

Inspiring Islanders On The Run : Beibei Jia



This week our inspirational runner is Beibei Jia. She grew up in a very small town in Hennan Province, China. It was Beibei's dream to pursue veterinary epidemiology that brought her to PEI in 2011. She has been researching aquatic health at the Centre of Veterinary Epidemiological Research Centre (CVER) at UPEI Atlantic Veterinary College. She is currently a faculty member at CVER. She has a son who is almost 17 years old now. We believe Beibei is a great role model for being able to excel in and balance many areas of life, while enjoying the process.

Beibei was a sprinter back late 1996, and started running more regularly in 2012. She started running during her PhD study time. It was a very functional way for her to refresh herself from studying, both mentally and physically.

She has previously participated in 7 PEI Marathon events. Her favorite memory of the PEI Marathon is the support from volunteers. She highlights how the volunteers really bring the whole community together. You might find her training at Victoria Park for a routine relaxing run, or with running friends at the UPEI track improving on speed. Although her favorite race distances are 5 and 10 kilometres, she plans on lacing up for the full marathon this fall. Her advice for this year's participants is to sleep well, eat whole food, and join group runs.

The reason Beibei inspires us is she consistently shows up to several different run clubs with a smile. We have watched her running improve over the years. She is always encouraging everyone around her, as a runner and as a cheering spectator. To no surprise, she is motivated to continue running by surrounding herself with friends, and joining various running events. When she has her running friends around her, she is never bored! Beibei is happiest when running with a group, especially the 10ish Crew Running Group, and Meacher's Saurday Morning Run. Both are fun, encouraging run groups based in Charlottetown, PEI. The 10ish group meets at the Running Room on Wednesday nights at 6pm for a 10"ish" Km run. There are currently 66 members now. Meacher's Saturday Morning Run, with 47 members, meets at Charlottetown Hotel with options for shorter distances, going for coffee afterwards.

Q: What is your favorite pre marathon meal? A: Lo Mein noodles for supper before the race. Salmon bagel three hours before the run. Q: What is your favorite post marathon meal? A: French toast with maple syrup, smoked salmon. Q: Give people a reason to go for a run. A: Running makes you relax, refresh your mind, and restart your system. Q: Favorite motivational quote or mantra? A: I have been motivated by a racing sign during PEI marathon: "PEI loves you!" It contains all the positive energy from the people, the soil, and the water around the island here!

We love that Beibei has found the magic in group running. The benefits are countless. Feelings of motivation, safety, and belonging. Not to forget to mention, improved performance. As sisters who run together, we have experienced these benefits. It makes the run more enjoyable, and we keep each other accountable. We can learn from Beibei to make a habit of running with a friend, joining in on a group run, or registering for events like the PEI Marathon to keep us motivated. Good luck Beibei, see you on the run!

Tagline: Sisters Sandra Cottreau and Carrie Gregory will be writing a weekly column in The Guardian leading up to the 20th Annual P.E.I Marathon Weekend on Oct. 20.