

The Empire Runner



The Prez Sez...

Hey club-mates,

Now there's a term, "club-mates." What exactly does that even mean?

All of us are members of the Empire Runners Club. We pay a nominal fee a year, and as such, that make us club-mates, right? Strictly speaking, yes, it does. But there has to be more than that.

Well, what about at a race. You are on the sidelines for one reason or another, and see someone fly by with the Empire singlet, maybe you know them, but with

hundreds of members, more likely you don't. So you cheer "Go Empire!" Because, they are a part of your club, and you want them to do well. This is something good, this is important.

Or say you're in a race far from Sonoma County, and, to your surprise, you see an Empire Runner after the race. You introduce yourself, say hi. Get to know someone new, because you already have that in, that connection back home. Maybe make a new friend. That's getting closer, that's huge.

But what I personally really like about club-mates is that it's only one step away from another concept: teammate.

There's no fine line between these concepts, don't get me wrong. All hundreds and hundreds of you are my club-mates, and if you're getting excited about your running, I'll get excited to. Because we are an extended family of sorts. But there is something about being a "team."

The PA circuit has been great to me. It introduced me to some awesome club-mates, whom before I had never really got to know. True, it started out with us just meeting race-day morning, toeing the line together, and hanging out. That's not really teammate status. But then, we said hey, let's go for a run some morning. So some of us met together and went for a training run together. And it was fun. And we did it again. And again.

A few years down the line, on January 1st of this year, I found myself awake at 6am. Why? Because one of my club-mates, nay, one of my teammates, needed to do a long tempo before the Resolution Run, and could use some help. So we were up before the sun, hammering out mile after mile, helping each other out. As a team.

We are all club-mates, all somewhat of an extended family. And it's awesome what we have. But I hope all of you have that chance to get to know some more members. Get out with some others to do some morning runs, or some nighttime drills, or lunch-break intervals, whatever. Get to know your club-mates and, who knows, you may find yourself with something more: a teammate.

Run Happy,

Alex Wolf-Root