

100 YEARS OF MOTIVATION

To celebrate its 100th birthday, New Balance has invited 100 runners from 50 partner races across the world to run the Chicago marathon. We meet one of the UK winners

LEON SPENCE is not a typical poster-boy for a sports brand. At the age of 30, the IT consultant was pushing 21 stone and hadn't run since taking the wooden spoon in his last primary school cross-country competition. But New Balance isn't a typical sports shoemaker, and prefers to focus on making comfortable, injury-proofing trainers rather than slapping its brand on millionaire sports stars ("Endorsed By No One" is one of the company's core philosophies). After entering this year's Bath half-marathon, Leon was picked by the company to carry the flag for the UK in this October's Chicago marathon.

Leon's motivation to take up the sport came in 2005 when, after his father died of cancer, he applied to become a bone marrow donor and was turned down for being too heavy. Leon made up his mind to lose weight and raise money to fight the disease by running. "My only problem was that I knew at my weight I could only run 100 yards, if I tried more I would probably badly injure my knees," he says.

After a trip to get some running shoes fitted, Leon settled on a pair of New Balance 854s ("the only ones I felt comfortable in"), and has never looked back. Now two years later, seven stone lighter and a seasoned runner, Leon has slimmed down sufficiently to join the bone marrow register and has raised £1000 for Leukaemia Research in the process. "I honestly don't think it would have happened if it wasn't for my confidence in my 854s in those first few months," he says.

"New Balance isn't a typical sports shoemaker"

His confidence was well-founded. New Balance came into being by making arch supports and prescription footwear to improve shoe fit, and the company has stayed true to those principles. The trainers all come in a range of widths and sizes and utilise the New Balance Suspension System, a collection of features which cushions and protects every part of a runner's feet.

And there's no stopping Leon, who will be competing in the London and Stockholm marathons, but it's Chicago he's particularly looking forward to. "I've never been to America although I've always wanted to, and Chicago is the culmination of my personal challenge for the year," says Leon, adding that he's particularly looking forward to taking in the city's spectacular architecture. "How else would you get to run down the middle of the street in a city like Chicago and be able to take everything in?"



LEON IS A TYPICAL NEW BALANCE RUNNER. RUNNING FOR HIS OWN MOTIVATION TO LOSE WEIGHT AND RAISE MONEY FOR CHARITY. NEW BALANCE SUITS LEON BECAUSE THEY MAKE COMFORTABLE, GOOD-FITTING TRAINERS WITH A FOCUS ON THE EVERYDAY CONSUMER NOT MILLIONAIRE SPORTS STARS

100 YEARS OF NEW BALANCE

NEW BALANCE ARCH

Scientifically Designed - Light Weight - Soft and Flexible - All Sizes

Relieves Pain
Restores Foot Health



READ INSIDE FACTS

1900s

1900s: NEW BALANCE FOUNDED IN BOSTON USA BY WILLIAM RILEY, AN EXPATRIATE ENGLISHMAN, WHO MAKES CUSTOMISED ARCH SUPPORTS TO CORRECT ORTHOPAEDIC FOOT PROBLEMS.

1930s



1930s: RILEY GOES INTO PARTNERSHIP WITH HIS LEADING SALESMAN ARTHUR HALL. THE COMPANY DEVELOPS THEIR FIRST HANDMADE RUNNING SPIKE, WORN BY ATHLETE DAN McBRIDE.

1960s

New Balance shoes have special features designed to give you

MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE

TRACKSTER

1960s: NEW BALANCE PRODUCES THE TRACKSTER. THE FIRST RUNNING SHOE TO FEATURE A RIPPLED SOLE AND THE FIRST TO BE MANUFACTURED IN MULTIPLE WIDTHS. IT QUICKLY BECOMES THE PREFERRED CHOICE OF RUNNING COACHES AND ATHLETES.

1970s

TRIPPLE Sole



1970s: TOM FLEMING WINS THE 1975 NEW YORK CITY MARATHON IN A PAIR OF NEW BALANCE 320s. THE SHOE GETS FIRST PLACE RANKING IN THE 1976 RUNNER'S WORLD AWARDS.

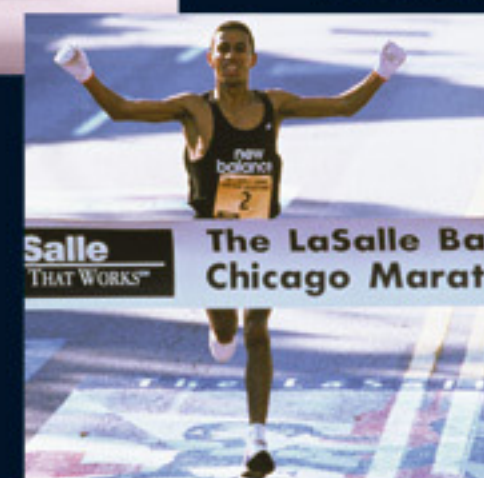
1980s



1980s: THE COMPANY INTRODUCES THE ICONIC 900 SERIES OF RUNNING SHOES. TWENTY YEARS LATER IT'S STILL GOING STRONG. THE SHOES COMBINE A LIGHTWEIGHT FEEL WITH TOUGH SUPPORT FEATURES, INCLUDING A WIDE BASE DESIGNED TO AVOID ANKLE INJURIES.

1990s

1990s-PRESENT: MOROCCO'S KHALID KHANNOUCHI SETS A NEW WORLD RECORD AT THE 1999 CHICAGO MARATHON, WEARING A PAIR OF NEW BALANCE RC110s. THE COMPANY ENTERS THE NEW MILLENNIUM IN A TYPICAL SPIRIT OF INNOVATION, BRINGING OUT THE RC1001s, THE FIRST SHOES TO FEATURE THE N-ERGY S.C. SYSTEM, OFFERING EVEN GREATER PROTECTION TO RUNNERS, THROUGH IMPACT, HEEL STRIKE AND AFTER-HEEL STRIKE.



BOTH THE 857 (TOP) AND THE 1060 (BOTTOM) ARE AVAILABLE FROM ALL QUALITY INDEPENDENT AND SPECIALIST STORES, AS WELL AS SOME OF THE LARGER SPORTS CHAINS, SUCH AS INTERSPORT. NINETY PER CENT OF NEW BALANCE'S UK SHOES ARE MADE IN THE UK.

NEW BALANCE'S WINNING SHOE

The 857 was voted Best Updated Shoe in the March 2006 issue of *Runner's World* magazine. It has enhanced shock absorption, so it's cushioned as well as offering superior stability. It features a water-resistant mesh, so it's ideal for outdoor training in all conditions. The 857 for men comes in sizes seven to fifteen and in two widths.

New Balance's flagship shoe, the 1060, offers the ultimate in sports performance. It's renowned for its fab fit and offers great shock absorption, durability and stability. The 1060 for men comes in sizes seven to fifteen and in three widths.

20% OFF

WHEN YOU GO INTO A SWEATSHOP WITH THIS PAGE

Has Leon's example given you some marathon-beating motivation of your own? Visit www.sweatshop.co.uk/newbalance quoting reader offer code MH_SS06 and you will receive a 20% discount on all full-price New Balance footwear and clothing. This offer is also available in Sweat Shop stores when accompanied by this coupon. This promotion is valid until 31 May 2006.

