorer areas of the world.

As such, she brings a much broader perspective to the world of elite sport combining this with a fierce competitiveness (and a good helping of laughter inducing awkwardness) that leads her to record breaking performances.

For those of us who juggle work & family with training and competition this is one athlete you will readily relate to.

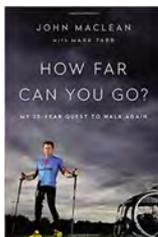


LET MY PEOPLE GO SURFING: THE EDUCATION OF A RELUCTANT BUSINESSMAN
YVON CHOUINARD

(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

This is the story of the birth of Patagonia - the company not the region. More than just a corporate biography, it is a book about the philosophy of the Patagonia business. The business has always been about producing gear and equipment that the people behind the company would be happy to use - that is, top quality. They consider the impact of their business on the environment because they are outdoor adventurers, and they consider the impact of their business practices on those who work for them, treating them as humans rather than 'resources'.

If only there were more like them.



HOW FAR CAN YOU GO? MY 25 YEAR QUEST TO WALK AGAIN.

JOHN MACLEAN

(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

I've seen John over the last couple of years at my local cafe, and I know him enough to nod and say g'day. A really humble bloke. It's funny how often the most accomplished people are also the most humble...

I knew he had a foundation to inspire kids, but that was all I really knew.

I was blown away by this book, and you will be too. His fledgling triathlon career was snatched from him when he was hit by a truck at age 22 and as a result became a paraplegic. He went on to become one of the most successful wheelchair athletes in the world, winning a Paralympic silver medal, becoming the first to complete the Hawaii Ironman World Championships in a wheelchair, and the first paraplegic to swim the English channel. But most of the time when I see him he's walking around - not in a wheelchair. This book tells the story of how he was able to get out of that chair after 25 years and walk again.



THE LONG RUN: MY LIFE AS A RUNNER

MATT LONG

(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

Matt Long is a New York firefighter who has it all. A job he loves, a share in 3 successful bars, a great social life - and he's just qualified to run the Boston Marathon.

His life takes a dramatic turn though when he is run over by a bus early one morning, and while he survives (just) his body has experienced profound trauma and his life will never be the same.

This is the warts and all story of his fight to recover from the accident, both physically and mentally. His recovery is far from straight forward, and often times it's not pretty, but you will be inspired by Matt's resilience and determination.



I'M HERE TO WIN: A WORLD CHAMPION'S BLUEPRINT FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE

CHRIS 'MACCA' MCCORMACK

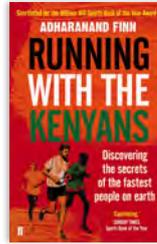
(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

If you want your hand held, or you want to be molly-coddled, this is definitely not the book for you Macca is a blunt instrument.

As an athlete he was self confident and brash with the results to back it up - until he headed to the Ironman World Championships in Hawaii.

For me, the best part of this book was reading about how he much he suffered as a result of his DNFs and defeats in Hawaii, and yet ultimately was able to come back from them and taste victory.

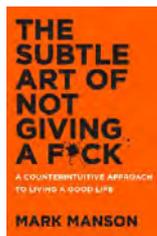
A great reminder that even the best of us don't get everything we want without a fight.



RUNNING WITH THE KENYANS: DISCOVERING THE SECRETS OF THE FASTEST PEOPLE ON EARTH

ADHARANAND FINN
(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

A keen British runner convinces the newspaper he works for to send him on a six month trip to Kenya to live and train with the best distance runners on the planet so he can uncover the secret to their success. He transplants himself and his young family into Iten and together they immerse themselves in the local community. A fantastic window into what makes this area a production line for world champions, and their best efforts to drag Finn up closer to their level.



THE SUBTLE ART OF NOT GIVING A F*CK: A COUNTERINTUITIVE APPROACH TO LIVING A GOOD LIFE

MARK MANSON
(AVAILABLE TO LISTEN ON AUDIBLE)

I'd resisted reading this book because of the hype around it - if everyone else is doing something it can't be good right?

I actually really enjoyed this book though, although I'd love to have heard it read by Billy Connolly rather than the narrator chosen for the Audible version - having a Scot say f*ck every second sentence would be much more entertaining.

As the title indicates the author reminds us that generally we spend far too much time caring about too many things that don't matter to us, diluting our efforts and causing us angst.

But what will resonate most with endurance athletes is the idea that the greatest rewards come as a result of working through difficult (and sometimes painful) paths. The important point is that there is always pain in life, but that we have the power to decide what pain we are willing to accept to achieve what is most important to us.

If you like these stories but want some more Australian content why not try our new podcast: The Pursuit of Life. The first season includes interviews with people who have run across the Sahara Desert, parachuted into the North Pole and run 52 marathons in 52 weeks across 7 continents.

Download it here: <https://www.knightswood.com.au/podcast>

