

Success Story: Megan

I started running four years ago, as a freshman at Houston County High School. I am now a senior, have seven varsity letters for cross country, swim team, track and field and golf. Next fall I will join the Georgia Tech cross country team and continue to run indoor and outdoor track and field for them throughout the year. My dream of being the best female distance runner that Georgia Tech has ever seen almost disappeared this winter when horrible knee pain made me incapable of running further than eight-hundred meters.

About two months after I started running, my right hip started to bother me. Doctors and trainers told me it was merely tendonitis and that rest and ice would fix the problem. I was also hindered by GI issues during and after running that persisted throughout high school. I ran in my first ever half-marathon race that winter and finished in 1:37, an amazing feat for a 15-year-old girl with little training and hip problems. During the Track season that spring, my hip started hurting once more as my training intensity increased. I iced it, rested it and “contained” the pain. The next fall-my sophomore year-during cross country the pain returned once again along with a new pain around my sciatic nerve. I also sprained my left foot and was put in a walking boot and on crutches for a week. I trained a little more that winter and finished my second half-marathon race in 1:31. That spring the hip tendonitis persisted and sidelined me for many practices. Despite the pain, I managed to run 11 minutes and 37 seconds in the two mile race at the State Track and Field Championships, placing 8th in the 5A GHSA division. I then took some time off, healing my “tendonitis.” I ran with a sore right hip, hamstring, and gluteus for a few months while hoping that ice, stretching, and anti-inflammatory would make the problem disappear. Then, in October of 2008 I tore my right Achilles tendon. I was forced to do nothing but rest for a month, and I gradually came back to running over the winter. I returned to the track that spring to place 8th at the state two-mile championship again, unfortunately with a slower time than the previous year. I ran in the Junior Olympics race series over the summer and raced well enough to make it to nationals. However, I never seemed to reach my potential. My last year of High School cross-country I managed to set a personal record in the 5k (18:26) and place 8th at the State Cross-country Championships. Unfortunately, during my winter training I started to feel pain in my right knee. I ignored it for a while, as every stubborn runner does. The pain would not go away and forced me to walk home in tears from a five mile run. I had felt like my knee cap had shattered, along with my goals for my last season of high school track. Doctors told me it was once again tendonitis. I iced it and took as much Motrin as I could. The pain remained and doctors could not figure out why. They told me I tore something, but the MRI’s proved them wrong. A month later, after physical therapy for a patella tracking problem, I returned to running and so did the knee pain. I could not run for more than a half-mile. Doctors could not figure out the problem, and my future as a Georgia Tech runner seemed to disappear.

I decided to go to the Cantrell Center to swim until my knee got better. So, at my initial appointment with Jason Barker, I described the injuries that I have had over the years, as well my current knee injury. He right away caught on to the typical PRI symptoms which I described and called Mike Cantrell in to look at me. Jason and Mike

had loads of fun asking me PRI questions and receiving typical PRI replies. Did I have headaches? Yes. Did I have TMJ? Yes. Was one leg longer than the other? Yes. Did my left rib cage stick out further? Yes. Was my right shoulder mobility limited? Yes. He was happy to hear that I had all of these problems, while I was unhappy to discover new ones. However, Mike was excited to “fix” me and assured me that he could have me back to running in two weeks with a few visits. I was desperate to hit the roads again and asked him when I could make my first appointment. After three visits and a little gluteus strengthening, I was back to running and could not believe it. I was able to increase my mileage to forty miles a week in just three weeks, it was a miracle! After two months of finishing physical therapy, my GI issues, right knee pain, right gluteus pain, and right hip pain has disappeared while running. If I start to feel pain anywhere during the day, I just perform a physical therapy movement or “trick” to quickly fix the problem. My parents, coaches, and I are dumbfounded by the miracle that PRI therapy has done. I have received numerous comments on my improved running form and have felt the ease of my new stride. My knees come up with less effort and there is no longer a pain in my sciatic nerve or lower back while running.

Mike Cantrell is every runners dream: a “quick fix” and a trustworthy physical therapist. He understands an avid runner’s mentality and works harder than the patient on getting him or her back to “normal.” I am happier than ever knowing that all of my injuries and pains are related, but easily cured by revisiting the simple, yet odd physical therapy movements that Mike Cantrell has prescribed. I know that my future is bright as a Yellow Jacket runner all because of Mike Cantrell and his abundance of knowledge about postural restoration and passion for curing each and every person who walks through his doors.