

# **Born to Run** by Christopher McDougall (2009)

The author was a recreational runner that kept getting injured. He heard of some runners that ran effortlessly & didn't get injured. He was in search of the elusive **Tarahumara** (Tar.) **Indians** in the copper canyons of the western Sierra Madres in Mexico. He hired Salvador Holquin as a guide to find Arnulfo Quimare (greatest living Tar runner). They had to cross dangerous area (due to the drug lords Mexico is 2<sup>nd</sup> to Iraq in the # of killed or kidnapped reporters). The Tar Indians hated white men since the Spanish silver hunters killed or made them slaves (they now hide). Later came bounty hunters for scalps, missionaries with new diseases, more recently Rick Fisher.

They found Arnulfo, but he didn't want to talk. The canyon school teacher told them about "white horse" (a white man that lived like them). He was just as elusive, but one day they found him. He told them how in 1992 Rick Fisher (photographer & expert on the Mongollon underground canyons in AZ) talked some Tar runners into going to CO for the Leadville 100-mile race. At home they run for fun & hunting in sandals. He gave them shoes & they didn't do well. '93 he took a new team back & won, but Rick seemed more interested in the money & fame, than the runners. In '94 they came back & raced against Ann Trason (just won Western States 100). She ran her best, set a women's record (never broke), but came in 2<sup>nd</sup> to a Tar. Rick caused such a commotion, the runners never returned. But during that race a hippy guy ran as a pacer & like the Tar runners so much he moved to Mexico & became the "white horse".

Dr. Joe Vigil studied the great runners of the world. He wanted to study the Tar, but got distracted coaching Olympic hopefuls, including Deena Kaster & others at Mammoth Lakes, CA. **The great runners had the joy of running**, like Emil Zapotek (1940's & 50's) was one of them. Eric Orton & Ken Merke coached the author to run better. Take shorter strides (glide @ 180 bpm), back straight, & stay relaxed. Think: easy-light-smooth-fast. Ask nothing from running & get more than you could have hoped for. Don't cringe from fatigue, embrace it & push through it.

2006 "white horse" created a race with Tar white runners. Some of the runners were: Scott Jurek, Luis Escobar, Eric Orton, Jean Shelton, Billy Barnett, Barefoot Ted & the author. The same month Scott Jurek won WS100 & Badwater (even when it looked like he was toast). Barefoot ted helped Vibram put 5-finger shoes on the map. They had the joy of running. Scott came in 2<sup>nd</sup> to Arnulfo. The "white horse" told his story.

Stanford University found running in expensive shoes causes more injuries than cheap shoes. Arthur Lydiard said: "You support an area [foot], it gets weaker. Use it extensively, it gets stronger." Exercise can reduce the risk of breast cancer returning by 50% [no meat helps too]. Foods & drinks they thrive on are: tortillas, beans, rice & corn; an energy drink from chia seeds, sugar & lime; corn beer. Geranium niveum (anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, anti-bacterial & anti-oxidant)

## Quotes:

"If it feels like work, you're working too hard." "Practice abundance by giving back."  
"The heroes of the past are protected forever by the fortress doors of time."

“They were just guys trying desperately to keep up with the living shadows of their former selves.” “Beyond the very extreme of fatigue & distress, we may find amounts of ease & power we never dreamed ourselves to own; sources of strength never taxed at all because we never push through the obstruction.” (William James)

Other books: Running Athlete (Dr. Je Torg); How they train (Fred Wilt)