

Running 50km a day, over 50 days, to celebrate SG50

By CALVIN YANG

IT IS one of the more physical celebrations of SG50.

Fifty staff and students from the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) will take turns in running 50km a day over 50 days.

The daily distance is longer than a marathon – 42.2km – yet another two participants are taking on the full 50 days.

Seasoned marathon runners Yong Yuen Cheng, 43, and MediaCorp TV editor Lim Nghee Huat, 62, plan to cover 2,500km – the equivalent of running in a straight line from Singapore to Hong Kong.

Mr Yong, a physical education teacher at Hwa Chong Institution, will go on no-pay leave for two months from April to run the full distance and has been training for five hours a day.

He said: “Hopefully, the feat will inspire Singaporeans to do extraordinary things and more people will pick up a sport.”

Collectively known as Go 50 – A Nation In Motion, the runs will begin on April 16, with the June 4 finale coinciding with the torch light-up ceremony of the SEA Games, which will be held here.

Non-profit youth organisation Heartware Network and ITE started work on the running initiative last September, with the bulk of the planning taken on by 15 ITE students.

Heartware Network founder Raymond Huang said: “We wanted to involve our youth in the planning of this large-scale project, since they will play a part in Singapore’s next 50 years.”

The runs will follow routes in different parts of the island. Some will cut through the heartland, while others will take them to scenic spots like East Coast Park and HortPark.



Teachers (front row from left) Cheo Kok Kim from ITE College West, Sumiko Tan from ITE College Central and Yong Yuen Cheng from Hwa Chong Institution will be taking part in Go 50 – A Nation In Motion. Behind them are ITE students from the youth planning committee. ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN

nic spots like East Coast Park and HortPark.

Organisers have also persuaded companies to adopt one day of the 50-day schedule, in which they

will encourage their staff to participate in a 5km community run.

Eight organisations have volunteered so far, including Safra Ju-

rong and property agency Century 21.

First-year ITE student Sanjeet Singh, 24, who is in the youth planning committee, said: “Hav-

ing these runs will help us remember the long and difficult journey Singapore took to be where it is today.”

✉ calyang@sph.com.sg

长跑50天庆祝独立50周年

李妍珊 报道

plee@sph.com.sg

本地两名资深超级马拉松健将，连同三所工艺教育学院的学生和教职员，在50天里每日跑50公里，完成2500公里的路程。

这项名为“Go 50: A Nation in Motion”的活动由工艺教育局和志愿组织心件工程（Heartware Network）合办，希望聚集更多国人一起庆祝新加坡独立50周年，也让15名参与策划的工教院生筹办大型活动有实践经验。

已有40多年长跑经验的中文时事电视节目主编林义发（61岁），以及参加过无数超级马拉松的华侨中学体育教师杨渊箐（43岁）将从4月16日起，每日在七小时内完成50公里的长跑。每天至少有一名工教院师生结伴同跑。此外，各学校、机构或企业也可报名参加长跑或成为活动赞助商，为国家庆生之余也为两名超级马拉松选手打气。

林义发受访时说，如此连续50天的长跑他从未尝试过，也不知到身体会如何反应，但希望能启发他人，也让大家知道新



超级马拉松老手杨渊箐（前排右起）、工艺教育学院教职员陈淑慧和周谷金，连同其他工教院师生和国人，以长跑形式欢庆新加坡独立50周年。（叶振忠摄）

加坡今时今日的繁华成就同长跑过程一样，来之不易。

目前，有八家公司和组织确认参与长跑活动，另有20家机构表示有意参与。

50天的长跑活动每日有一个特设的主题，如1969年种族冲突、1988年生育率创新高、2003年沙斯疫情爆发等，回顾我国50年来的发展点滴。

Running start to nation's 50th birthday

Duo running 50km daily for 50 days straight to pay tribute – and inspire

By KASH CHEONG

WHILE most people are taking refuge from the heat in air-conditioned places, two men are sweating it out in the run of their lives.

Teacher Yong Yuen Cheng, 43, and MediaCorp Chinese current affairs editor Lim Nghee Huat, 61, embarked yesterday on an attempt to run 50km daily for 50 days in a row.

The duo, seasoned runners who have done ultra marathons of more than 200km, are doing so to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and pay tribute to its founding fathers and pioneers.

Said Mr Yong: "It required resilience and endurance to overcome challenges and build the nation we enjoy today."

"In our small way, we hope to inspire Singaporeans to remember that spirit."

Health Minister Gan Kim Yong, who flagged off the duo at the Institute of Technical Education's (ITE) College West, said: "Building a nation is a never-ending journey."

Both men said this would be their toughest run ever.



Ultra-marathon runners Lim Nghee Huat (in green) and Yong Yuen Cheng starting the first of their SG50 special runs yesterday, accompanied by ITE students and staff. They will run seven routes through places such as MacRitchie Reservoir Park and Labrador Park. ST PHOTO: TIFFANY GOH

Mr Lim said: "Usually after running 50km, the body takes one or two days to recover. But this time, we will be doing it for 50 days straight."

Mr Yong said the greatest chal-

lenge would be the heat. "It is hot and humid in Singapore, especially now."

Dr Philip Koh, chairman of the medical board at Healthway Medical Group, said such extreme exer-

tion could lead to health risks. "You could tear a muscle or your heart could shut down if it is under too much stress."

But Mr Lim said that as seasoned ultra-marathon runners, he

The route they took yesterday



ST GRAPHICS

and Mr Yong are sensitive to their bodies' needs. "We will push hard, but safety comes first."

They will run seven routes through places such as MacRitchie Reservoir Park and Labrador Park. But if it rains too heavily, they will continue at the indoor track at the Sports Hub.

They will be supplied with water and food like bananas. A supplies and first aid van will follow them throughout their gruelling

endeavour.

Singaporeans can pledge running miles at www.go50.sg – the run is called Go50: A Nation In Motion – to express support.

ITE staff and students will take turns to run alongside the duo, who will be honoured at the 28th South-east Asian Games torch light-up ceremony on June 5.

✉ kashc@sph.com.sg
Track the progress of these runners in The Straits Times in print and online.





channelnewsasia.com

A MEDIA CORP Interactive Media

SINGAPORE

Ultramarathoners go the distance to pay tribute to Mr Lee Kuan Yew

Lim Nghee Huat and Yong Yuen Cheng will run 50km a day together to honour some of the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew's character traits.

By Nur Afifah Ariffin, Channel NewsAsia

POSTED: 22 Aug 2015 14:04 UPDATED: 24 Apr 2015 11:14

PHOTOS



Ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat (centre) and Yong Yuen Cheng (right)

THUMBNAIL

CAPTION

SINGAPORE: Ultramarathoners Mr Lim Nghee Huat and Mr Yong Yuen Cheng will be running 50km a day together for 50 days to commemorate the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew's significant contributions to building the nation and to honour some of his character traits.

Each day of the run will be anchored by a theme based of one contribution or character trait. A total of 50 themes have been decided by the Institute of Technical Education students, such as independence, self-reliance, and kindness.



The run, called "Go50: A Nation in Motion", was officially flagged off by Health Minister Gan Kim Yong at ITE College West on Thursday morning (Apr 16).



Mr Lim and Mr Yong were also joined by 50 staff and students from ITE Colleges, who will be participating in the event.



The pair will run the 50km distance from 8am to 3pm daily, and it would be spread across planned routes over six different zones of Singapore (North, South, East, North-east, West and Central). It will end on Jun 4, the eve of the start of the South East Asian Games.



Day 1: Singapore ultramarathoners start run that will cover 2,500km over 50 days to commemorate SG50

PUBLISHED ON APR 16, 2015 10:45 AM



(#2)

Mr Yong Yuen Cheng (left) and Mr Lim Nghee Huat will be running 50km daily for 50 days to celebrate SG50. -- ST PHOTO: KASH CHEONG



(#1)

(#2)

BY KASH CHEONG

SINGAPORE - Two Singaporean ultramarathoners started the most challenging run of their lives- 50km daily for 50 consecutive days- on Thursday morning.

Teacher Yong Yuen Cheng, 43 and media producer Lim Nghee Huat, 61, will be attempting this feat to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and commemorate the resilience of the nation's founding fathers.

"What they did was great, it required resilience and endurance to overcome challenges and build the nation we enjoy today," said Mr Yong. "In our small way, we hope to inspire Singaporeans to remember that spirit," he added.

Health Minister Gan Kim Yong flagged off the event, entitled Go50: A Nation in Motion, as 800 students from the Institute of Technical Education at College West cheered the runners on. Staff and students at ITE will take turns to run with Mr Yong and Mr Lim in these 50 days.

Despite having done ultra marathons of over 200km, both runners said 50km daily for 50 days would be "the most challenging run" so far. "Usually after running 50km, the body takes one or two days to recover," said Mr Lim. "But this time, we will be doing it for 50 days straight so it will be challenging," he said.

"We will be taking it slow for the first few days, because it will be unwise to tax your body and injure yourself," he said. "Hopefully by the fourth or fifth day, our bodies would be used to it," he said.

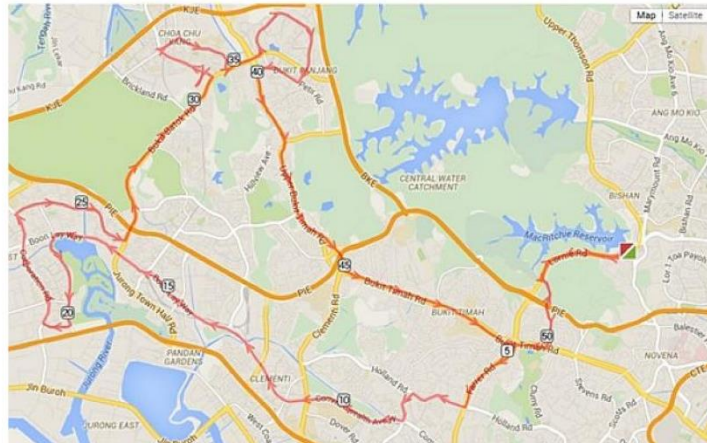
"But we have special marathon clothing that helps us beat the heat and thick socks to ensure that we do not get blisters," he added.

Rain will not deter the runners who will run seven designated routes across the 50 days. If showers are heavy, they will move to an indoor track at the Sports Hub.

They will drink water and isotonic drinks regularly as they run. These are available from a supplies van that will follow them throughout the course. They will also snack on carbohydrate-rich fruits like banana, papaya and honeydew. "Some might get a stitch of they do that, but we have conditioned our bodies to take in energy as we go," Mr Yong said.

Jointly organised by ITE and non-profit group Heartware Network, the run will also see staff and students from partner organisations like Hwa Chong Institution pledging to run 5km at their own premises, in solidarity with the runners.

Singaporeans can also pledge a run in solidarity with the runners at www.go50.sg (<http://www.go50.sg>). They are, however, not encouraged to join the runners in person due to traffic and personal safety concerns.



North Zone Route 1: Starting & Ending Point: MacRitchie Reservoir Park. -- PHOTO: GO50



North Zone Route 2: Starting Point: Loring Road (near Ang Mo Kio Park). -- PHOTO: GO50



South Zone Route: Starting Point: Loring Road (near Ang Mo Kio Park). -- PHOTO: GO50



East Zone Route: Starting Point: Loring Road (near Ang Mo Kio Park). -- PHOTO: GO50



North Zone Route: Starting Point: Loring Road (near Ang Mo Kio Park). -- PHOTO: GO50



West Zone Route: Starting Point: Loring Road (near Ang Mo Kio Park). -- PHOTO: GO50



Central Zone Route: Starting Point: Loring Road (near Ang Mo Kio Park). -- PHOTO: GO50



ST PHOTO: TIFFANY GOH

HOME B7

50KM A DAY FOR 50 DAYS

While most Singaporeans are seeking refuge from the sweltering heat, two local ultramarathoners are sweating it out in the most challenging run of their lives.

Teacher Yong Yuen Cheng (in white), 43, and editor of MediaCorp Chinese current affairs programmes Lim Nghee Huat (in green), 61, yesterday kicked off their attempt to run 50km daily for 50 consecutive days. They are doing this to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and pay tribute to its pioneers and founding fathers.

"What they did was great," said Mr Yong. "It required resilience and endurance to overcome challenges and build the nation we enjoy today."

The duo will run seven routes, passing places such as MacRitchie Reservoir Park.



Change in route for runners to beat the heat

By KASH CHEONG

THE heat got to runners Lim Ng-hee Huat and Yong Yuen Cheng on the fifth day of their quest to run 50km daily for 50 days in a row, as they deviated from their planned route for a cooler one instead.

Mr Lim, 61, an editor, and Mr Yong, 43, a teacher, are running to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and pay tribute to the resilience of the nation's pioneers.

They have completed 250km over five days, including 50km through Upper Peirce Reservoir yesterday, which they finished in 7 hours and 30 minutes.

"It was an easy run - hilly but cool," said Mr Lim. "There were lots of trees and shade."

Starting at 7am instead of 8am yesterday, they were accompanied by ultramarathoner Gerrard Lin, 31, and Institute of Technical Education (ITE) physical education teacher Chen Joo Soon, 56.

At the 35km mark, Mr Chen struggled to go on as his feet were numb. "But I saw Mr Lim ahead of me, if he can do it, why can't I?" he said.

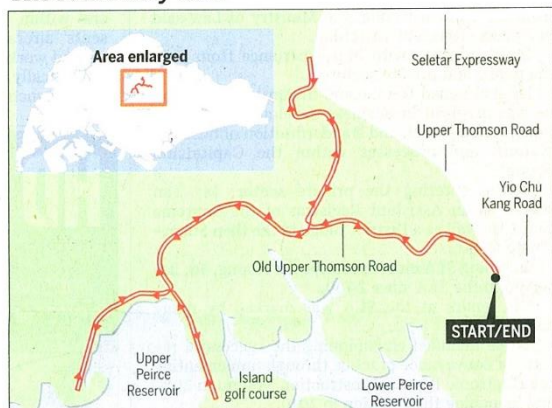
Yesterday, the organising committee had planned to run a route starting at MacRitchie Reservoir and running through Choa Chu Kang and Jurong, but changed plans due to the heat.

For Mr Yong, routes winding through busy urban areas meant more stoppages at traffic lights. Yesterday's run through Upper Peirce Reservoir was challenging in that it was hilly. "Each route



Mr Lim Nghee Huat (right), accompanied by Mr Gerrard Lin (left) and Mr Chen Joo Soon, running the "hilly but cool" route through Upper Peirce Reservoir yesterday after a change of plans. ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN

The route they took



ST GRAPHICS

has its pros and cons," he said.

The duo are running seven different islandwide routes planned by youth charity Heartware Network and ITE volunteers, with help from Mr Yong. Organisers will tweak the routes to suit the runners' conditions, as safety comes first. Last Saturday, Mr

Lim sustained a minor knee injury after he tripped and fell on a roadside kerb.

He said: "Judging by our progress so far, we should be able to complete 50km for 50 days - provided the weather is kind and we stay injury-free."

✉ kashc@sph.com.sg

THE STRAITS TIMES TheBigStory

Day 2: Duo pace themselves in marathon challenge



🕒 PUBLISHED APR 18, 2015, 1:01 AM SGT

It was only Day 2 of their challenge to run 50km a day for 50 days, but the muscles of the two ultra-marathon runners were already sore even before they started.

Mr Lim Nghee Huat, 61 and Mr Yong Yuen Cheng, 43, felt slight stiffness in their muscles from the first day's running just 16 hours before.

Mr Lim, who is a Chinese current affairs editor at MediaCorp, also had a nagging pain in his toe. But they pressed on and completed the 50km in 7 hours 5 minutes yesterday - slightly longer than the 6 hours and 13 minutes the day before.

The duo are attempting the feat to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and pay tribute to the resilience of the nation's pioneers.

"Seven hours is actually a good pace," said Mr Yong, who is a teacher at Hwa Chong Institution. "If we run too quickly, we may not be able to sustain the whole 50 days."

With another ultra-marathon runner Gerrard Lin, 31, the duo ran a route stretching from Marina Barrage to Changi Coastal Park yesterday.

Under the blazing midday sun, the runners struggled to get through a 10km stretch at Changi Coast Road that had no shade.

"It was really very, very hot," Mr Yong said.

Fortunately, they were supported by a crew who gave them iced energy drinks, wet towels and watermelon cubes. "They were really lifesavers, we wouldn't be able to do it without them," said Mr Lim.

His hawk-eyed wife, Deborah, cheered the runners on from the supplies car.

As they crossed yesterday's finish line, the runners broke into smiles. Mr Lim looked forward to a sports massage by his Chinese sinseh, while Mr Yong could not wait to soak his feet in cool water.

"The end of another 50km," Mr Yong said. "Tomorrow will be another mountain to climb."

Runners take it sure and steady, with wives' support



🕒 PUBLISHED APR 20, 2015, 7:36 AM SGT

✉
Kash Cheong (mailto:kashc@sph.com.sg)

When editor Lim Nghee Huat, 61, threw in the towel and got into a car at the two-third mark of a 217km run in California's Death Valley last year, his support crew fell silent.

Mr Lim already fought back the pain at the 90km mark, when he stopped to ice his right calf for two hours. Encouragement from his support crew gave him the strength to run another 50km in the sweltering heat before he called it quits.

His wife Deborah Lim, 56, said: "Nghee Huat never gives up. The pain must have been really bad for him to stop."

Among the nine ultramarathons he has signed up for, it was the only one he did not finish.

Mr Lim is now attempting the hardest race of his life, running 50km for 50 consecutive days, with seasoned ultramarathoner Yong Yuen Cheng, 43, to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday.

The route they took yesterday



Yesterday, both men completed their fourth 50km run in 7 hours and 44 minutes.

Mrs Lim is her husband's chief cheerleader but she was not always supportive of his long-distance running.

The Death Valley race, however, allayed her fears that he would one day push himself too hard and ruin his health. "That incident convinced me that he knew how to listen to his body, he knows when to stop," she said.

When he started running in ultramarathons, she would tell him to stop as she was worried that running distances of more than 200km, when he was pushing 60, would do more harm than good.

"I would always say 'this is the last time', and then go and register behind my back," she said.

Fed up, she refused to accompany him to a 2012 ultramarathon in Brazil, hoping this would dissuade him. But Mr Lim went anyway.

Mrs Lim paced about the house and could not sleep the whole time. She constantly kept in touch with her son, who went in her place. "After that, I learnt that no matter what, I had to follow Nghee Huat to make sure he is okay," said the mother of three.

Now, she is an ever-present figure at Mr Lim's races, attending to his every need. The staunch Christian prepares extra iced energy drinks, suns the wet shoes he changes out of, and even prays for cloud cover during hot weather.

Mr Yong's wife, Mrs Yong Pui San, 43, takes a more hands-off approach - she simply lends her husband a listening ear when the going gets tough.

"That's more than enough for me," said Mr Yong, who has been married for 12 years.

Both Mr Lee and Mr Yong juggle training with full-time jobs. Mr Yong is a teacher. Still, they make time to have dinner with their families at least once a week.

"Family support is important, it helps me through tough times," Mr Lim said.

After running 50km on the third day, Mr Lim also made the effort to solemnise his friend's wedding in the evening, because he had given his word.

"My husband can be a bit passive," said Mrs Lim. "We have been married for more than 30 years but every time he completes an ultramarathon, I feel like he is my hero," she added.

Mr Lim says his wife is "God's gift". "I cannot thank her enough," he said.

Go50: Change in route for runners to beat the heat



🕒 PUBLISHED APR 21, 2015, 5:59 AM SGT



Kash Cheong (mailto:kashc@sph.com.sg)

The heat got to runners Lim Nghee Huat and Yong Yuen Cheng on the fifth day of their quest to run 50km daily for 50 days in a row, as they deviated from their planned route for a cooler one instead.

Mr Lim, 61, an editor, and Mr Yong, 43, a teacher, are running to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and pay tribute to the resilience of the nation's pioneers.

They have completed 250km over five days, including 50km through Upper Peirce Reservoir yesterday, which they finished in 7 hours and 30 minutes.

"It was an easy run - hilly but cool," said Mr Lim. "There were lots of trees and shade."

Starting at 7am instead of 8am yesterday, they were accompanied by ultramarathoner Gerrard Lin, 31, and Institute of Technical Education (ITE) physical education teacher Chen Joo Soon, 56.

At the 35km mark, Mr Chen struggled to go on as his feet were numb. "But I saw Mr Lim ahead of me, if he can do it, why can't I?" he said.

Yesterday, the organising committee had planned to run a route starting at MacRitchie Reservoir and running through Choa Chu Kang and Jurong, but changed plans due to the heat.

For Mr Yong, routes winding through busy urban areas meant more stoppages at traffic lights. Yesterday's run through Upper Peirce Reservoir was challenging in that it was hilly. "Each route has its pros and cons," he said.

The duo are running seven different islandwide routes planned by youth charity Heartware Network and ITE volunteers, with help from Mr Yong. Organisers will tweak the routes to suit the runners' conditions, as safety comes first. Last Saturday, Mr Lim sustained a minor knee injury after he tripped and fell on a roadside kerb.

He said: "Judging by our progress so far, we should be able to complete 50km for 50 days - provided the weather is kind and we stay injury-free."

Go50 Day 7: Fatigue creeps in; runners continue on Upper Thomson route for shade

PUBLISHED ON APR 22, 2015 4:05 PM



(From left) Runners Cheryl Ng, 44, Randall Kok, 36, Yong Yuen Cheng, 43, Lim Nghee Huat, 61 and supply crew Maureen Setyadi, 37, at half time break on day seven of Go50 ultramarathon. -- PHOTO: HEARTWARE NETWORK

BY KASH CHEONG

SINGAPORE - Ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng and Lim Nghee Huat are starting to feel tired after running 50km for seven days straight.

They have 43 more days of running in their attempt to complete 50km for 50 consecutive days to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday.

"We'll carry on," said Mr Yong, a 43-year-old physical education teacher.

"One day at a time."

The runners are already starting to experience muscle aches in their calves, hamstrings and quadriceps from pounding the pavement for seven hours for a week.

Said ultramarathoner Gerrard Lin, 31, who has joined Mr Lim and Mr Yong for the last seven days: "It's pain everywhere, I'm barely making it but Mr Lim and Mr Yong are still going strong."

To recover, they go to bed at 9pm at night, ensuring they have enough rest before getting up at 5am for a 7am run the next day.

They hydrate themselves as they run and consume carbohydrate-rich foods such as prata and bread along the way. Sunburn has not been an issue, as members from the supply crew spray water on them to cool them down and they apply sunblock liberally.

The runners finished a 50km route around Upper Peirce Reservoir in seven hours and 11 minutes on Wednesday. They have been running the same route for the past three days as it is cool and shady, providing relief in Singapore's stifling heat.

Mr Lim also tripped and fell on a curb on Saturday. So a runner-friendly route with fewer kerbs and traffic lights would put less stress and help him recover, Mr Yong said.

The trio were accompanied by air steward Randall Kok, 36, an ultramarathoner, and Institute of Technical Education teacher Yi Wei, 27, as well as another runner Cheryl Ng, who happened to be running in the area.

Mid-way, they ran past a plaque indicating that Singapore's founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew had opened the Upper Peirce Reservoir in 1977.

"I'm glad that Mr Lee made an effort to green Singapore," Mr Yong said.

"Without him, we would not have such lush surroundings to run in, or a beautiful garden city to live in."

Keep pace with the two Go50 ultramarathoners on their daily 50km run

PUBLISHED ON APR 23, 2015 4:43 PM

SINGAPORE - It has been a week since runners Yong Yuen Cheng, 43, and Lim Nghee Huat, 61, embarked on what they called "the most challenging run of their lives". They aim to run 50km for 50 days in a row to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and pay tribute to its founding fathers and pioneers. Staff and students at ITE are taking turns to run with Mr Yong and Mr Lim; other seasoned marathoners have joined them on some days.

Here's a look at the picturesque scenery along their routes, the people they meet and behind-the-scene preparations to help them cope with the physical demands of their daily 50km run.



ST PHOTO: TIFFANY GOH

DAY 1 - Ultra-marathon runners Lim Nghee Huat (in green) and Yong Yuen Cheng starting the first of their SG50 special runs on April



ST PHOTO: TIFFANY GOH

DAY 1 - Students from Beacon Primary School cheering on as ultramarathoners Mr Lim Nghee Huat (in green), a Chinese television editor at MediaCorp and Mr Yong Yuen Cheng (in white), a teacher at Hwa Chong Institution, ran past the school on Day 1 of their Go50 Run feat.



ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

DAY 2 - Support staff Maureen Setyadi (right) using sprinklers to spray water at Mr Yong Yuen Cheng to cool him down while he drinks iced isotonic drink. Both runners say the most challenging part of their Go50 Run feat would be battling the heat, especially after 10.30am. April is typically the warmest month in the year for hot and humid Singapore.



ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

DAY 2 - Both men wear special ultramarathon gear that deflects radiated heat. Sunburn has not been an issue, as their support crew would spray water at them and pass them wet sponges and wet towels to help them stay cool. They also apply sunblock liberally.



ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

DAY 2 - Mrs Deborah Lim feeding her husband Lim Nghee Huat some watermelon cubes during his 50km run. Mrs Lim is an ever-present figure at Mr Lim's races, attending to his every need. She prepares iced energy drinks, suns the wet shoes he changes out of, and even prays for cloud cover during hot weather.



ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

DAY 3 - Mr Yong Yuen Cheng (left) offering fellow ultramarathoner Lim Nghee Huat (seated) a drink after finishing their 50km run on the third day. They were accompanied by 20 runners from the Safra Running Club, including 37-year-old designer Koh Hui Ping (blue visor). Ms Koh led the pack for most of the way as she paced the runners in a route covering West Coast Park and Lower Delta Road. Ms Koh, a seasoned runner, came in second in a recent Nanjing Mountain Marathon.



ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

DAY 4: It was an early start for Mr Lim Nghee Huat (first from right) and Mr Yong Yuen Cheng (second from right) on the fourth day of their 2,500km quest. They started at 7am, an hour earlier than usual, to beat the heat. Sunday's route took them along Singapore's eastern coastline, a popular trail among marathoners.



ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN

DAY 5: The run through Upper Peirce Reservoir is challenging in that it is hilly but it is more shady and cooler. It is also a runner-friendly route with fewer kerbs and traffic lights, which would help Mr Lim recover from his knee injury. The organising committee had planned to run a route starting at MacRitchie Reservoir and running through Choa Chu Kang and Jurong, but changed plans due to the hot weather. The runners are guided by Aetos Auxiliary Police throughout their runs to ensure their safety on the roads.



ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN

DAY 5: Mrs Deborah Lim (in blue), 56, and volunteer Ms Maureen Setyadi (centre), 36, preparing various isotonic drinks and energy gels at the back of the supply car. The vehicle follows the runners throughout the course. Both men also snack on carbohydrate-rich fruits like banana, papaya and honeydew.

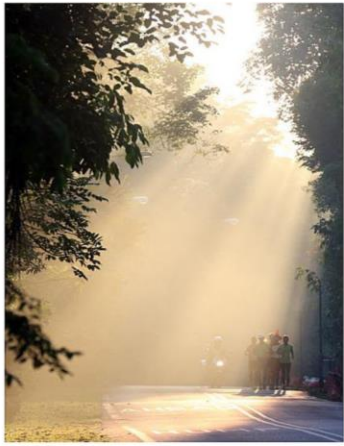


ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN



ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN

DAY 5: Ardent supporter and runner Gerrard Lin (second from right) and ITE College West teacher David Ho (third from right, in white) helping to massage ultramarathoner Lim Nghee Huat (in green) as he takes a short break from the 50km run at Upper Pierce Reservoir.



ST PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN

DAY 5: It is a scenic run through Upper Pierce Reservoir, a cooler route which they would take again on Day 6 and Day 7. The runners consume carbohydrate-rich foods such as bread and roti prata from nearby Casuarina Curry restaurant.

Go50 Day 9: Ultramarathoners battle rain and fatigue



🕒 PUBLISHED APR 24, 2015, 9:44 PM SGT



Kash Cheong (mailto:kashc@sph.com.sg)

SINGAPORE - Ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng, 43 and Lim Nghee Huat, 61 battled rain and fatigue to finish running 50km in a route passing through Caldecott Hill, Bukit Batok and MacRitchie on Friday.

They have run 50km each day for the past nine days and their muscles are sore.

"I'm just feeling very tired today," said Mr Yong, a physical education teacher, sounding more fatigued than he usually is.

He also tripped over some tree roots at Portsdown Road and fell, grazing his right knee.

"It wasn't painful but it affected my mood slightly," he said.

"When you get used to flat road, you let your guard down and put one foot before the other, it's easy to trip if you don't look out."

But together with Mr Lim, Mr Yong soldiered on to finish 50km in 7 hours and 29 minutes.

The duo were accompanied by fellow ultramarathoner Gerrard Lin, 31, who has been completing 50km with them each day so far. Colleagues of Mr Lim Nghee Huat, who is a Chinese current affairs editor at Mediacorp, also ran with him for about half the journey. Mediacorp artistes Qiqi and Kym Ng also ran for about 5km.

In their last 3km, the weather took a turn for the worse and it started raining. But the runners did not stop. They continued running loops in a 200 metre stretch under a flyover just to make up the distance.

Said Mr Lim: "We have to do 50km every day no matter what."

An online tracking system, open to the public at go50.sg, ensures that they complete the full distance without making false claims.

The runners' shoes got wet, but none of them suffered blisters.

Mr Lim added that although his muscles had ached for the past few days, he feels he is recovering faster each day. "I think my body is getting used to it," he said.

Marathoners feel strain as illness hits

By KASH CHEONG

DESPITE a bad stomach upset and diarrhoea, Mr Lim Nghee Huat is soldiering on, along with fellow ultramarathoner Yong Yuen Cheng, who has hurt his foot.

The duo are attempting to run 50km for 50 days in a row to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday, and pay tribute to its founding fathers and pioneers.

They have made it halfway, but are also paying a price for the pounding to their bodies.

For Mr Lim, 61, symptoms appeared on Saturday when he vomited, and had to rush to the toilet several times along the route.

Things had improved yesterday but he still felt nauseous.

"I felt unwell, but giving up was never on my mind," he said.

At the end of their run yesterday, the two men had each clocked 1,250 km. They finished

yesterday's run in 8hr 20min.

Dr Jason Lee, head physiologist at DSO National Laboratories, which studies military endurance, explained that constant strenuous exercise can cause fatigue, weakening the runners' immune systems. This makes them prone to viral or bacterial infections.

He advised Mr Lim to slow down or walk throughout the journey, if necessary. "I am worried because for many endurance athletes, their minds are stronger than their bodies," added Dr Lee.

Mr Lim's wife Deborah, 56, a businesswoman, is supportive.

"We've seen similar conditions in previous ultramarathons, yet he completed them," she said.

"Once, he pulled out of an ultramarathon because of a leg injury, so that tells me he knows how to listen to his body."

Ultramarathons cover distances longer than the traditional



Mr Lim Nghee Huat gets a hug from his wife Deborah (left) while Mr Yong Yuen Cheng (right) gets much-needed relief for his feet and stomach. ST PHOTOS: SEAH KWANG PENG



marathon's 42.2km.

Both men are feeling the strain. Mr Lim, an editor, struggled

through his 50km on Saturday in almost 10 hours – the duo's longest run time in 25 days – and Mr

Yong is nursing a strained Achilles' tendon.

Dr Lim Baoying of Changi



Sports Medicine Centre warned that constant running could lead to a higher risk of strains and fractures.

Concurring, Dr Wang Mingchang of National University Hospital Sports Centre said: "Running 50km for 50 days may result in the body not getting enough rest to repair impact to the bones, tendons and muscles. This increases one's risk of over-use injuries, such as stress fractures."

Mr Yong, who is consulting senior sports physiotherapist Yeo Hwee Koon of Singapore Sports Institute, said he is coping well with special tape to support his injury.

"We are only halfway there, slow and steady wins the race," he said.

✉ kashc@sph.com.sg

Runners get boost from 3,000 teenagers

By KASH CHEONG

RUNNING can be a lonely affair but ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng and Lim Nghee Huat received a boost yesterday from 3,000 teenagers, who cheered them on as they set out on their 50km run.

With pacer Gerrard Lin, 31, bearing the South-east Asia Games flag, the two runners circled a 400m track in Hwa Chong Institution with 200 students. It was a rousing opening of the annual sports day for Hwa Chong Institution, Hwa Chong International, Nanyang Girls' High and Chinese High.

The high spirits were in order, as it was the 42nd of their series of 50km runs over 50 days to celebrate Singapore's golden jubilee and commemorate the resilience of the nation's pioneers.

Students came up to the runners and wished them luck. They were not surprised to see Mr Yong, 43, a physical education teacher at Hwa Chong Institution, looking upbeat despite his punishing schedule.

Said 18-year-old Glenn Tan, a kayaker who trained under Mr Yong: "Ultramarathons are not new to him. He knows how to take care of himself. It's really inspiring to see your own sports



Pacer Gerrard Lin bearing the SEA Games flag as Mr Yong Yuen Cheng (centre, in white) and Mr Lim Nghee Huat (in grey) ran with students in Hwa Chong Institution yesterday. ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM

teacher walk the talk."

Yesterday, Mr Lim, 62, an editor, and Mr Yong completed 50km in 6½ hours and five hours and 46 minutes respectively. Their route took them through Dunearn and Evans roads and Ulu Pandan.

Though some routes are tougher than others, paradoxically they have been clocking faster times than the seven-hour average of their earlier runs. "Our bodies are now used to running 50km daily," Mr Lim said.

"We don't feel so tired so we have been taking fewer breaks," said Mr Yong, who achieved a personal best of five hours and nine minutes last Saturday.

Both have also recovered from nagging physical ailments that

dogged them two weeks ago.

Dr Jason Lee, head physiologist from DSO National Laboratories, advised the runners to be aware of the "last leg" syndrome, in which runners tend to push themselves harder and risk injury as the end

comes in sight.

With the final run just a week away, that is the last thing they need. "Now that the goal is in sight, we won't let our guard down," Mr Yong said.

✉ kashc@sph.com.sg

SINGAPORE

Go50 run: Home stretch for ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat, Yong Yuen Cheng

The two seasoned ultramarathoners started the mission in mid-April and are now on their last 10 days, with about 500 kilometres left to cover.

By Liyana Othman

POSTED: 25 May 2015 20:51 UPDATED: 26 May 2015 08:44

PHOTOS



Seasoned ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat (centre) and Yong Yuen Cheng (left).
(Photo: Calvin Oh)

SINGAPORE: Two seasoned ultramarathoners are now in the last stretch of the Go50: A Nation in Motion initiative. They have run 50 kilometres daily over the past 40 days.

But the duo - Mr Lim Nghee Huat and Mr Yong Yuen Cheng - are still pushing on strong, keeping their focus very much on the remaining journey. This is a running feat that will see them complete 2,500 kilometres each over 50 consecutive days. They started the mission in mid-April, and are now on their last 10 days.

The duo usually start running at around 7am each day, but preparations begin the night before - with a good night's rest. After extensive warm-up exercises in the wee hours of the morning, they then embark on their daily run, clocking 50 kilometres sometime in the afternoon.

The pace has been gruelling although both men have now settled into a routine. As to what keeps them going, they said it is their shared desire to make a significant contribution to Singapore as it turns 50, as well as to pay tribute to the nation's founding father, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew. In addition, Mr Yong, a teacher at Hwa Chong Institution, wants to inspire not only his students, but also youths all across Singapore.

"In order for our country to continue to be successful, we need the values of resilience, determination and perseverance. I hope this message will go far. Personally, I consider myself very ordinary, in terms of ability. I believe if I can do it, anyone else can do it. I have this slogan that says, 'Ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary feats'," he said.



This feat would not be possible without the support and encouragement that both men have been receiving from family, friends, colleagues and the public since they started on the 50km-a-day run. An entourage of runners, pacers and volunteers is with them every step of the way. Mr Lim's wife has also put her business on hold, getting up every morning to prepare energy drinks, fruits and energy gels for all the runners.

"We would like to dedicate this run to our nation and also to hopefully motivate more people to take up exercise as a form of lifestyle," said Mr Lim, a Chinese TV editor at MediaCorp.

Each day takes on a different theme. So, there are altogether 50 themes in the Go50: A Nation in Motion initiative, each symbolising Mr Lee's contributions and character traits. These are values that the organisers, Heartware Network and Institute of Technical Education, hope Singaporeans will emulate.

"We want young Singaporeans to realise that building a nation, like this run, takes one day at a time, one step forward. We cannot just sit and do nothing, but we have to move forward one step at a time to take Singapore beyond SG50", said Mr Raymond Huang, founder of Heartware Network.

Celebrations will flood the air when the end finally runs. The veteran ultramarathoners have about 500 kilometres left to cover. It will culminate at the 28th Southeast Asian Games Torch Light-up Ceremony on Jun 4 at the Promontory.

- CNA/xk



Mr Lim Nghee Huat getting a massage from sports therapist Lynne Teo at the Singapore Sports Institute. With them was Mr Yong Yuen Cheng, who clocked a personal best timing of four hours and 47 minutes for his 50km run. ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

Runner sets record despite gastric attack

By KASH CHEONG

ULTRAMARATHONER Yong Yuen Cheng clocked a personal best timing of four hours and 47 minutes for his 50km run yesterday, despite a mild gastric attack.

He did this with the help of pacer Gerrard Lin, 31, who ran alongside and encouraged him all the way.

"I felt like vomiting a few times, but Gerrard told me when I was going fast or too slow, running at an irregular pace," said Mr Yong, 43, a physical education teacher at Hwa Chong Institution.

"A friend's encouragement does wonders."

Yesterday, Mr Yong and fellow ultramarathoner Lim Nghee Huat were joined by about 100 runners on their 47th straight day of running 50km.

These included running enthusiasts from Gei Gei Running Club, Mr Lim's church friends, and students from Hwa Chong Institution's canoeing club, whom Mr Yong coaches.

Both Mr Lim and Mr Yong are close to completing their goal of running 50km for 50 days straight to mark Singapore's golden jubilee.

"It is a great morale booster

to have so many people run with us," said Mr Lim, 62, an editor.

He and Mr Yong adopted different running strategies yesterday.

Mr Yong and Mr Lin, the pacer, ran ahead as they wanted to clock personal bests while running a simpler route at Upper Peirce Reservoir.

Unlike other routes passing through busy urban districts, this one was shielded from roads and traffic lights which might slow runners down.

Mr Lim, on the other hand, slowed down to encourage his church friends and talk to them. "There are only three more days left, so I want to enjoy the process and the people who come along."

He completed 50km in seven hours and 43 minutes yesterday.

One familiar face was former civil servant and former People's Association chief Yam Ah Mee. While many runners dropped out at the 20km to 30km mark, the 57-year-old, who is also Mr Lim's church friend, ran the full 50km with him.

When he got a cramp at the 25km mark, he put on compression tights, which eased the pain and helped him complete the run.

"The runners really embody



DAY 47

the spirit of resilience and 'never say die', which is the kind of spirit many of our pioneers had," said Mr Yam, who is now managing director at Sembcorp Design and Construction.

"Every time I felt like stopping, I just thought about the two runners - they are doing 50km for 50 days and I'm just doing one."

He had run a maximum distance of 21km before yesterday.

Mr Lim and Mr Yong got a massage from therapists at the Singapore Sports Institute yesterday.

Sports therapist Lynne Teo said: "I expected the runners to be in worse shape. For running 50km daily, it's amazing, their muscles are still quite supple."

Both runners were relieved to hear that.

Mr Lim said: "We need to know that our bodies are doing fine, especially in this last leg."

✉ kashc@sph.com.sg

Walk for charity, run for SG50



ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM

Ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng (centre, in red) and Lim Nghee Huat (left) flagged off a barefoot walk in Sentosa yesterday morning to raise money for less privileged families in Singapore.

The event, organised by voluntary welfare organisation Habitat for Humanity Singapore, had more than 6,000 participants for the 2km and 4km walks.

The \$350,000 raised will be used to improve living conditions of the elderly and the vulnerable in one- and two-room rental flats.

Mr Lim, 62, and Mr Yong, 43, also kicked

off their 45th of 50 runs at the event.

The duo have pledged to run 50km each day for 50 days to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and commemorate the resilience of the nation's pioneers.

Mr Yong, a physical education teacher at Hwa Chong Institution, said they were still focused on their daily challenge.

"Even though it's just five more days left, anything can happen, so we're focused on keeping ourselves healthy and injury-free," he said.

Feng Zengkun

KEEPING FLAMES OF S'PORE SPIRIT ALIVE

Ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat (left in picture) and Yong Yuen Cheng kept the flame of community spirit alive yesterday at Marine Parade Cluster's Community Sports Festival opening ceremony.

The SEA Games torch that Mr Lim held aloft had been lit by Minister for Social and Family Development Tan Chuan-Jin, the guest of honour at the event.

Such "community flames" are being gathered across the island in support of the 28th SEA Games, and will be brought together in Marina Bay on Thursday.

Mr Lim, 62, and Mr Yong, 43, both grassroots leaders in Marine Parade, are hitting the home stretch of their project to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday by running 50km a day for 50 days.

Yesterday was their 46th run.

ST PHOTO: DANIEL NEO



50km runs today and tomorrow

DAY 49 **Start:** Bishan - Ang Mo Kio Park near McDonald's (8am) **End:** Fort Canning Park (3pm)*



Ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat (centre) and Yong Yuen Cheng (second from right) tucking into a meal after their run yesterday, with (from left) Mr Lim's wife Deborah pacer Gerrard Lin and Mr Raymond Huang, chief of Heartware Network, a youth charity that helped organise the run. ST PHOTO: CAROLINE CHIA

Finish line in sight, runners wary of injuries

By KASH CHEONG

ULTRAMARATHON runners Yong Yuen Cheng and Lim Nghee Huat finally have the finish line in sight.

Today, they will run 50km for the 49th day in a row.

Tomorrow, they will attempt another 50km before they achieve what they started out on April 16 to do: run 50km for 50 days to celebrate Singapore's Golden Jubilee.

The men of iron will be hopeful that neither illness nor injury will steal their thunder now.

With their bodies continually under pressure for so many days, preventive measures were important, said Mr Yong, 43.

But despite warm-up stretches, ample hydration and paying

attention to their strides, injury still caught up with them.

On the third day, for instance, Mr Lim, 62, tripped on a kerb and hurt his knee.

"It was a blow to fall down and hurt myself so early in the run," he said. A doctor gave him the assurance that he could go on and he healed in 10 days.

Mr Yong strained his Achilles tendon about 20 days into the feat. "The injury was hard to hide. People asked me to slow down or stop, but I am doing this for a greater cause," said Mr Yong, who had the help of a physiotherapist to continue.

"When you do something this long, you have to run from your heart. You have to get your body and mind to cooperate to overcome,"



said the former boxer.

Though the men are pushing their bodies to the limit, they have decades of running experience and are not reckless, said pacer Gerrard Lin, 31, who ran with them on every day but one.

Their times have ranged from five hours to nearly 10, depending on the difficulty of the route and their physical conditions.

Today, the public can see them off at 8am at the

McDonald's outlet in Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park, or be at the finish line at Fort Canning Park Carpark A at 3pm.

Tomorrow, the runners will start at 2am at Ion Orchard for the final run, ending at the Promontory at Marina Bay at about 10.30am.

There, they will perform a flame-kindling ceremony, harnessing the sun's rays to kindle the flame to be used in the SEA Games torch-lighting ceremony tomorrow night.

Runners can sign up to run in this final 50km leg but space is limited, organiser Heartware Network said.

✉ kashc@sph.com.sg

To register to run the final leg, check www.facebook.com/go50sg. Runners are advised to be fit for a 50km run.

Runners buoyed by army of supporters

Duo due to cross finish line today, ending marathon effort for SG50

By KASH CHEONG

AT AROUND 10.30am today, ultramarathon runners Yong Yuen Cheng and Lim Nghee Huat are due to cross the finish line of a 50km run for the 50th consecutive day in celebration of Singapore's Golden Jubilee.

As they do so, they will be grateful to an army of supporters who helped them through rain, shine and injury for the last 50 days. Even strangers who recognised them from the media coverage have encouraged them.

"They say, 'Jiayou! (Mandarin for 'keep going') - a few more days to go'," Mr Lim, a 62-year-old editor, said. "It's a small gesture but it really keeps you going."

Members of running clubs and representatives from the organisers - youth charity Heartware Network and the Institute of Technical Education - kept them company. And on some days, they received a boost from students who invited them to join school runs.

The duo and their pacer Gerard Lin even inspired amateur runners like Ms Cheryl Ng, 44. She bumped into them at Upper Peirce Reservoir and joined them

for 26km that day, then ran 50km with them four days later. "I didn't think I could do it, but the runners paced me and encouraged me," she said. "I pulled through."

Friends have given them support, offering prayers and even frog leg porridge recipes.

"Our bodies feel very hot from being under the sun so much, so cooling tea from my family members helps," said Mr Yong, a physical education teacher.

The pair are helped by a five-member team that wakes up at 5am to stock the supply van with \$400 worth of groceries. These include 70kg of ice, 27 litres of water and 10 litres of endurance

drinks. The crew follow the runners, stopping every kilometre or so to give them energy drinks or spray water to cool them down.

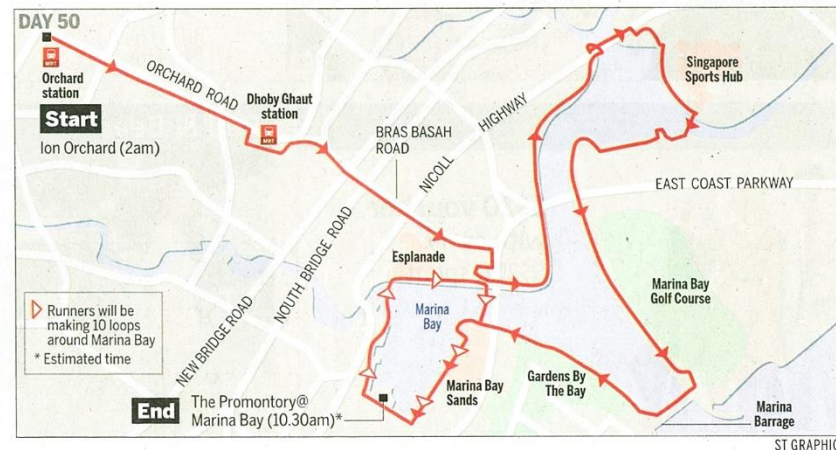
"It's nothing compared to the runners' efforts," said housewife Maureen Setyadi, 36, who volunteered to help. "As long as they have the heart to run, we will support them."

Mr Lin, as pacer, has run 50km with them on every day but one. Music blasts from wireless speakers to keep them going. "He tells us when to speed up and slow



Ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat (in grey) and Yong Yuen Cheng (in white long-sleeved shirt), with representatives from Deloitte, finishing their 49th leg at Fort Canning Park yesterday. The pair's support crew follow behind them, stopping every kilometre or so to give them drinks and cool them down. ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

Where to cheer the runners



down so we can last 50 days. It's a great help," said Mr Yong.

Mr Lim said: "Singers perform to celebrate SG50, we do what we do best to celebrate Singapore's 50th birthday and inspire others."

Last night, the pair prepared for their final leg at Mandarin Orchard hotel. They were due to set off from Ion Orchard mall at 2am.

✉ kashc@sph.com.sg

To track the location of the runners and cheer them on, visit go50.sg



SINGAPORE

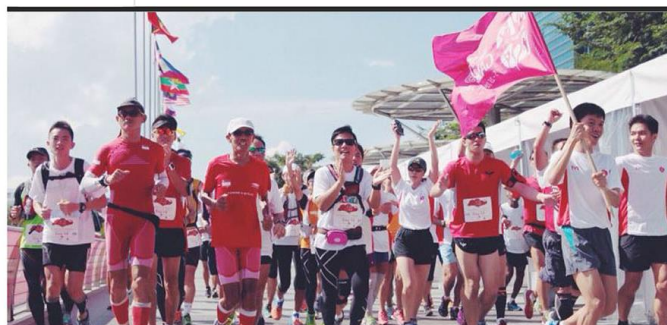
Ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat, Yong Yuen Cheng complete Go50 run

The last day of the run began at 2am from Ion Orchard and the duo crossed the finishing point on Thursday morning (Jun 4) at the Promontory at Marina Bay at about 10.30am.

By [Hetty Musfirah Abdul Khamid](#), Channel NewsAsia, [Goh Chiew Tong](#), Channel NewsAsia and [Alice Chia](#)

POSTED: 04 Jun 2015 11:41 UPDATED: 05 Jun 2015 00:31

PHOTOS



Ultramarathoners complete their last of 50 runs in 50 days. (Photo: Goh Chiew Tong)

SINGAPORE: Ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat and Yong Yuen Cheng have accomplished their mission to run 50 kilometres each day over the last 50 days. They crossed the finishing point of their last run on Thursday morning (Jun 4) at the Promontory at Marina Bay at about 10.30am.

Upon crossing the finishing line, Mr Lim said triumphantly: "Mission complete! I feel very relaxed actually."

The 62-year-old said that the marathon, called Go50, was "tougher than expected".

"The toughest thing was to wake up and do the same thing every day. It can be very boring. But I had a strong belief that I will overcome every day of the run," he said. "I didn't look at the run as an entire 50 days, but I focused on each day as it is."



Ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat (left) and Yong Yuen Cheng (right) (Photo: Goh Chiew Tong)

The duo usually start running at around 7am each day. After extensive warm-up exercises in the wee hours of the morning, they then embark on their daily run, clocking 50 kilometres sometime in the afternoon.

Mr Lim and Mr Yong both agreed that the one thing they wanted to do after completing their mission was catch up on sleep.

"I have been waking up every morning at about 5am and am lacking sleep," said Mr Lim, who admitted that his body is definitely "not structured" to handle 2,500 kilometres. He is currently suffering an injured tendon on his left foot. "If you touch the lower parts of my legs right now, I would definitely feel pain."

On top of that, unexpected challenges also surfaced during the run. Mr Lim faced diarrhoea and vomiting on one of the days - to which the route had to be adjusted so that he could have easy access to toilets. Yet, the duo recorded the fastest run on that very day.

The pair started the run on Apr 16 to mark Singapore's 50th birthday. Each day takes on a different theme. There are altogether 50 themes in the Go50: A Nation in Motion initiative, each symbolising the nation's founding father, the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew's contributions and character traits.

The duo finished the marathon together with over 50 runners representing different SEA Games celebratory partners.

"This run is more than just a run," said Mr Yong. "It's a project where youths of Singapore can learn values, values of hard work, discipline, mental toughness, resilience and perseverance."

The last day of the run began at 2am from ION Orchard. For their efforts, they have also been chosen to ignite the 28th SEA Games flame (pictured below), which will be used at the SEA Games Torch Parade later on Wednesday evening.



Relief and joy as duo complete epic run to mark SG50

They overcame injuries and illness, while being lifted by strong support

By KASH CHEONG and REI KUROHI

RELIEF and joy were etched on the faces of ultramarathon runners Yong Yuen Cheng and Lim Nghee Huat as they crossed the finish line on their 50th and final 50km run yesterday.

"Mission completed," declared Mr Lim, a 62-year-old TV editor, after their challenge to mark Singapore's 50th anniversary ended at 10.32am at the Marina Bay Promontory. "It has been tougher than expected but we made it!"

Said Mr Yong, his 43-year-old running buddy: "The first thing that came to my mind was relief. For 50 days, I focused on nothing but the run and how to recover. Now all that mental stress is over. The second thing was really appreciation for those who have supported us in one way or another."

Mr Yong, a physical education teacher, had struggled through the final days of the challenge after gastric flu killed his appetite and left him nauseated.

Earlier, he overcame a strained Achilles tendon. "Sometimes you just have to push through the run with sheer willpower. I believe ordinary people achieve extraordinary things."

The pair displayed grim determination at the start of their final 50km, but were lifted by about 50 runners who ran the home stretch with them to show support.

Among them was Mr Chen Joo Soon, 56, who ran alongside them for the entire final leg, which started from Ion Orchard mall at 2am.

The Institute of Technical Education (ITE) lecturer hardly had any sleep the night before, having completed the previous day's 50km leg with the duo at 4pm.

"The runners have been through so much, I wanted to give

them the last boost and be there to celebrate their feat with them."

In the run, co-organised by youth charity Heartware Network and ITE, the runners paid tribute to the resilience and fortitude of Singapore's pioneers.

Mr Lim, tanned from running under the sun for 50 days straight, overcame a bout of diarrhoea earlier in the challenge and ended it with just minor aches and pains.

"The first few days of our run, I felt pain everywhere in my legs," he said. "But after 10-plus days, our feet felt lighter. Our bodies were conditioned to running 50km every day."

Pacer Gerrard Lin had mixed feelings about the challenge ending. "There is a certain sense of loss," said the 31-year-old, who would challenge the two men to "mini races" and give certain stretches nicknames like "Tour de Sembawang" to keep their spirits up. "Somehow it feels like the past 50 days have gone by so quickly."

After they crossed the finish line yesterday, the two men, along with Mr Lin, hardly had any time to spare as they hugged and took pictures with supporters. All three were awarded certificates from co-chair of the SG50 Steering Committee, Dr Tan Lai Yong.

They then ignited the SEA Games flame, which was used to light the SEA Games torch for a community parade last night.

Having forgone spicy and sweet foods for the last 50 days, all Mr Yong wanted was a bowl of laksa and ice kacang.

Meanwhile, Mr Lim was looking forward to a holiday in Beijing next week with his wife Deborah, 56, who joked: "Maybe he'll run the Great Wall."

✉ kash@sph.com.sg
✉ rkurohi@sph.com.sg



Ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng (foreground) and Lim Nghee Huat lighting the SEA Games flame at the Marina Bay Promontory yesterday, as Mr Lim Teck Yin (right), chairman of the Singapore Southeast Asian Games Organising Committee executive committee, looked on. ST PHOTO: SEAH KWANG PENG

WHAT A FEAT

After 50 brutal days of running 50km a day, ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng and Lim Nghee Huat ended their run with a sprint to the finish yesterday. These numbers sum up their feat.

Total distance covered per person:

2,500km,
which is like running from Singapore to Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Calories burnt per person:

150,000

Estimated number of steps per person:

3,125,000

Food supplies:

\$20,000
(With aid from Sheng Siong and SG50 Celebration Fund)

Estimated cost of supplies:

\$20,000
(With aid from Sheng Siong and SG50 Celebration Fund)

Longest run:

9 hours 51 minutes
(Day 24)

Shortest run:

4 hours 47 minutes
(Day 47)



Mrs Deborah Lim (left) and volunteer Maureen Sedyadi preparing isotonic drinks and energy gels at the back of a supply car in April, in their support of ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng and Lim Nghee Huat during their run.

ST GRAPHICS ST PHOTO: NEO XIAORIN

Experts advise rest and thorough check-up

By ONG KAI XUAN

ULTRAMARATHONERS Yong Yuen Cheng, 43, and Lim Nghee Huat, 61, completed the incredible feat of running 50km for 50 consecutive days yesterday.

Now that the greatest running challenge of their lives is over, their first step, according to Mr Anand Sivayogam, a 31-year-old senior physiotherapist at Mount Elizabeth Hospital, should be to do a thorough medical check-up.

"The most common injuries of distance running are stress fractures of the tibia or fibula or medial tibial stress syndrome," he said.

Tibia and fibula are the bones that make up the shin, and medial tibial stress syndrome, or shin splints, can occur from overuse, resulting in pain.

"Other injuries include muscle tears at the calves and Achilles tendinitis," said Mr Sivayogam.

The challenge for the runners, according to Chang General Hospital sports medicine chief Benedict Tan, will be to differentiate between muscle soreness and injury. Dr Tan, 47, said pain accompanied by swelling, or pain that lasts longer than two weeks, most likely signals an injury.

As for what they should eat, Mr Derrick Ong, director of Eat Right Nutrition Consultancy and nutrition adviser to the Football Association of Singapore's medical committee, said carbohydrates will be essential in the days to come.

"Their glycogen stores are probably heavily depleted, so they need to load up on carbohydrates to replenish them," said the 42-year-old dietitian.

"Their bodies have been put under a tremendous amount of stress, so they need to consume more protein as well to recover their muscles. Other things like cherry juice or blackcurrant extract can help alleviate muscle soreness and aid recovery."

Experts agreed that rest was essential - Mr Ong thought they should rest for at least a week, while Mr Sivayogam felt two weeks would be safer.

Dr Tan said two weeks was the usual break before starting strenuous training again, but advised "recovery training" during the break.

"Doing an easy swim or cycling every day will accelerate recovery, and is better than lying down and doing nothing," he said.

✉ ongkx@sph.com.sg



DAY 1: Mr Yong (left) and Mr Lim starting the first of their SG50 special runs, accompanied by students and staff from the Institute of Technical Education, on April 16.



DAY 25: Mr Yong (in white) and Mr Lim (in white cap) at the halfway mark of their attempt to run 50km for 50 consecutive days, on May 10, at the Marina Barrage, along with supporters.



DAY 45: Mr Lim (left) and Mr Yong (centre) joining a barefoot walk in Sentosa on May 30 to raise money for less privileged families in Singapore. ST FILE PHOTOS

TOP OF THE NEWS A6

2,500KM IN 50 DAYS: 'WE DID IT!'

Ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng (right), 43, and Lim Nghee Huat (far right), 62, were triumphant after the most difficult run of their lives yesterday, accomplishing the feat of running 50km for 50 consecutive days in celebration of the nation's golden jubilee.

The duo sprinted past the finish line at 10.32am, soaked in sweat but buoyed by more than 50 runners who had joined them for the last leg.

"Mission completed!" Mr Lim, a media editor, said. "It was tougher than we thought but we made it!"

They had braved rain and shine as well as illness and injury. But there was no time to spare after the run beyond taking photos with supporters as they had to kindle the flame used to light the SEA Games torch last night. The torch passed iconic spots in Marina Bay on a 2.5km parade.



ST PHOTO: SEAH KWANG PENG

Proving ordinary people can do the extraordinary



Kash Cheong

I am not a runner. I am a couch potato.

So when I first received a press invitation in April to cover two Singaporeans who were going to run 50km for 50 days, my eyes popped.

Was it 50km spread across 50 days, meaning 1km a day? Was it 50km on 50 days of different months?

I had to call the organisers three times before I was convinced they were not kidding: Ultramarathoners Lim Nghee Huat and Yong Yuen Cheng were going to run 50km a day on 50 consecutive days, as a tribute to the resilience of Singapore's pioneers. Each day was also meant to symbolise a year of growth for Singapore as an independent nation.

Sweaty and red-faced just from interviewing the runners under the sun at the first day's flag-off, I could only wonder what gluttons for punishment they were.

Granted, they looked lean and fit in their skintight marathoning

suits, but would they get past even their first 10 days in this heat?

In the days ahead, as the men ran, I followed in their supply vehicle, and watched as they put one foot before the other, gritting their teeth on some days and smiling on others.

What struck me most was the dedication of those who played a back-end role. They would get no glory for their efforts. All they wanted was for the runners to succeed in this daunting quest.

Pregnant Tan See Leng came, rain or shine, to help marshal the runners and answer media queries. While many mums-to-be would be resting, the executive director of Heartware Network, which co-organised the run, bustled about every day, checking arrangements, cheering the runners on and ensuring that everything went smoothly. Her friends Fiona Loi and Raymond Huang also helped out.

And then there was the jovial Maureen Setyadi, 36, who volunteered to be part of the supply crew.

Providing sustenance meant far more than staying in one spot and handing over drinks. While the runners were pounding the roads, Ms Setyadi and Mr Lim's wife, Deborah, would be figuring out if it was time for them to have their endurance drinks or cramp-preventing salt tablets. The two women shook energy drinks with one hand, held a map in the other, all while communicating hands-free on the phone with other members of the crew.

Sometimes, the runners ran in park connectors, where the supply car could not enter. Bicycles were deployed to chase after them.

Along the way, Ms Setyadi took

the opportunity to get fit too. She cycled so much that she lost 12kg over the 50 days, with the help of a special diet plan. I was excited when she told me it was the first time in two decades that she could fit into her favourite pair of Mickey Mouse shorts. The runners might have scored a national victory, but Ms Setyadi claimed her own personal triumph.

Then there was Mrs Deborah Lim. The 56-year-old took every opportunity to sun her husband's shoes. They might be a sweaty pair, or another pair that had been washed the night before. During hectic five-minute stops when the supply vehicle stopped to pass drinks to the runners, she quickly put the shoes on the ground near the car's front seat.

As the days went by, I was surprised that both men persevered. Their extreme feat drew criticism too – some said the run was a waste of time and the pair were “glory-hunters”.

But they said they were just doing what they do best to celebrate the nation's birthday and inspire others to surpass their limits.

They did just that. Several amateur runners, including 44-year-old Cheryl Ng and 24-year-old Debbie Lee, decided to join in and attempt a 50km run as well, setting a new personal best for themselves. Members of the Gei Gei runners group were among others who turned up to accompany Mr Lim and Mr Yong and keep their spirits up.

Last Thursday, on the final day of the run, the crew and the runners came to the starting line at Ion Orchard, exhausted yet excited.

Their surreal experience – of waking up at 4am to get supplies, flag-



ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

Ultramarathoners Yong Yuen Cheng (right) and Lim Nghee Huat (second from right) marking Day 49 of their run last Wednesday. With them are Ms Maureen Setyadi (far left) and pacer Gerrard Lin, waving the SEA Games flag.

ging off at around 7am daily, avoiding spicy food for 50 days – would end the following day.

After seven weeks of covering these two men on their amazing SG50 quest, I found myself fishing out my dusty running shoes and putting them on.

And as I joined them for part of the last stretch, I felt like I was running with superheroes.

Brisk walking with them was easy. But once they decided to power forth during stretches of their last 50km, the banter in the flock of supporters quietened as some huffed and puffed to keep up.

A stoic Mr Yong fought off gastric pains and nausea to run from his heart. The physical education teacher just wanted to prove his personal motto to his students: that or-

inary people can achieve extraordinary things.

“If I didn’t complete the run, the teaching opportunity would be lost,” the 43-year-old said. He credited pacer Gerrard Lin, 31, who accompanied them on all but one of the 50 days, for providing invaluable motivation.

Not once did 62-year-old Mr Lim let his age slow him down. Seasoned Malaysian ultramarathoner Ng Seow Kong said that, as one gets older, one’s muscles recover more slowly from running, which makes Mr Lim’s achievement all the more significant.

Of course, both the runners have decades of experience and took precautions.

I was surprised by their detailed log books, where they documented

their physical condition and made notes reminding themselves to slow down in the following day’s run if they felt unwell.

“I would not do anything to permanently damage my body,” Mr Yong said.

In the end, the two men achieved what they set out to do. Although they won no SEA Games medals, their achievement is truly a feather in Singapore’s cap.

Their feat also inspired me to lace up and start running again after a break of two years.

Maybe it will also move others to imagine the unimaginable and give it a try.

Now, what shall we do for SG100?

✉ kashc@sph.com.sg

大学生热衷志愿服务

盧虹伶 2015年06月17日

8+1



街访街坊

陈俊维自17岁加入志愿组织心件工程，过去八年来，他从一名小组长到后来成为心件工程的青年规划委员会成员，曾经在妆艺大游行和国庆庆典等大型活动中当志愿者。

盧虹伶 报道 / 摄影

lsandie@sph.com.sg

大学生的课业繁重，忙着应付学业的同时很少会选择在闲暇时间当活动志愿者，但是陈俊维（25岁）从去年4月起就开始为在东南亚运动会开幕和闭幕典礼的招待服务志愿工作做准备。

他是志愿组织心件工程（Heartware Network）青年规划委员会的10名成员之一。他们每个星期都要花很多时间筹划具体的招待计划、志愿者的人手安排、志愿者的训练计划等。心件工程是参与东运会的志愿组织之一，负责招待服务的工作。

陈俊维受访说：“这类志愿性质的活动磨练了我的自信心、应变能力、工作能力之余，还能让我为国家献出一分力，我觉得很有意义。”

陈俊维自17岁加入心件工程，之后担任小组长参与妆艺大游行的招待服务志愿工作。过去八年来，他从一名小组长到后来成为心件工程的青年规划委员会成员，曾经在妆艺大游行和国庆庆典等大型活动中当志愿者。

他说：“在筹划这些志愿性质的活动时，最困难的是考虑加入能让青少年成长的因素。例如每个志愿小组中需要不同年龄层、不同生活经历的人，这样能在参与的青少年面临困难时，引导他们想到解决办法。”

陈俊维认为，每次看到参与志愿活动的青少年从中学习新事物和掌握新知识，他都很有满足感，并希望“自己也能成为别人的榜样，帮助更多青少年成长”。