



Gaye Young

Name: Gaye Young

Born: 21.03.1969

Date Joined: October 2017

Personal Bests: 1500m track race: 6:25.74

5K: 22:26

5 miles: 37:57

10k: 47:23

10 miles: 79:23

HM: 1:44.01

20 miles: 3:03.23

Marathon: 3:56.19

First Club Race: 28th October 2017 - Horseheath, Essex League. Time achieved was 32:26. It was freezing cold and it was a shock to the system doing my first cross country race. But somehow I enjoyed it, hence me waving and smiling as reflected in the photo.

Favourite Race: I do like the Elvis Olympic park 5k not so much for the race but feeling a sense of gratitude for being proud to be a part of this country and that I am running in the Olympic park where other great athletes took part in the Olympic games. I also felt the same sense of awe being part of the London Marathon and enjoyed the atmosphere so much. It brought tears to my eyes when I was crossing over London bridge.

Notable Performances: The Elvis Barking 5k race in August 2021. I arrived literally with 2 minutes to spare, after cycling to the park, dropping my bike and running to the start line and desperately needing the toilet and started running still trying to pin my number onto my top. I did my fastest 5k and once I reached the finish line I continued running, heading straight to the toilet.

The Essex 20 was the race which proved I could run a lengthy distance. Then of course running the London Marathon which was a goal I set to achieve when I started running.

Typical Weeks Training: I train 5 days a week with 1 or 2 strength and core workouts.

Favourite Sessions: I do like doing the summer time hill sessions. They are tough but spending time in



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the forest is always lovely especially as you can see the London skyline.

Who is the most Famous Athlete you've seen: I saw Mo Farrah at the Vitality 10K one year. It was also great watching him fly past when I was volunteering at the London marathon water station.

How would you improve the sport: To combine strength and core workouts as part of the training plan for runners. To gain more understanding around the science of running and the power of the mind and how it influences your performance.

Favourite Athlete or Sportsman: On the South African side for me is Bruce Fordyce who won 9 Comrades ultra marathons and was everyone's hero during his prime. Comrades is the ultimate race in South Africa and it is an event that most South Africans will tune into to watch.

Francios Pienaar the captain of the South African rugby team who won the 1995 world cup. His performance on and off the ground was inspirational during a time where South Africa as a nation came together to celebrate. A time of great unity across the rainbow nation.

Who do you admire as a runner:

I think everyone in Ilford AC is great and each of us achieve amazing results. It is always great watching the fast runners racing around the track but equally those who just keep going and finish a race or a rep giving their best is amazing.

Pam is a legend and someone I admire so much.

Julia is the first person I ran with at track and she helped me gain confidence when I first started.

Carlie helps me realize that you can improve your speed and stamina.

Hannah impresses me with how speedy she has become at track sessions.

Frieda is just fantastic with her ability to just keep going always with a smile

Alison is so strong with cross country and a good partner to run with.

I am humbled by Billy who supports other runners to help them meet their running goals

Dennis is inspirational with how he just powers up those hills and am in awe when I see him running. Dennis has helped me much to build my belief in myself.

Anna helped me achieve my first 7:52 pace for a 5 miles virtual race and Sameena helped me overcome the challenge of running longer distances again when coming out of the first lockdown by running alongside me for 14 miles at my achievable pace.



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What other sports do you follow:

I do like watching tennis and sailing.

Best Country Visited:

Canada. Everyone is so friendly and helpful. The Rocky mountains are spectacular and the vastness of the country is astounding.

I am biased but South Africa, particularly Cape Town and the Garden Route is exceptionally exquisite.

Favourite Food & Drink:

My comfort food is marmite on toast.

I always enjoy tea and hot chocolate.

Favourite TV Shows:

No idea. I don't watch T.V.

Last Film Seen

Maverick, the latest Top Gun movie which was then followed by watching Top Gun on dvd.

Last Book Read:

Non fiction:

Time to Think: Listening to ignite the human mind

By: Nancy Kline

A fascinating read.

Ficton:

The book of two ways

By: Jodie Picoult

Favourite Band/Singer:

This is difficult to decide:



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I always find myself singing along to Queen when I hear it being played.

I like Shaina Twain and always feel energized when her music is playing

My go to c.d. when I need a pick me up would be Ed Sheeran

I generally like music and listen to all types (no particular artist or band).

The c.d. I am playing at the moment is 'Top Gun!' Guess what I am a Top Gun fan!

Last Theatre Attended:

Cinders – it was a bit naughty but funny.

Any Pets:

I have a finch. Did have a pair of finches but one of them died.

What are your aims for next season:

To achieve a PB at the London Marathon.

To be able to continue running as it helps me not only physically but for my emotional well being as well.

Joke:

I really am no good with jokes and don't really know any.

Billy is good at jokes.

Three men are waiting in a hospital because their wives are pregnant. The nurse comes out and says 'congratulations you are the father of twins'.

The man says 'what a coincidence as I am an executive at Twix'.

A bit later the nurse comes to the second man 'congratulations you are the father of quadruplets'. The man says 'what a coincidence I am a manager of a 4 star hotel'.

The final man then starts panicking and says 'I work for 7up'.

Do you get this joke? I don't (Editor – I do !!!)



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Founded in 1923

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1st Olympic park 5k 2022.

2nd photo is me receiving my Warrior of the year trophy. I was so surprised to receive this amazing trophy.

3rd photo is my running the London marathon

4th photo is my first track race where I was entered for the 1500, running with Carlie.

5th photo: seeing Mo at the Vitality10

6th photo: my first race for Ilford AC.



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7th photo: Achieving Mud Warrior of the year. I was so stunned and humbled by this award.

8th photo: my first half marathon ever run in May 2018. The Hackney half marathon. Ran it in honour of my dad in a time of 1:44.01

9th photo: the Redhill half marathon in July 2018. Ilford ladies team won the silver medals. A great achievement and it was a tough race on a very hot day.

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

When and Why did you start running ?

I started running in April 2017. I was in a very low emotional space at the time. A friend who was in South Africa had completed the Two Oceans ultra marathon and I thought if she can run so can I and she inspired me to start running.

What influenced you to join Ilford AC ?

Attending the Wednesday Harrier's sessions was so uplifting and I was encouraged to go along to the track sessions and from there I joined Ilford AC.

What is your occupation and how do you fit your training around this ?

I am a qualified teacher but currently am Assistant Headteacher, Inclusion Lead of an ARP for Autism and an Educational coach and mentor at a primary school. I have to balance work, being a mother and fit running into my week. There are days I honestly have not got an ounce of energy to run but every time I do run I feel so much better.

Favourite Running Shoe and Why ?

I have not tried many running shoes but my faithful ones are Asics shoes. I don't know why I like them, they suit me and have just stuck with them.

Favourite and Least Favourite race and why ?

The Tonbridge XC British Masters race was not at all pleasant and it was such a tough



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course. My favourite race is the Olympic Park Elvis race as I feel a sense of pride that I am running at the place where the Olympic games were held. The Essex league track race where I ran 5k was a new experience. Rob was amazing with supporting me over each lap, guiding me as to what to do next. I would not have succeeded without his guidance which I greatly appreciated. I achieved a gold Essex medal which I had been striving to get but missed out on at other Essex races.

Any ambitions to run Comrades or Two Oceans ultra-marathons back in South Africa ?

I would love to run the Two Oceans as I have that on my bucket list.

Worst Injury ?

Being bitten by a dog which put me out for many weeks, was a severe injury. Actually it happened the Friday of the London Marathon weekend which I was supposed to run but it had got canceled due to Lockdown.

What is included in your strength and core training ?

I focus mostly on core and resistance training using bands and sometimes weights. I am conscious the affects on the body changing during menopause and the importance to keep muscle and bone strength.

Do you follow any specific diet/Nutrition ?

Nope not really. I have recently ensured that I am eating more protein after training to help with recovery.

Ultimate Running Ambition ?

To be able to keep running into my senior years.

What do you miss most about South Africa and what do you like most about the UK ?

I do miss the view of Table mountain and walking on the beach. I also did some sailing and owned a little catamaran but have not done this for over 20 years now so probably very rusty. I love London, when I go to Covent Garden and listen to the musicians playing or when I visit the great museums I get a sense of wonderment and feel privileged to be here. I love the history of the UK, and there are so many beautiful places to visit in the UK. I am still discovering the UK and its greatness.

During the days of sanctions against Sth Africa, did it ever feel like the country



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was suffering economically?

I am not the best person to ask as my ethnic group had a better lifestyle and more opportunities during that time. Due to apartheid and its laws everyone had different experiences. There was such poverty and huge discrimination and restrictions for so many other ethnic groups. There was a minority group who used force and indoctrination to keep power. It was not right and there were a vast many South Africans who constantly worked to drive the changes that eventually took place. It was so incredible when Nelson Mandela was released and when the first general election took place where everyone could vote and this was such an emotional and jubilant time. There were many who walked for days to get to a polling station. There was unity and we as a country came together as one United South Africa.

What is your favourite landmark that you have visited in the UK?

I have to make a confession, I mis-represented Tower Bridge in my Who's Who. I think it is such an impressive structure and felt so special running over it in the marathon last year. I think architecturally the Natural History museum is phenomenal. I love the V&A entrance, the new section, and if you ever get a chance to visit the gardens in the Ismaili Centre, it is absolutely peaceful and beautiful. There are so many great landmarks.

Do you have a favourite route to run?

I like to run in Wanstead Park.

I was there the first time you attended panto. Panto isn't done in any other country, it is a very British thing. Did you find the experience funny or strange....or even both ???

I thoroughly enjoyed my first Panto. It is not something that is presented in South Africa so I had to learn how to join in and to pick up on the humour.

If you won a competition to spend a week being trained by any runner on earth. Who would you choose?

Not 100% sure. Recently I have been listening to podcasts by coach Lindsay Parry who is geared towards helping runners over 50, but especially ladies runners, who are experiencing menopause, to improve their running. So I think right now for me I feel I would like that opportunity to get training incorporating this approach.

If you could go back and attend and witness any event in history what would it be?

Honestly, I am not sure. The beginning of creation.



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6 guests at a dinner party - Alive or dead. Who would they be, why and what are you cooking?

Nelson Mandela - would love to have a conversation about his ability to be so compassionate and his outlook on life.

Tom Cruise - he is so dedicated to his profession and would like to hear about his work. Not so much about his scientology though (no interest in that).

Dr Joe Dispenzer - the topic of Nero-science is of interest to me and would like to do a walking medication with him after dinner

David Attenborough - I can imagine it is fascinating listening to his stories about his adventures.

My best friend, Tracey. She knows me better than I know myself. I miss that physical connection, virtual calls are great but being physically present is when there is a real tangible connection.

My dad - a million times I wish to have one more conversation and meal together. He is a great storyteller.

What I would cook. Well truly the only really good dish I know I can make which is always a winner for Warren is a tuna pasta bake. So I will go with that.

Looking at your Strava I am very impressed with your running but does your watch run out of battery at the end of the week or do you never run on a Friday? ☐

This made me laugh. Rest days from running are vital for recovery and I have rest days on a Friday and a Monday. If you follow my Strava you will mostly see strength and core workout, stretching, yoga or Qi Gong on these days which are great to maintain your strength for your body and your mind.

Tell us all about your father. A few of us have heard the story, but it's a story worth sharing with others. Also how did he feel when you told him you had taken up running.

My dad was completely taken aback that I was running and didn't quite believe me when I



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told him I had actually run in a race as well. So when Billy did the press report of my first race and it appeared in the local paper I sent the clipping to my dad. He kept that clipping as I found it in his bible when I was sorting his things out after he passed away.

Who would win a basketball penalty shoot out between you and Carlie?

That is a little unfair. I reckon we would agree to decide on a draw instead of going head to head for a penalty shoot out and go off and have a nice cake and hot drink instead. What would you say, Carlie!