



### 2008 Review

Typical of large corporations, my workplace has a semi-annual staff performance review process where supervisors will review the performance of their staff. We use an Intranet workflow system for the preparation, submission and review. At the end of the process, the employee will be interviewed with the supervisor where hopefully a constructive feedback session can take place before a final rating will be accorded and agreed by both parties. The rating goes in some ways towards determining the appropriate increment and/or career progression of the said staff. A good thing about the workgroup that I'm in is that we're all quite matured and very open in communication across all levels. It's easy to see why we're quite well-oiled since the average years of service within my team of 4 members is 12 years, with an average age of 39. In a marketplace where the staff turnover is as rapid and frequent as underwear change, our longevity in our department is a wonder.

Likewise in running, it's a good thing to conduct an annual review on went through, our training, the disruptions and challenges, and achievements. I've been doing such reviews since 2005. It's all part of wanting to become a better runner and ultimately a better person in balancing our passion with other aspects of our lives. I'm more than happy with the running I've put in this year. 2008 has to be the best year I've had in my running. I succeeded in lowering my times in distances ranging from 10K to the Marathon and was fortunate to have participated in 3 overseas events.

I continued my policy of being selective of the races to run, and even though I took part in 11 races I thought they were spread out quite well and contributed to my key race performances. I'd have to go back to 2004 when I last raced so much. Some may roll their eyes when I regard 11 as plenty. Indeed so, since some of my friends raced as many as 6 times in a month, not counting some of their training runs were like races.

Personal highlights of this year include:

- PRs in 10K, 15K, Half Marathon, 30K, Marathon (twice)
- Ran 3 marathons. It was 4 years back when I last did 2 within a year
- My 10th marathon was a World Marathon Major no less. Only in the sport of running can you run in a world class event and thread the same grounds as the champions)
- Travelled more than 4 hours to a race
- Ran 2 races in Singapore, unusual for someone with limited time
- Participated in the global Nike+ Human Race 10K
- Embarked on a series of Back to Backs™
- Initiated Hell Week™
- Hit 114K mileage per week, 160K in 9 days and despite the volume actually enjoyed it and except for the odd blisters, remained injury and illness free
- Supplemented running with spinning which proved to be an excellent cross-training exercise
- Covered just a little bit more in the 12 hours walk

I'm thankful for the company of friends during the long runs, without whom Hell Week™ and the Back to Backs™ wouldn't have been so much fun. Their presence made waking up at the ungodly hours very much easier.

Next year will not be quite the same. The current global economic situation means that sponsors will be hard to come by and organizers will face tough challenges in maintaining race quality in view of rising costs, smaller budgets and tightening purse strings. Events will be done on a smaller scale and we runners will have to contend with smaller or non-existent goodie bags. Unless we're willing to pay higher race fees, we shouldn't complain. On the other side of the fence, organizers will be tempted to raise fees, something which I hope will not happen. At the same time, it is also hoped that the organizers will not use the lack of sponsors as an excuse for a poorly managed race. We runners want a well managed race, not a well-stocked goodie bag full of unusable items. I believe, however, niche events will continue to be well-supported, even if there will be a reduction in those who register only to collect the event T-shirt/vest.



My racing plans for 2009 remain uncertain with only January's GE30K to show. Standard Chartered Bank's debut sponsor of the KL Marathon in June looks appealing and is almost certain to draw the crowds. Training for it will be tough – which marathon training isn't – but the added challenge lies in the fact that the project I'm involved in will be moving to the UAT phase then. As high as I got in 2008, I'm praying that I won't be descending to the opposite depths in 2009. I'll just have to make sure that I don't regress, do I?



Orange Run. Photo courtesy of Tey



ING New York City Marathon



Malakoff 12K. Photo courtesy of Choi

To read previous reports, just go to the [Race Report page](#) or hit any of the links below.

- GE Pacesetters 30K – [Race report](#) (PR)
- KL International Marathon – [Race report](#) (PR)
- BHP Orange Run – [Race report](#) (PR)
- NB PACM 15K – [Race report](#) (PR)
- RMAF Half Marathon – [Race report](#) (PR)
- adidas Sundown Marathon – [Race report](#)
- Nike+ Human Race 10K – [Race report](#)
- adidas King Of The Road – [Race report](#)
- ING New York City Marathon – [Race report](#) (PR)
- Putrajaya International 12-Hour Walk – [Race report](#) (PR)
- Malakoff 12K – [Race report](#)