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vegan health & fitness

Vol. 3 Issue 6

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meet **Logan and Moe Beaulieu**
father and son ultramarathoners

Photos by Angie Ziemann



MEET LOGAN

VHF: When and why did you go vegan?

I first became vegan for ethical reasons, but the more I researched, the more I learned about the health benefits of following a vegan

diet. I also realized how terrible today's food system and factory farming is for the animals and the environment.

VHF: How has this diet affected your training, racing and recovery?

I feel so much better physically, mentally and emotionally, which has played a key role in my training and racing. My recovery has improved dramatically. I feel like I am the best that I can be with smart training on a vegan diet. But like all runners and athletes, I am always seeking improvement.

VHF: Have you been involved in other athletics besides running?

Although I played lacrosse as a kid, I never excelled in team sports, but I took pride in the fact that at 12 years old I placed 5th at the British Columbia Cross Country Championships. I grew up in Penticton where my family ran with the Penticton Pounders, a group formed by the well-known race announcer, Steve King. We ran races that were held all over the Okanagan, Similkameen.

VHF: As a running coach, does your client training differ from your own?

I try to follow my own advice, but I admit that sometimes I take on too much. Like Dirty Harry said, "A man's got to know his limitations." Who could argue with Clint?

VHF: I understand that you were in a near fatal car accident in the past. VHF: How did this event affect your outlook on life and the world?

Being involved in a serious car accident in which my best friend lost his life and mine was nearly lost has made me appreciate life's simple pleasures. When I think back on my past I know I can get through any race regardless of how tough it is. Training for me is a passion. My day feels incomplete without my run. I like to start out my day with a run in the morning if I have time, or to unwind and clear my thoughts with a run at the end of the day.

VHF: What inspires you to train and compete?

When I was young I would run ultras for the sheer enjoyment of it. I ran my first ultra, a 50k in 1992 and again in 1993. In 1994, I stepped it up and ran a 24-hour track run around a quarter mile track. I ran around the track 400 times and I decided to stop at 100 miles. As I got older I have become more competitive, but I do still like to run some of my races for enjoyment and training purposes. I will often run 50k races as training.

VHF: What does your typical diet look like?

I start out my day with a green drink. Later in the morning, I'll have a fruit smoothie with various organic fruits (some fresh/some frozen) with some vegan protein. I add chia seeds and maca. I drink milk alternatives such as almond, hemp, rice, hazelnut, cashew and coconut milk and I usually add ginger or cinnamon for extra flavor and antioxidants.

At breakfast I may also have steel cut oats or organic sprouted spelt kernels with nuts, flax oil or ground flax seeds, Udol oil, raisins, sugar free cranberries and a variety of seeds and nuts.

Around noon I have a green drink with lots of vegetables such as kale, spinach, parsley and dill. I often throw in a beet and make it a purple drink.

Around lunch time I generally eat quinoa, wild rice, beans or lentils with coconut aminos in place of soy-sauce and salads with lots of greens and vegetables, from tomatoes, avocado, alfalfa, green peppers. I love sweet potatoes and yams too!

For my green drink I'll use cold water, Green Magma, Beet Essence, Carrot Essence and Barley Essence (all of which are Green Foods products). I like to add different things to change up the flavor and nutrient content. I keep the green drink with me and sip on it throughout the day. This ensures the best absorption of vitamins and minerals.

I am a big fan of turmeric, which is a great anti-inflammatory. I am also a fan of curry as well as cumin, cayenne pepper, rubbed sage and coriander. I think of my spice rack as a medicine cabinet.

In the afternoon I also include a Matcha Green Tea Drink. I graze throughout the day. I carry a bag of nuts with me, including figs, dates and seeds.

At dinner I eat tempeh, quinoa, rice, black beans and hummus. I prepare lots of stir-fries and casseroles, which I sprinkle with nutritional yeast

I take only food-grade vitamins, but I minimize these as I have learned that a vegan diet is very nutritionally complete. Remember, the strongest animals in existence are plant-based (gorillas, elephants, and rhinos, etc.)

VHF: How does your diet change leading up to a race?

My diet does not change a whole lot leading up to a race. My diet is very nutritionally dense at all times. It's not that I eat empty calories, but leading up to a race I especially avoid all junk. It is very important to avoid empty calories leading up to and after a race. The body requires complete nutrition leading up to a race and for recovery after a race. Empty

calories cause too much stress on the body with no benefit.

VHF: How do you manage your nutrition needs during a race?

I eat as much real food as possible during a race. I never pass up fruit for the complex carbs. I eat bananas, watermelon, honeydew, cantaloupe, and grapes. I eat avocado for the calories and healthy fats. I also eat boiled potatoes or yams with salt. I always carry dates with me during a race for the sustained energy. I carry a small bag of nuts, such as cashews and pistachios, or have some at a station or in my drop bags. These snacks are the easiest to digest. I use and prefer e-load sports drinks, e-load energy gels and I carry zone caps and e-discs when racing and training.

VHF: What is your typical running mileage and how does it change leading up to a race?

I try to stay conservative in my training. To this day my left leg causes me grief; because of this I try not to over-race. I avoid running too many crazy distances leading up to a race. I like to be rested and not over-trained come race day. Although, I always want to be trained properly, it is better to be slightly undertrained than over-trained for a race. I run by time rather than distance. I also spend a fair bit of time on the spin-bike. The time I spend on my feet is anywhere from eight to fourteen hours, but this includes plenty of fast walking and walking hill repeats.

VHF: What sort of equipment do you use?

I like to cross-train. I spend plenty of time walking as well as on the spin bike at home and at the gym. I also jump on my road bike through the week and on the rowing machine a few times each week. I find water running to be a fantastic workout throughout the race season, particularly leading up to a race and after a race when rest is very important. It is also great form of training in the winter months.

VHF: Do you have certain gear that you love?

I switch up hand-held bottles and a water pack. I find that hand-held bottles are the easiest and most efficient when aid stations are close together, but when stations are farther apart, I prefer a pack. I always have a pair of sunglasses to minimize squinting and to relax the eyes. If there is cloud cover I simply wear the shades on the back of my head until I need them. I use the brightest head lamp available without a battery pack attached and carry a flashlight. I like to see everything in front of me because there is nothing more tiring than squinting looking for markings with a dim light. I always wear compression socks and often wear gloves.

VHF: What is your philosophy of running?

Forcing too many expectations on oneself can be a recipe for disappointment. Although I try

not to set the bar too high, I am also a strong believer in persistence and the commitment to train and work hard. I like the quote on the back of the 'River Valley Revenge' race shirt that says, "YOU GET WHAT YOU TRAIN FOR." I also believe the most successful athletes are relaxed and grounded.

VHF: Do you ever raise money for charities when you compete? If so, please tell us which ones.

I have raised money for the Easter Seal House and United Way for events in the past. I have also raised money for PETA for a race. My plans are to raise money and run for Mercy For Animals in the not-so-distant future.

VHF: We understand that you and your father are possibly the only competitive vegan father and son ultra marathoners. What does this mean to you?

I think this is very cool. We run our own races, but we also like to run races together. We are happy to set an example for other people, not only regarding fitness and living a healthy lifestyle, but also following a plant-based diet. Actions speak louder than words.

VHF: How has your father motivated you?

My father has been a huge motivator for me throughout my life. After my accident when I was bedridden and given a ten percent chance of walking again, he was there for me, as was the rest of my family, but it was my father who was "my coach." He was an incredible motivator throughout my recovery. In fact, he was almost like a drill sergeant since he realized that it is human nature to fall into self-pity and take the easy way out. Because of his coaching, encouragement and support I was able to avoid that trap. Although I must confess, I would sometimes wonder about my ability to succeed and take the easy way out. Today I use my past challenges to my advantage and know that whatever challenges I may encounter during a race, I can get through it. He taught me many secrets about running and we share thoughts and facts about our vegan diets.

VHF: What are the biggest lessons you have learned since you began this journey?

Being successful in life is determined by one's chosen endeavors. Author Dan Millman says, "If I threw in the towel or gave up I wouldn't be where I am today. I believe

that we take on the strength of that which we overcome. Every day is a challenge and every moment of life should be cherished. Running is my life, my life is running." This is how I choose to live my life; or as Millman also says, "Rather than dedicating our sport to our lives, why not dedicate our lives to our sport." Likewise, I have never stopped running nor given up despite facing the biggest challenge of my life.

Since becoming vegan, I've learned that by choosing whole foods we can be the healthiest that we have ever been and feel the best we have ever felt without consuming any animal products. Since deciding to make kindness a habit with my dietary choices, I feel so much better physically, mentally and emotionally.

VHF: Any advice for other vegans who want to get started competing?

The vegan diet is loaded with essential vitamins, nutrients and minerals. Vegans get all the protein they need. There are vegan athletes in every sport that excel by following a plant-based diet. My advice is for people to educate themselves well. I suggest that anybody interested in a plant-based diet try to minimize fake meats that many people turn to because these foods are high in sodium. But if you do tackle the vegan diet, the rewards are huge! Doing it right by incorporating plenty of leafy green vegetables and eating a wide variety of foods is not only the most healthful way to eat, but also adds variety and keeps your diet interesting.

VHF: What else do you incorporate into your training regimen?

Realizing that running alone is not the only aspect of a complete workout, I incorporate a variety of high-repetition weight training exercises as well as push-ups, planks, abdominals and core strength exercises into my routine to stay lean and for muscular endurance. I weight train my legs on my days off from running; but to avoid fatigue and injury during the race season I don't do too much. After each run I stretch, use a foam roller and the stick (a "toothbrush" for the muscles). I also have a couple of magnesium soaks each week. Everything I do is to better myself physically, mentally and emotionally. I hear from those around me that I am somewhat of a fanatic. I know this is true.

Leading up to a race, and during a race, I visualize myself running strong and having a successful race. I sit quietly, relaxing before a race. If I catch myself getting down during a race or start to feel discomfort (or rather when I start to experience discomfort), I keep a mental picture in my mind of my best self, my strong self, my ideal self. No matter how positive a person is in life, it is difficult to stay positive throughout an entire race, but it is very important. We go through many emotions and crazy discomfort, but being negative will make things much worse so do your best to stay positive.





MEET MOE

VHF: When and why did you go vegan?

Three years ago I was diagnosed with stage 4 throat cancer and it was spreading. They gave me 1-2 months to survive. But I gave MYSELF a heck of a lot longer than that! I embraced the vegan diet as a way of staying

alive. I went from my normal 180 lbs to 140 lbs, it's taken nearly a year to get my weight and strength back. I didn't run for 3.5 months, my first absence of more than 2-3 days in a row in 34 years! With the help of my loving family and super good friends I am still around. For me, the vegan diet is the most nutrient dense, least acidic diet (cancer breeds in an acid base and dies (shrinks) in an alkaline base) Did you know that nearly all plant-based diets are alkaline from fruits/veggies, seeds/nuts/grains?

VHF: How has this diet affected your training, racing, or recovery?

I turned 70 on the 5th of September. I am still improving my endurance and my physical as well as my mental acuity. I am, of course, a lot slower than I was two decades ago. Maybe I have lost a little strength too, but I still see areas of improvement ahead of me. In fact, I recover quicker from grueling events at 70 than I did at 55. That has to be the diet, there's no other explanation for it.

VHF: Have you been involved in other athletics besides running?

I was never an athlete in school per say, but later in life I played softball, broomball, floor hockey, ring hockey. I also studied six years of Jujitsu.

VHF: How many ultras have you completed?

I have completed 130 ultras. My most recent race was the Lost Soul 100 km in Lethbridge, Alberta. I finished all but seven of them. I did not complete those seven races mostly because of circumstances that were out of my control. For example, a horse stepped on my foot at a race in Virginia. I limped along from the 80 to the 88-mile marker. By then, my foot was bleeding so much and I was limping so badly that I was unable to finish. There was nothing broken. But on the side of my foot there was a wound caused by the friction of my shoe, and with every step the pain got worse. I've had hypothermia a few times. At one race the course officials finally pulled me off that course.

I've bonked and been dehydrated from extreme high heat another time with my electrolytes all out of whack. I lost four hours another time. I just gave up and let my thoughts control my body. There were only two times that this happened though!

Those two races are the only ones in my life that I ever regretted not finishing. The "I just give up ones," darn it!

VHF: What inspires you to train and compete?

Many things inspire me to train and compete. My family, friends, and those in my run group inspire me. My son Logan with his tremendous drive and work ethic to succeed at ultras inspires me. I am also inspired by my fellow cancer survivors and cancer fighters. My own self-actualization to be my own best hero is also important, but we have to each be the best we can be!

VHF: What was it like running with your son on your 70th birthday?

It was a special thrill given his own battle for survival from a car accident as a teenager, and to see him do so well now. We only ran together in races twice before. He is one of only two pacers that I have used in my running history. (These are allowed in 100-milers after half way). We visit each other a few times per year as we live about 900 miles apart. We train together when we get together.

VHF: What does it mean to run The Lost Soul 100 km in Lethbridge in Southern, Alberta?

It is a great race with a deceptively tough course. Runners are up and down coulees all day and night long. The trails are very well marked,



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great race directors and volunteers. Everyone is super friendly and it is organized very well. Apparently I was the oldest competitor but it's just a number anyway. I know a lot of folks there as my son has lived in Edmonton, AB for ten plus years and see a lot of them when I visit Alberta.

VHF: How has your training mileage and diet changed over the years?

When I was my son's age I trained more, but in the last 15 years I have run every second day as I've found my body needs more rest for recovery. I run or hike 6-10 hours per week as a yearly average.

I thought my diet was pretty good until I switched to a plant-based diet. Since making the switch, I have really fine-tuned my diet.

VHF: How do you modify your training as race day approaches?

I taper by reducing my distance for the last two to three weeks before a race. I cut back to two-hour runs, then one and a half hours and then one-hour runs.

VHF: What equipment do you use?

Besides running shoes and enough clothes to appear respectable, I use a rowing machine on occasion. I also do high repetition workouts with light weights two to three times per week. I incorporate water running occasionally as well. I use a foam roller and a stick to keep my muscles limber.

VHF: Any favorite gear you use?

I have been using hand-held water bottles for over thirty years. I make my own hand straps for about a buck each! My homemade straps last me up to three years easy, and they keep their tension for at least that amount of time.

VHF: What is your running philosophy?

In my opinion (as an older runner) if a runner wants to run for a lot of years, unless 90% of their runs are conversational pace they will simply break down. Run for a long, slow distance (aka LSD) every seven to ten days. Hills are also super important pushups for the legs!

Unless we are very elite, most of these ultra events have a lot of variables with thousands of feet of climb and descent, extreme heat or cold, crossing creeks and rivers, in snow, desert etc. It is all about survival. So how do you survive? Be well trained but not over-trained. The proper event pace is so important as well as proper fuelling.

Enjoy the ride. Nature is awesome, but tougher than you, so be courageous but cautious.

VHF: Do you ever raise money for charities?

In the late 80s to early 90s I put on twelve 24-hour timed ultras at University Stadium to benefit the VIHIS (Vancouver Island Head Injury Society).

VHF: Do you ever train or race with your son?

I have done three races with my son, which was always a blast. I have also trained with Logan many times. I also train with groups as well, like Mike Suminski's group (the trail guy) in Victoria, B.C. Running in a group is always more about strength of purpose, motivation, and social networking. I have also logged thousands of miles on my own, which I always enjoy as well.

VHF: What are your biggest lessons learned since you began your ultra journey?

The biggest lessons are that we can find more within ourselves than we thought possible. We can find more strength, more endurance, more wisdom, more patience, and more courage. Running is a form of moving meditation. And trail running, the only running I do and prefer, gets you closer to nature, God, and our primal self.

Enjoy the ride.
Nature is awesome,
but tougher
than you, so be
courageous but
cautious.

VHF: Any advice for other vegans who want to start competing?

Eat from a varied group of food choices to cover all of your nutritional needs and always include lots of colored fruits and vegetables in your diet. You might take plant-based supplements and/or food grade vitamins, but it is best to get these nutrients from your diet. Train smart, less CAN be MORE.

VHF: Is there anything you'd like to add about your ultra lifestyle?

I always did love the outdoors, could not get enough. I worked in logging at first, which also put me outdoors. I always wanted to be a Forest/Wildlife Warden, but never applied myself to doing it. Later, after 27 years in Radio/TV Advertising Sales I started a guided hiking company and put on ultra marathons in Penticton, Keremeos, and the Apex Ski Resort.

From 1996 to 2006, minus a few years, I organized the Eagle 100-Mile Run, Canada's first 100-mile trail run. At that time it was the only 100-miler in the Pacific Northwest including Alberta, B.C., Montana, Idaho, Washington State and Oregon. We had an average of 55 runners in those days maybe six or seven Canadians, 40 Americans and Europeans. In the first 17 miles

there were 13 ice-cold mid-thigh creek crossings down to Hedley, BC (Famous for Gold).

The native Indian band allowed us cross into the Chuchwayha Reserve and run about 13 miles out and back on their land. It was a daunting 50 meters across a river there. The Eagle Ultras always had at least 20,000 feet of climbing. There were lots of hills throughout the race. One of the bigger hills was 5,000 feet of elevation for the last 11 miles, which was a very challenging finish!


That is where Tim Tweetmeyer, five-time champion of the Western States 100-miler left his pacer Neil MacDonald of Penticton puking on the way up to Apex Alpine Ski Resort near the finish. Neil in 1996 was like a 34:00 minute 10k-er (one of Neil's claims to fame). We also had a very good runner from Smithers, a studio musician who ran The Eagle and dropped out at 61 miles, composed a son called Eagle Lament!

In 2004 we did two loops of Cathedral Park instead of the one loop and back to Apex Ski Resort. We finished at Ashnola Powwow grounds courtesy of the Upper Similkameen Indian Band. One of those loops was the rim above Cathedral and was famous for whiteouts. But you could see row upon row of Northern Cascades in Washington State. On the first loop we got up to 8,100 to 8,500 feet for 10 miles straight and the second loop got up to 7,000 feet of elevation. There were lots of roots, rocks, mud, and scree piles. It was very technical!

But there was a flat gravel road finish, also a 50-miler that year. Easier course? I guess not. 25 percent of the 100-milers finished, whereas in 2004 only about half of the 50 milers finished! All of my 100s averaged a 40-55% finish rate. But this was in the days when no rookies ran 100s and you had to qualify with a 50-mile run prior, show proof of this (a letter from a race director, newspaper clipping, or *Ultrarunning* magazine race result posting, etc.) I later added a 50k so as to allow more folks to run.

I put on the Keremeos Kruncher 50k with an 8,500 foot climb in 2004-2006. In 1997 I organized the Wildhorse 50-miler from Naramata near Penticton, BC to Kelowna, BC in Okanagan Mountain Park (which was reportedly GPS'ed by 2 Alaska competitors at our event as over 15,000 feet of climb).

We had 75 runners, a pretty big field in the interior of B.C. Steve King, (the Voice of Ironman Canada when it was in Penticton for so many years) announced and played my music selection as each runner finished the Wildhorse Ultra, "A Wildhorse Runs Free Forever" by Rod Stewart.

A photograph of two ultramarathon runners from behind, walking through a field of tall, dry grass. They are wearing black athletic gear, white caps, and green neck gaiters. The runner on the right has 'GREEN' visible on their back. The background is a dense field of green and yellow vegetation under bright sunlight.

I've had challenges to face during my ultras. I experienced high winds that could knock you down, hail storms, lightning, whiteouts in which I had to crawl in the rocks and wait it out. I remember in a race (Wasatch Front 100-miler in Utah) our water bottles froze.

I have also seen more beauties of nature in three decades plus than I can recount. For instance, I have seen wolves, two or three different types of eagles, California Condors, buzzards, elk, moose, wild boar, javelinas, bobcats and their kittens and even a wolverine. I saw countless bears, never a cougar, but tracks where I knew on the return that I was being followed. I've encountered unlimited types of trees, plants, flowers, ice fields, raging rivers, quiet pools and brooks.

-Moe (The Eagle)

completed over 130 ultras, so far...