

Injury Prevention Keeps Doctor on Toes

By Dave Hines
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KINGSTON – Of the many runners – and walkers – planning to participate in this year’s 25th annual Kingston Classic 10-kilometer road race on April 30, a high percentage will encounter some sort of injury along the way.

Hopefully, participants will be perfectly healthy on race day, and clear of problems in the approaching weeks, but sometimes injuries are unavoidable.

In the hopes of preventing such problems, Doug Tumen, a popular local podiatrist and member of Hudson Valley Foot Associates – a Classic sponsor – as well as a former Classic director, offered some thoughts on the types of injuries his office commonly sees, and how to avoid them.

Tumen said more injuries actually come out of the Shamrock Run (March 12), the unofficial kickoff for many to the running season, which is a two-mile downhill sprint, rather than the Classic’s flatter, longer run.

He said the most common problem he sees is plantar fasciitis, an injury to the arch area between the heel and the ball of the foot, that comes from the repetitive stress of running.

Other problems include stress fractures resulting from overuse of the metatarsal (ball-of-foot) bones; tendonitis in the foot or leg – injuries commonly grouped together and called shin splints; trauma to toenails; and knee pain resulting from improper pronation (ankle rolling inward or outward).

Tumen, an avid runner and veteran of nine marathons – including seven New York City marathons, said he runs on average five days a week. He said he likes to see new runners get started.

“One of my passions is getting new people out there,” Tumen said. “If we can inspire some people to even walk (the Classic) . . . I would invite anyone who wants to participate.”

Tumen said the Classic course – up the hill from Kingston Plaza, out Hurley Avenue and back in to finish at Dietz Stadium – is an excellent choice, even for those just getting started in running.

“The course is great – even for beginners,” Tumen said. “It’s fairly flat. The key is to get to the race with a good 6-8 weeks of running.”

He said the tendency at the start of the race, especially with people cheering and a large crowd, is to go out fast. But that’s the wrong approach.

“I would encourage people to start slower,” Tumen said, noting that going out too fast would make the later stages of the race much more challenging than they need to be.

Tumen directed the Classic with Charlie Lawrence from 1992-96, but he still helps out where he can. He said current director Dick Vincent does an excellent job overseeing the race.

“Dick Vincent deserves all the credit in the world for the race,” Tumen said. “I help Dick with some things and also on race day announce on the radio (WKNY 1490 AM).”

Tumen said he has come up with five *Rule of the Road* to help runners avoid injuries.

No. 1: Speed kills.

“If you run every day at race pace you’re going to get hurt,” Tumen said.

No. 2: The 10 percent rule.

“You should increase weekly mileage no more than 10 percent,” Tumen said. “If you run 20 miles this week, then you should run no more than 22 next week.”

No 3: Long run of week should be no more than 50 percent of total mileage.

“If you run 20 miles a week, don’t throw in a 10-mile run,” he said.

No 4: Listen to your body.

No 5: Throw in cross-training.

“Swimming and biking helps give your body a break,” Tumen said.

He said, above all, it’s important to have a plan for your training regiment.

To that end, Tumen will lead a free in-depth seminar and foot screening for runners and walkers 7 p.m. on Tuesday at the Hudson Valley Foot Associates office at 103 Hurley Avenue Kingston.

Tumen said spots were still available, but reservations are required. Call (845) 339-4191 for details.