



# The StrideRight

Club #229 Vol. 45 No 11 Sept – Oct 2024

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)

## What's Inside

President's Corner	1
Nice to Meet You	2-3
Wednesday Track	4
2024 Wellness Expo	5
3rd annual Clay County Elementary P.E. Teachers Lunch	6
Membership	7
Holiday Party	8

## 2024-2025 Officers

President: Joni Neidigh  
 Vice President: Josué Velázquez  
 Secretary: Kim Rife  
 Treasurer: Adam Cross

## Board of Directors 2024-2025

Jon Guthrie  
 Jakob Irwin  
 Larry Neidigh  
 Jack Frost  
 Dave Allen  
 Emma Millson  
 Nina Kammatt  
 Savannah Landis  
 Bryan Boyer  
 Ellen Boyer  
 Mike Tibble

## 2024-2025 Coordinators

Children's Running: Carol MacDougall  
 Track Coordinator: Mike Tibble  
 Membership: Eugene Biala  
 Social: TBD  
 Scholarship: Kim Lundy  
 Race Volunteer: TBD  
 Registration: Kathy Murray  
 Equipment: Mike Tibble  
 Race Advisor: Bill Krause  
 StrideRight Editor: Michelle Colina  
 StrideRight Proofreader: TBD

## President's Corner

By Joni Neidigh



"Your life doesn't get better by chance; it gets better by change". -Jim Rohn

Hello Strider Family!

I just returned from the Olympics in Paris as I watched amazing athletes perform at various levels. Some had their personal best performances achieving gold, silver, and bronze medals while others disappointingly fell short of their goals.

They all had many things in common but the one that was most salient to me was the need to shift, reset, or change when needed. Within our club, we all have various goals for running and walking but share common elements-to get better, do better, feel better, or some combination of those things. In order to do that we are, like the Olympians, required to shift, reset, and change. These are skills that I teach often when I work with people and athletes to help them enjoy the process of self-improvement understanding that without changing how they are, they will always have what they've got and that they have more because they can become more.

It has been amazing to watch our club change and grow over the past 15 months that I have been honored to serve as your Florida Strider Track Club president. It has been a process and I absolutely love what we have accomplished together! The feedback that we've received about the "vibe" of the Memorial Day 5k and our newest race the Strider Summer Classic has been positive, encouraging, and exciting. It has been incredible to watch many of you celebrate each other's accomplishments, support those who are injured, show up for those in need for encouragement and form bonds with each other. It is no wonder why we are passionate about our running community and our Florida Strider family!

I want to personally thank you all for your patience, trust, encouragement, and willingness to support change. I assure you that you have officers and a board of directors who always have the members and our mission's best interests in mind. We have some exciting things coming up this fall including our new 5 -mile race in November, our holiday party and awards, and the Jingle Bell Fun Run in December. Until then, stay hydrated and safe for the rest of this hot summer and I hope to see you out there training, at track, or at the races.

With Gratitude,

Joni



# The StrideRight

Club #229 Vol. 45 No 11 Sept – Oct 2024

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)



My name is Jakob Irwin, but you can call me Jake.

I have been a Striders member for almost 4 years now and have been a Board Member of the Florida Striders for just over a year. However, my journey into this space started long ago.

I have been racing competitively since I was 9 years old. I grew up in a tiny little town in Northern California. In Grade School we had a yearly track meet on our small little dirt track and for reasons I cannot explain, I just fell in love with running. However, when high school came around, I did of course try out for the football team my freshman year because that was what all the “cool kids” did where I was from. To my surprise, I made the team. Well, I made the Punt Team. Why? Because I was the only guy quick enough to get to the receiver before he caught the ball! The problem was, I was built like a runner, not a football player, and any attempts to tackle this person ended in failure. After our first game my coach put his arm around me when we were walking back to the locker room. He said “Irwin, you are never going to be a football player... but you are a hell of a runner. You need to try out for cross country” .



I took his advice and from my freshman year on I was running varsity for both cross country and track, competing in our regional and state championships, and having the time of my life!

I went on to college and did two years of track and cross country before opting out of competing at the collegiate level, and instead competing for a club team. While I studied Kinesiology, with a focus on adaptive physical education, and therapeutic recreation, with a focus on adaptive exercise and sports... I found myself getting more and more involved in Special Olympics. I eventually took on opportunities as a coach for several adaptive sports including Track and Field, Basketball, Wheelchair Basketball, Goal Ball, and Power Ball.

When I graduated from College, I started doing private endurance coaching while upping the distances that I was racing, progressing to 15ks, then half marathons, and eventually marathons. I have to this day competed in 12 marathons and over 30 half marathons.

I eventually left California and moved to New York for an opportunity to meet my biological mom (another story for another day). It was here that I met my now wife. It is also here that I joined a competitive masters team called “Willow Street Coed”. I recaptured my love for Team Running with



# The StrideRight

Club #229 Vol. 45 No 11 Sept – Oct 2024

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)

them and made several friends along the way. When the Pandemic rolled in to town, I took an opportunity to take my passion for running to the social media world and started posting to TikTok. I now have around 11,000 followers. Also, during the Pandemic, my wife and I had our daughter and decided that we wanted to move out of New York. After investigating many areas around the country, we found that the greater Jacksonville area met all of our needs.

One of the major selling points for me personally was the running community. In particular, how competitive the masters community was in this area.



So, we packed up our things and ended up buying our house here in Fleming Island, FL. I instantly engraved myself into the running community here and was given the opportunity to join the 1st Place Sports Elite Team. Through this team I met several strong masters runners, and we got together to form a separate team that would compete in the USATF Masters Grand Prix National series. We competed in the National 5k Championships in Atlanta where we ended up coming in 4th place. Then we ended up competing in the National Half Marathon Championships in Syracuse, NY where we placed 2nd overall as a team.

Among my running and coaching, along with my social media content creation, I eventually was given the opportunity to help create and cohost a running podcast that is now active today called “RunTok Live”. This has been something that has also become a fun and exciting passion project.

I was later given the opportunity to become a board member for the Florida Striders, and over time started developing the track workouts that are currently conducted every Wednesday Night. At the same time, I started a Sunday Run Group in Fleming Island that would give people the opportunity to run longer miles in a group setting.

And this all leads me to where I am today...

- Masters Competitive Runner
- 1<sup>st</sup> Place Sports Elite Team Member
- Virtual Endurance Coach, certified with RRCA and UESCA
- Florida Striders Board Member
- Wednesday Night Track Workout Creator
- Running Social Media Content Creator
- Running Podcast Cohost



And when I am not doing all this, by day, I am a Recruiting Manager in the Dental Field.

Simply put, I am someone who loves the world of Running. And I hope to meet you soon.



# The StrideRight

Club #229 Vol. 45 No 11 Sept – Oct 2024

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)

## Wednesday Track is Growing!

By Jakob Irwin

A belief that I have always stood by is that if you want to get faster, you must run faster. Plain and simple. As a member of the Florida Striders, you have the opportunity to do just that, in a group setting, and within a designed workout structure. Every Wednesday night at Orange Park High School's Track, Florida Striders members are invited to participate in our Track Workouts.

The good news is our group of people that attend is getting larger and larger! Maybe it's the veteran Leadership of Coach Dave Allen. Maybe it's the structured workouts coming from Coach Jake (Me). Maybe it's the fact that you can do your own workouts if you don't want to do the designed workout. Maybe it's the ice-cold water and Gatorade that is provided. Maybe it's the positive comradery among all the runners. Maybe it's having the ability to feed from the inspiration and motivation of others. Maybe it's being able to use one of the newest and best track facilities in all of Clay County. Maybe it's just simply meeting new people that may be trying to achieve the same goal as you.

The great thing about being a runner, is Running doesn't have a skill requirement. Once you lace up those shoes and you go out for your first run, you are a runner. These track sessions allow just that opportunity. No judgements, just advice if wanted and inspiration if needed. Essentially, it's a platform for you to become whatever type of runner you want to be.

For me personally, the most exciting part has been seeing the growth in numbers when it comes to people attending these track sessions. But it's not just that! It's also seeing the different ages, the different abilities, and the different reasons. And more than anything, it's seeing dedication.

Make no mistake about it, these workouts are meant to be hard. They are meant to build up your speed and your overall running performance. But having the supports and structure of These Wednesday night settings does make it just a little bit easier to do. So, no matter what it is you are training for, come on out to Our Track nights. Who knows, you just might find yourself achieving goals, and having to set new ones.





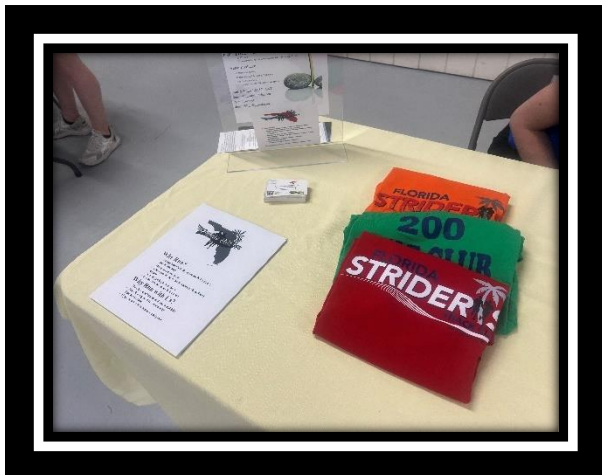
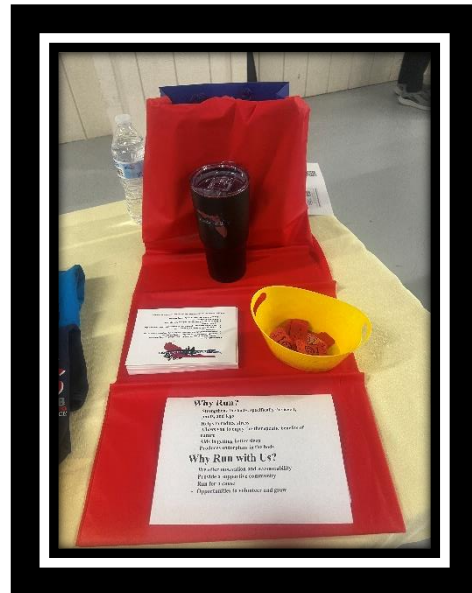
# The StrideRight

Club #229 Vol. 45 No 11 Sept – Oct 2024

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)

## Clay County Board of Commissioners 2024 Wellness Expo

Joni Neidigh and Christine Johnson represented the Florida Striders Track Club at the 2024 Clay County Wellness Expo. Joni talked to visitors about the benefits of running and our Children's Running Program.





# The StrideRight

Club #229 Vol. 45 No 11 Sept – Oct 2024

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)

## 3rd annual Clay County Elementary P.E. Teachers Lunch By Carol MacDougall

Lunch provided by Florida Striders during their in-service day.





# The StrideRight

Club #229 Vol. 45 No 11 Sept – Oct 2024

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)

## MEMBERSHIP

Welcome and thank you to our new  
and returning members!

[Click here to join](#)

[Click here to renew](#)

Cruser Barnes  
Matthew Feryus  
Robert Hernandez  
Amy Landin  
Susan McInnis  
Stephanie Pratt  
Jill Scott

Jan Bullock  
John Gillman  
Brittany Jackson  
Jenny Landwehr  
Bob O'Connor  
Doug Robenalt  
Mark Troxell

Liane Daniels  
Carmen Hernandez  
Bruce Kelly  
August Leone  
Justin Owens  
Ah-Keel Scott  
Xiaoxing Troxell

Virgen Domingues  
Danette Hernandez  
Ed Kelly  
James May  
Aaron Pratt  
Isla Scott

♥ welcome ♥  
to the team



# The StrideRight

Club #229 Vol. 45 No 11 Sept – Oct 2024

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)

## Mark your Calendars!

Holiday Party/Championship Awards Celebration.  
Mark your calendar . It will be on November 30th at 6:30pm.  
More details to follow.

