



# Tempo Monthly Newsletter

July Edition 2016

## Athlete Focus: Stephan Wenk, Swiss international athlete



Winner of the 2014 Beachy Head Marathon

## Eastbourne's Specialist Running shop

### 1. What made you first get into running?

I first got into Sport probably through my brother, who was competing Duathlon on an international level at the time. I saw myself as a Duathlete with the occasional runs in between. Later I discovered mountain- and trailrunning which is now my main passion.

### 2. What is your biggest/ proudest achievement to date?

It made me proud every time I was able to represent my country at international championships. The 13<sup>th</sup> place at the Duathlon Worlds in Rimini 2008 was probably one of my best experiences when I was able to stay in the lead group on the first run and was flat out. This is when the competition actually really starts.

### 3. What are your aims and goals for the season?

It depends on a few factors in my private life. Either I will do the skyrunning world series where my main goals would be the Zegama Marathon, Ultraks Zermatt and Limone Extreme – or Sierre-Zinal (also known as the New York marathon of mountain running) and the Jungfrau Marathon.

**4. What motivates you to get up early in the morning and train?**

To explore where I am and experience the nature is a great motivation. On the other hand, the feeling of all body parts working hard and as a unit - and the exhaustion afterwards with the endorphins is also something only people will understand who are regularly active. And finally success at competitions and the goal to achieve something is also an element that drives me.

**5. What food is your guilty pleasure?**

That's easy – Swiss Chocolate!

**6. If you could stay injury free and have an excellent 6 months training, what time do you think you could do for a 5k run?**

I have only done very few track races. I am not sure if I can get down to the sub 15 minutes again. My PB stays at 14:59 from 2007 and there was a time in 2008 when I thought I could have done something like 14:30 so I go with 14:30.



**7. Who is your role model or inspires you and why?**

In my early days Haile Gebrselassie was the dominating figure for me in the athletic world. I have to admit that I don't have the faith anymore in the system. When athletes like Gatlin get big fat contracts you know something is wrong.

**8. Have you ever suffered an embarrassing moment during a race/ training?**

If a race lasts a certain time you may feel the urge to urinate. To stop for this is definitely not an option. Fortunately, the field is by that time so far spread and in trail races you are often on your own so nobody will notice it and a few cups of water at the next water station will help cover up the rest. This has happened to me only in very few occasions but you certainly feel embarrassed when it happens.

**9. If you could race against anyone who would it be (can be anyone) and why?**

As a Swiss sportsman I would love to meet Roger Federer once for a jog. He is the best ambassador Switzerland could wish for.

**10. What is the best bit of running advice you have ever been given...and could pass on to others?**

Enthusiastic athletes don't need training plans – they train anyway. What they need are recovery plans.



# TEMPO 10K

## OCTOBER 9TH 2016



**START TIME:**  
9:30AM

**ENTRY PRICE**  
£12.00

**ENTRY CLOSING DATE**  
Saturday 1st October  
(subject to availability)

**SUPPORTED CHARITIES**  
RNLi of Eastbourne and  
the Great Ormond Street  
Hospital

**ENTRY DETAILS**  
To enter the race, pick up an  
entry form at the Tempo shop  
or visit [www.temposhop.co.uk](http://www.temposhop.co.uk)

**CONTACT DETAILS**  
T: 01323 723152  
E: [temposhopuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:temposhopuk@yahoo.co.uk)  
Wk: [www.temposhop.co.uk](http://www.temposhop.co.uk)

**WHEN**  
Sunday October 9th,  
9:30am start

**THE COURSE:**  
2 laps of Eastbourne seafront. Start and finish by the Holywell Café (BN20 7XB), turnaround point opposite Terminus Road

- Registration opens at 8:30am and closes at 9:15 on day of event, race numbers picked up on the day.
- Public toilets available at start/ finish point of race. Men and women must be at least 16 years of age on race day
- Refreshments available from the Holywell Café
- Race medals and goody bags for all finishers, prizes available to podium finishers and spot prizes also available.








I really wanted to call this article ‘Stretching the truth’, because I thought it was a snappy title and I love a semi-decent pun. But I’m well aware that I’m venturing here into a topic that people have particularly strong views about. Attack an athlete’s stretching routine and you attack their very being. So rather than providing the definitive answer, or ‘the truth’, I thought I’d go for something I can quickly back away from when someone tells me I’m wrong before a race, or even worse – after a race where they’ve just beaten me – “You see if you’d stretched like me...”

So instead, this is “to stretch or not to stretch – the science says...” -

### Before we begin...

The information included here deals solely with the stretching element of warming-up or cooling down, not with the entire process of a warm-up and cool-down.

### Different types of stretching

I intend to deal with two types of stretching here, as they are the most frequently used – static and dynamic. Static stretching, which involves lengthening a muscle until a feeling of stretch or minor discomfort<sup>1,2</sup> and then holding for a period of time and dynamic stretching, which involves a controlled movement through the range of movement (ROM).

### The effect of different types of stretching on performance

For many years static stretching was the most common form of stretching people engaged in during a warm-up for physical activity. In fact, other than some disagreement over how long you should hold a stretch for, few people seemed to question its effectiveness in terms of improving ROM and as such reducing the chance of getting injured. More recently however, a growing number of studies have reported an impairment in performance following static stretching and a review of stretching studies in 2012<sup>3</sup> reported significant performance reduction in 119 studies, no change in 145 studies and a significant improvement in performance in 6 studies. The tests used to represent ‘performance’ in

## To stretch or not to stretch?



Contributor: Jason Newbery

these studies varies greatly – everything from single jumps to long running time-trials - but reported ‘performance change’ following a period of static stretching ranged from +5% to -20.5%. This vast range that suggests there may be more occurring during these studies than just changes caused by stretching. It should be noted that studies that have looked at holding static stretches for different periods of time have shown holding a stretch for more than 60 seconds caused the largest impairment of performance<sup>6</sup>.

Dynamic stretching has become more and more popular during warm-ups for a number of reasons. There is clearer association with the movement patterns involved in the activity<sup>4</sup> and it helps to raise the body’s core temperature, which accelerates energy production and increases nerve conduction velocity<sup>5</sup>. A range of studies into the effect of dynamic stretching on performance have demonstrated a positive effect on performance, however, these improvements are often small and as such no robust evidence exists for substantial performance improvement following dynamic stretching<sup>6</sup>.

One point of note is that often in studies the period between stretching and testing is often much shorter (3-5 mins) than typically occurs during racing - where people often complete their warm-up more than 10 mins before the race begins. When these periods have been simulated there is even less noticeable effect on performance for any type of stretching<sup>6</sup>.

### **The effect of stretching on injury prevention**

Considering the fact that one of the reasons a lot of people give for stretching is that it reduces their risk of injury, you might think there are a huge number of studies into this claim. There aren’t. Part of the issue is that it’s very difficult (quite rightly!) to get ethical approval for deliberately trying to injure people. As such, association studies are often reliant on people reporting ‘soreness’, or the retrospective reporting of stretching habits amongst injured athletes. A review of these studies have failed to show any significant positive effect of stretching on

reducing injury risk, although it should be noted that none showed stretching to increase your risk of injury. There is still little evidence either way regarding whether stretching prior to ‘warming’ the muscles with a period of activity has any different impact on injury risk.

### **Cool down stretching**

During physical activity the repeated contracting action of muscles can lead to disruption in the muscle fibres alignment and length<sup>7</sup>. This is particularly the case when the muscle is forcibly lengthened whilst contracting – known as an eccentric muscle contraction. This damage to muscle fibres is thought to be responsible for the stiffness and soreness often felt by people who take up a new sport or use muscles they haven’t used in a while in the days following an activity (known as delayed onset muscle soreness or DOMS if you want to slightly impress people). The thought process from here then is that perhaps stretching post-exercise would help muscle fibres realign correctly and this DOMS could be avoided. So what do the studies say?

Well much like pre-exercise stretching, the limited number of studies show little effect of post-exercise stretching on soreness or injury risk. Some studies found a small reduction in soreness, but at a very minor level, particularly considering the self-reporting nature of the evidence.

One particularly comprehensive study, which looked at implementing an entire warm-up and cool down routine, split 421 runners into two groups. The group with the new warm-up and cool-down stretching routine were found to be no more or less likely to get injured than those who did no stretching during their warm-up or cool down.

### **Final thoughts**

One element that should not be overlooked is the mental state of preparedness people may feel having stretched. Stretching a muscle that has been bothersome in the past, or using the time spent stretching to visualise the race, may be something

that people find beneficial and is unlikely to show up in studies of this type.

So as some form of conclusion...If you stretch pre- or post-exercise then the chances are you aren't going to be hugely damaging your performance (unless you hold a static stretch for more than 60 secs). And if you don't, the chances are you aren't going to be hugely damaging your performance (unless you feel less mentally prepared).

So, to stretch or not to stretch – that's probably still the question...

## References

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7. Proske, U., & Morgan, D. L. (2001). Muscle damage from eccentric exercise: mechanism, mechanical signs, adaptation and clinical applications. *The Journal of physiology*, *537*(2), 333-345.

# Dynamic Stretches to get your ready

Following on from Jason's superb article, we provide a number of dynamic stretches that could be incorporated into your training and racing routine.

## Hip Flexor Stretch

Stand tall. Flex your hip and knee to bring your right knee up toward your chest as you swing your left arm forward. Lower to the ground, then repeat on the other leg



## Leg Flexor Stretch

Stand tall with your right arm forward. Bend your knee at a right angle in front of you, thigh parallel to the ground, as you swing your right arm back and left arm forward. Contract your quads to extend your leg straight out. Return to standing, then repeat with the other leg.



## Leg Extensor Stretch

Tighten your hamstrings and bend your right knee behind you, bringing your heel toward your butt as you swing your right arm back and left arm forward. Straighten your leg, then repeat on the other side.



## Plantar Flexor Stretch

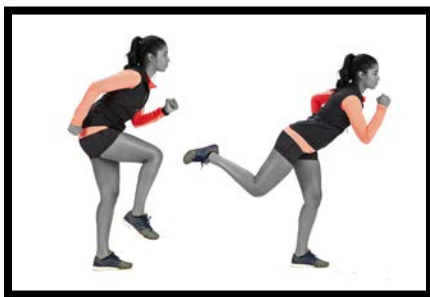
Stand with your hands on your hips. Raise your right foot a few inches, keeping your knee straight.

Quickly flex your foot, pointing your toes upward. Return to standing, then repeat with the other foot.



### Hip Extensor Stretch

Hinge forward at your hips. Raise your right foot and bend your right knee in front of you while swinging your left arm forward as you would when running. From there, maintain the same lean as you quickly stretch your right leg behind you. At the same time, swing your right arm forward and your left arm back. Return your knee in front of you and repeat with the other leg



## Nutrition idea...

### Eggs baked in avocado



Eggs baked in avocado, provides welcome protein and the avocado delivers monounsaturated fat which helps reduce inflammation. The avocado also provides a range of vitamins and fibre (that can contribute to weight loss, reduce blood sugar spikes and is strongly linked to a lower risk of many diseases).

How to make it:

1. Cut the avocado in half and scoop out the stone
2. Fill the hole made in the avocado through the removal of the stone with the yolk and white of the egg. (You may need to scoop out a little of the avocado in order to get the entire egg in).
3. Add seasoning on top, I personally like to use salt, pepper, parsley and paprika to give it that little edge, but you can also use chives.
4. Bake for approximately 15mins at 200 degrees until the egg has cooked through.

Then serve with salad or if you have enough preparation time, sweet potato wedges.

If you would like to make a contribution to the monthly newsletter, please get in touch via our email: [tempshopuk@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tempshopuk@yahoo.co.uk)



