

This newsletter is brought to you by chirpy 5am city birds, a herring migration, and sports drink powders that don't dissolve in the volume they claim to. If you enjoy it, I'd be grateful if you could share with one or two others!

## An ultra while breastfeeding!

This past weekend, Stephanie Case won the Ultra-Trail Snowdonia 100k while stopping to breastfeed her daughter Pepper 3 times throughout the race. These were some of her thoughts:

"I have gained way more joy and strength from this sport as a mom than I ever did before. While it broke my heart to leave little Pepper at the aid stations, I wanted to show her - both of us - how amazing mom runners can be."

"Whether you are thinking of being a mom, are pregnant, or are a new mom yourself, don't be afraid to keep setting big goals for yourself. Everyone has an opinion about what new moms should or shouldn't be doing, and that doesn't open up a lot of space for "out there" ideas like running an ultra. Should I spend this much time away from my baby? Is it harmful for my body? What about my milk supply?"

"Stories from this weekend, while inspiring to some, can be really demotivating for others. I'm lucky to be physically okay after childbirth (although it's taken a lot of pelvic floor work!). Others aren't so lucky."

"There is no "comeback" after childbirth. There is just the next phase."

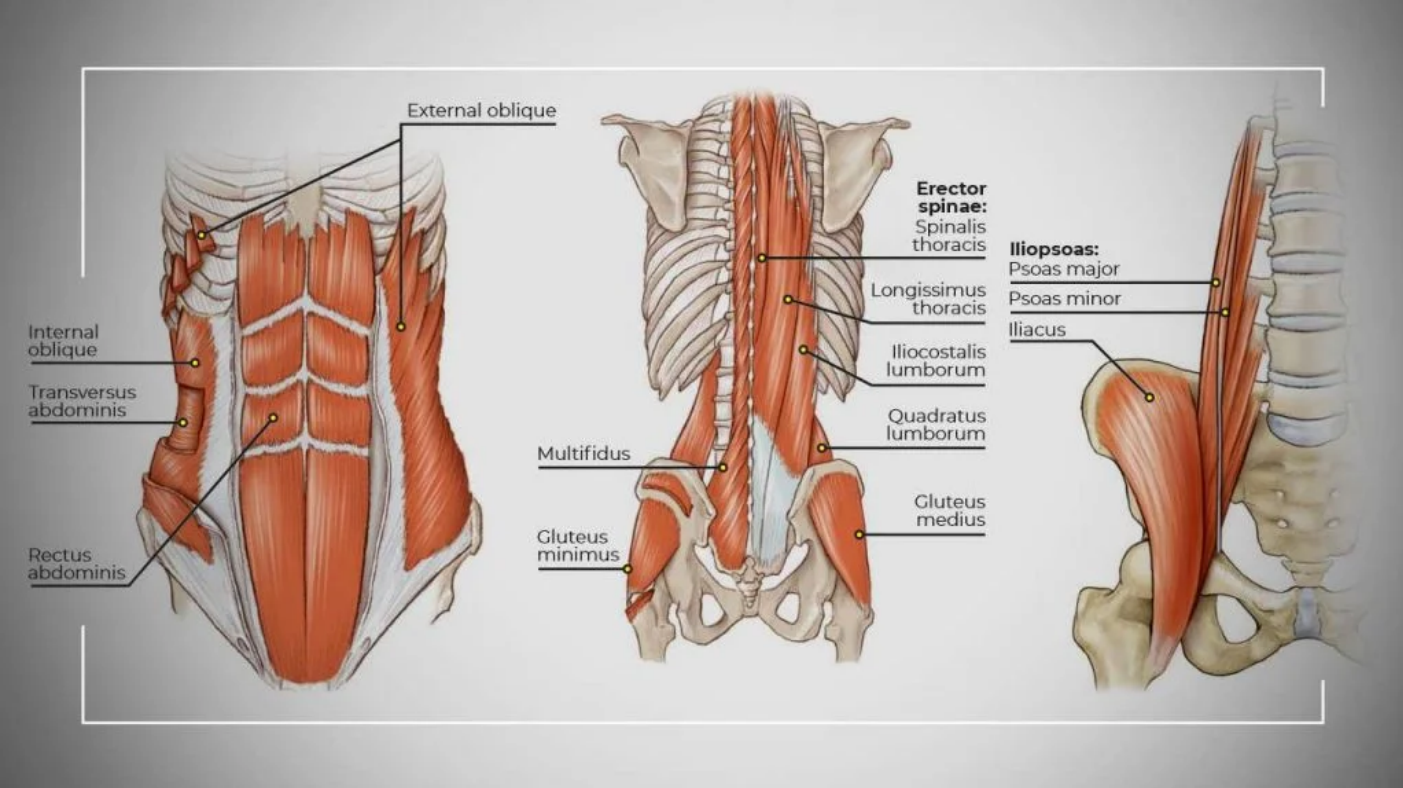
Whatever that looks like, on or off the trail, it matters. You matter.

Read more about her story and see some great photos from the race on her [Instagram!](#)

## Coaching snapshot: core!

*What does doing "core work" actually mean, and how do I apply it to my training? If I'm not getting injured, do I even need to do core?*

The "core," or lumbopelvic hip complex, generally references the stabilizing muscles of the back, trunk, and pelvis as shown in the [image below](#). It can also include the diaphragm (which helps with breathing), and pelvic floor (which helps with pelvic organ control).



In endurance sports, the core doesn't usually produce power; rather, it helps transmit forces between the upper and lower body and/or any equipment or ground contact areas. For example, in cycling, the core helps translate power efficiently from the legs to the pedals while holding the handlebars steady. In rowing, the core helps translate power from the legs to the oar handle. In running, the core helps keep the hips stable and torso upright upon foot strike. In fact, research in runners has shown that weak or imbalanced core muscles [may be associated with](#) higher injury risk, especially in the feet, ankles, and knees.

The peer-reviewed evidence behind core training to improve sport performance is poor, but my anecdotal evidence in favor of core work to improve performance is high. [Training the core](#) can include stationary exercises like planks, which can help the nervous system tune into activating core muscles. In addition, dynamic exercises in all planes of movement, like rotation, plyometrics, and balance exercises, can help athletes identify and use the core during motor coordination. Ultimately, the athlete must learn how to integrate using the core into their sport-specific movement pattern. I believe the end result will be improved economy of motion as well as fewer injuries!

Reply to this newsletter or [email me](#) with questions, and I'll answer one in a few weeks!

**Let your friends know that I'm taking more athletes! Send them to my [website](#) to submit an inquiry or just pass along my email. Thank you so much!**

## Ermine icing!

Ermine icing is traditionally for red velvet cake, but I like it for any chocolate cake, like these cupcakes, too. It's made mostly with milk and flour, so it isn't too sweet or buttery!

Ingredients: 1 cup milk, 5 tbsp flour, 1 cup granulated sugar, 2 tsp vanilla extract, 6 tbsp softened butter, optional food coloring.

In a pot over medium heat, whisk together milk, flour, and granulated sugar. Boil, whisking intensely, for about a minute until it thickens. Transfer to a mixing bowl and let cool. Cool further in the fridge. Beat in vanilla and butter and food coloring. The icing should be spreadable/pipeable now. If not, it likely did not cool enough and you can refrigerate it again. Just whip it immediately before use!



## Help me grow!

As a small business, I rely on word of mouth to grow. Please share my [website](#) (ssendurance.com), [Instagram](#) (@coach\_serena326), or [newsletters](#) with anyone and/or over social media! Reach out with any questions or comments by responding to this email. Thank you all!

## Hi from Bea!

Bea is Ramona's dog cousin. They don't get along very well, but they can be in the same room minding their own business.



Bea loves snow, sticks, belly rubs, cat toys, and drinking from the cats' water bowls! Sending snuggles!

