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EDITOR'S PICK

Days in life of Kathrine Switzer -- a fearless woman

By Kate Farrell Aug 20, 2018



The ability for women to chase their dreams can be attributed in part to Kathrine Switzer, the first official woman runner at the Boston Marathon.

She continues to inspire others to see the boundaries that society sets for them as obstacles that they can shatter as they reach their full potential.

Switzer said, “People talk about older athletes, older people the way they talked about women 50 years ago. ‘You shouldn’t do that, you are too weak, you are too fragile, you might hurt yourself. Take it easy,’

“Why take it easy? Just go for it.”

Now, Switzer is taking on another leadership role. She has created an organization called 261 Fearless. It uses running as a vehicle to empower and unite women globally through the creation of local

clubs, education opportunities, communication platforms, merchandising and events.

Through these networking opportunities, 261 Fearless breaks down the barriers of geography and creates a global community for women runners of all abilities to support and talk to each other, encouraging healthy living and a positive sense of self and fearlessness.

A “day in the life” can vary wildly based on Kathrine’s schedule, but her passion and desire to see further change keeps her working tirelessly to promote 261 Fearless.

Her work takes her all over the world:

1. Crazy day in Chicago

4:30 a.m. — The PR team meets me in the lobby at Starbucks, and off we go to a couple of local TV stations.

6 a.m. — We all head out to Grant Park where they are going to start social media content stuff — this is a whole new component.

Sometimes they will have a list of questions and want me to answer them all in 11 seconds.

7 a.m. — Westin Hotels has a program for their guests where you order up your shoes and your clothes — the fitness concierge decided he is going to interview me — so we get in front of an iconic scene of Chicago, the skyline.

11 a.m. — I might have a couple sponsor meetings (at Humana's corporate offices), and we brainstorm ideas.

1 p.m. — I try to get a run in. Sometimes it doesn't happen at all.

2:30 p.m. — I go to a radio show or we sit down with journalists for a written piece.

5 p.m. — There is a dinner and they want me to speak. Then it's (already) 11 at night. The hardest thing for me is that I just don't have time to keep up with my e-mails. I get 50 or 100 a day. People are impatient when I don't answer them for a long time.

2. Europe for a race

9:30 a.m. — Race

11 a.m. — Speech at the awards ceremony

Noon — Book signing. Everyone says “When is your next book coming out?” I mean, I have to write the book, right? I don’t have a lot of time to write right now.

3 p.m. — We jump on a plane and visit one of our big 261 sponsors — Adidas. They are right near Nuremberg, Germany, so we pile in there by late at night and get something to eat.

Day 2 in Europe

6 a.m. — We get up early and head over to Adidas, where my shoe from the Boston Marathon is ceremonially placed in their museum. Then I get to meet the executives over coffee.

7:30 a.m. — I sign their big guestbook, they call their employees together, and I do a speech. It’s a really huge, beautiful campus — filled with interesting designers, people from all over the world.

9 a.m. — We go into really intense meetings where we present 261 Fearless and our vision for the future and how Adidas should be involved with us.

Noon — We go down to see Adidas scientists who are there with thermometers and wind gauges. It is stunning what they are doing. They have big torsos of runners that they overheat and then they see where the sweat patterns would be and all kinds of amazing stuff.

3:30 p.m. — I'm winding down and they say no, no, no, we have a whole bunch of people out on the track and they want run with you. The photographers come out to do photo shoots and we run together and get very sweaty.

5 p.m. — We finish off the day by going into the Adidas company store and going shopping and buying all kinds of shoes and gear.

3. Quieter day in New Zealand

10 a.m. — I'm working on applications with the Boston Athletic Association to see if we can apply for charity bibs for next year again. A very vigorous process so we have to have all of our tax documents together, working with our lawyers. We give the reasons why and where this money goes with the charity and how we change women's lives.

1 p.m. — Dealing with lots of media requests

3 p.m. — We have a race in China, the first ever women's international marathon there. The Chinese team needs social media, pictures, press kits, logos, and we have to get it to certain channels because we cannot always get certain (media) into China.

☺☺☺

Former Windham High runner Kate Farrell interviewed Kathrine Switzer while in Chicago for a half-marathon.

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