

Runners, have ya met Coach T?

By Melissa Lorenzana, 2011

It's 95 degrees outside. It's a Sunday. And to top it off, it's 6:30 a.m. All I want to do is sleep. This combination does not scream, "Let's go running in the blazing summer sun!"

Oh, but It does when your biggest cheerleader is [Coach Taneen Carvell](#), or Coach T, as she's so fondly known during a race. As one of [Potomac River Running](#) training program coaches, Coach T is the one you want to whip you into shape that early in the morning, as she has more energy at 6:00 a.m. on a Sunday than a toddler does after inhaling a bag of candy.

Joining the endurance sport world a bit later in the game, Coach T started running at the "old" age of 32.

"I was running on a treadmill at this small gym in Gaithersburg, Maryland, and the women at the gym thought I needed to do a race because I was always running so fast on that machine," Coach T said. "They were so adamant that they signed me up for the Glenn Brenner 5k in DC in the spring of 1998. I ran the race and was so jazzed by the experience I just kept running another three miles to the softball game I was slated to play later that morning."

To date, she has completed 15 marathons (sweet 16 is this fall's Chicago Marathon) and roughly 14 triathlons - including four Ironman races and four half Ironman races.

However, it's not her long list of race accolades that most people admire about her. The most impressive aspect about Coach T is her love of coaching. With USA Track & Field Level 1 Certification under her belt, Coach T is currently in her second year coaching runners and endurance sport trainees around the DC metro area with [Potomac River Running](#).

But you'd think she's been doing this all her life. Because not only does she make a valiant attempt to remember every trainee's name, she also makes a concerted effort to learn about each person's goals.

"My favorite part of coaching is seeing the individual transform over the course of even just eight weeks or six months or a year," she says. "It is priceless and I cherish having just a small part in their success."

I, along with more than 130 runners in the DC metro area, am signed up for this summer's Distance Training Program. As I train for this year's New York City Marathon with this program, I'm able to participate in weekly track sessions at Washington Lee High School and weekly long runs, bright and early on Sunday mornings. In addition to these twice weekly sessions, Coach T provides detailed emails with running and stretching tips, nutrition advice, as well as safety recommendations. On top of all that, I can also email Coach T any time I have questions about my training.

And if group training isn't your thing, Coach T is also available for individual coaching. She's so well-versed in endurance training in general, you can even seek her expertise on cycling and swimming, or overall triathlon training.

But above all else, Coach T wants the training programs to be fun for everyone. It's not uncommon for her to schedule happy hours and picnics after running double-digit miles.

So, whether you're training for your first or tenth marathon, or just need that extra push each week to log those miles, join Coach T and one of her training programs. I promise she has enough energy to go around.