



Strides: Running Through History With an Unlikely Athlete

By Benjamin Cheever

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Acclaimed novelist Benjamin Cheever--author of *The Plagiarist*, *Famous After Death*, and *The Good Nanny*--brings his buoyant literary style to this impassioned memoir about the sport that changed his life.

From Pheidippides, who ran the first marathon in 490 BC--bringing news to Athens of the Greek victory on the plains of Marathon--to our own soldiers in Iraq today, running is an integral part of human culture and legend. In *Strides*, heralded author Benjamin Cheever explores the role of running in human history while interspersing this account with revelations of his own decades-long devotion to the sport.

Cheever has traveled the world writing features for *Runner's World* magazine, and he draws from this rich experience on every page. His adventures have taken him to Kenya in search of the secrets of the world's fastest long-distance runners and to a 10-K race with American soldiers in Baghdad. Cheever celebrates the quotidian personal satisfaction of a morning run and the more exotic pleasures of the Medoc Marathon in Bordeaux, where fine wines are served at water stations and the first prize is the winner's weight in grand crus. He shares vivid moments from the New York Marathon and waxes rhapsodic about the granddaddy of American distance events--the Boston Marathon. But what truly distinguishes *Strides* as a memorable read is the unique lens through which this sparkling writer explores our deep bond to running, an experience he likens to that of being able to fly.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Cheever (*The Plagiarist*) makes an erratic dash through his lifetime of marathon running while offering facts about the sport throughout history. Having discovered running in 1977, at age 28, while working at *Reader's Digest*, and stuck in an unhappy marriage, he became more and more involved in the sport over the next 30 years, losing weight, gaining a new body type and the much-needed confidence he lacked growing up as the son of the famous writer John Cheever. Alternating with his personal memories of marathon running from races in Yonkers, New York City; Boston; Médoc, France; and Baghdad, Cheever explores some troubling questions, such as whether running is really natural for mankind and even good for your health (hunters and gatherers weren't efficient runners, yet humans prove they possess impressive endurance running). Cheever tracks examples from Homer to the earliest and later Olympics, from races in the Dark Ages to the art of pedestrianism to Kenyan secrets of success. Cheever fills his pages with accounts by runners for whom the sport altered them profoundly. A terrific list of his 26.2 favorite books on running caps Cheever's springy, upbeat pep talk for the runnerati. (Oct.)

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Review

“Cheever, a former journalist and onetime copy editor at *Reader's Digest*, melds reportorial skills, literary talent and a wicked sense of humor to capture the irony and indefatigable spirit of running in the 21st century....Beginners will relate to Cheever's inauspicious initial forays into fitness and exercise, and veteran runners can share his enthusiasm for the Kenyans and other leaders of the pack. The result is a joyous and inspirational ode to our transformative sport.” ?Jim Hage, *The Washington Post*

About the Author

BENJAMIN CHEEVER has published in the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, *Gourmet*, and *Runner's World*. He has taught at Bennington College and The New School for Social Research. The author of the highly praised novels *The Plagiarist*, *The Partisan*, and *Famous After Death*, and editor of *The Letters of John Cheever*, he lives in Pleasantville, New York.

Users Review

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Steven Campbell:

The knowledge that you get from Strides: Running Through History With an Unlikely Athlete is a more deep you digging the information that hide inside words the more you get serious about reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to be aware of but Strides: Running Through History With an Unlikely Athlete giving you joy feeling of reading. The writer conveys their point in selected way that can be understood through anyone who read this because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your vocabulary increase well. So it is easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We recommend you for having this Strides: Running Through History With an Unlikely Athlete instantly.

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John Lambeth:

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David Baxter:

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