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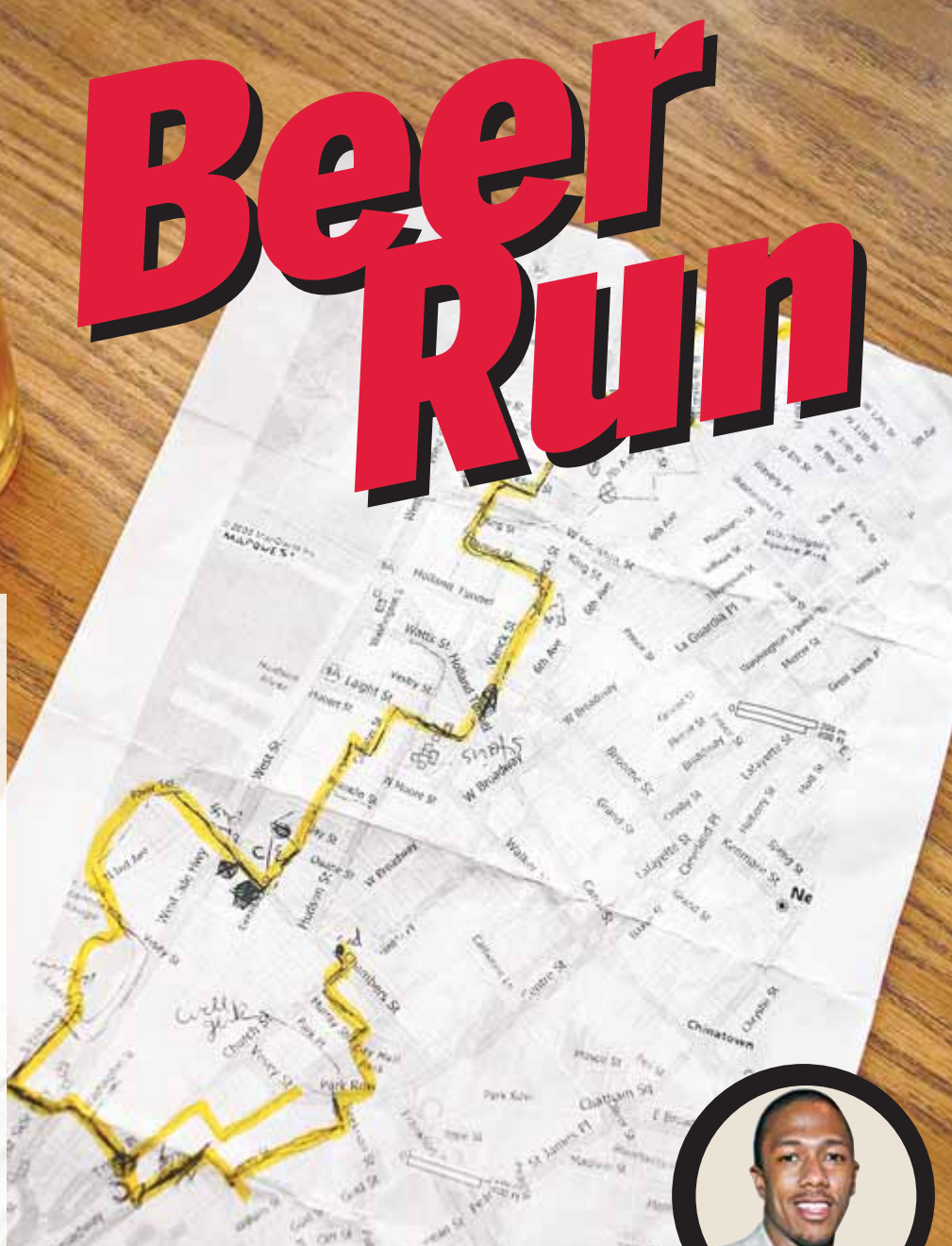
Beer Run

Go for a jog on the path to alcohol

By Kristen V. Brown
Special to amNewYork

Swigging back PBR and chanting old English pub songs, a group of 30 or so sweaty runners look conspicuous in a scarcely populated downtown bar on a Sunday afternoon. One runner is summoned to the center of the circle and issued a punishment: drinking beer from her running shoes for the crime of sporting a new pair.

Confused? It's "a running club with a drinking problem," explains Tim Reed, Joint Master of running group NYC's Hash House Harriers, one of four "hashes" in greater Gotham. Once a week the group meets to hash — an exercise that, boiled down, involves an extended run from one bar to another, beginning and ending (naturally) with beer.



(J. Mickelson)

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The New York Hashers grab a beer at the Patriot Saloon on Chambers Street after a run (inset) through lower Manhattan.

(Photos: RJ Mickelson)

Running + beer = hashing

When the sport was first founded in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, circa 1938, the main goals of hashing's British expatriate founders was to burnish hangovers and get a little fresh air.

The sport hasn't changed much since: The goal of contemporary hashers is less to sculpt the perfect bod and more to hang out and have a good time.

"It isn't a race," said Richard Frear, or "Rude Boy," his hashing nickname. "It's about the ability to get out and get some exercise, but also to meet people and have some fun."

"I love running," said Ianthe Dugan, a frequent Hash House Harrier. "But this is a different sort of thing entirely."

How to hash

Every run is a little different, but the basics remain the same. One hasher, dubbed the "hare," sets a



Hashers jog past Flannery's Bar on West 14th Street.

trail ahead of time, using chalk, or flour in foul weather. The trails are often complex, winding over bridges or off trails in places like Central Park or through busy Manhattan intersections.

Half of the fun is finding the trail — runners meet at a bar (the "on-in" in hashing) to "pre-lube" (read: drink) and then take off in search of the trail. After four or five miles, the trail leads to the "in-in," a second bar where runners essentially imbibe until the pool of money runs out. At each in-in, the group holds a circle where memorable hash moments are "awarded" — for events like running the wrong way or showing up to run in new kicks.



Hashers enjoy a laugh at the Patriot Saloon.

"After a while of seeing the same people, doing all these crazy events, you become kind of like a family," says Jennifer Novik, aka "Doggystyle." "You're just hanging out with your friends and drinking."

Today, hashing is a global addiction. "Wherever you travel there's probably a hash," says Heather, aka "Hot Rod," a hasher who wished to not disclose her

full name. "It's a good way to meet people immediately, and a really different way to see a city." The NYC Hash House Harriers often have tourists as guests on their runs, and several runners have hashed in places ranging from Oregon and D.C. to China and Australia.

But I'm not a runner ...

Hashing is for everyone. Literally.

"The nice thing about the hash is there's a lot of fast runners, a lot of people who are middle of the road, and some who are slow," says Heather. "It's really for any level of running — the emphasis is on being social."

NYC Hash House Harriers is virtually a microcosm of New York's diversity all by itself. Hashers are young, old (some have been hashing for upwards of 20 years), they're doctors, lawyers, biologists, social workers and students. One runner on a recent Hash House Harriers run didn't even drink.

Where to hash

All hashes are different, but New York's urban terrain presents a few particularly distinct elements — like finding a bar where as many as 40 sweaty runners can drink for cheap (many hashes include outdoor drinking or drinking at hashers' homes).

"New York is unique — it's the only hash I know of where the hare has to hail a taxi to take everyone's bags to the in-in," said Frear.



Steve Condon, 53, stretches before hashing.

Where to hash

Hashing schedules change seasonally, but in the summer (May through September) here's how you can give it a try:

- **New York City Hash House Harriers:** Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
- **Brooklyn H3:** Alternating Mondays at 7 p.m.
- **Greater Gotham Full Moon H3:** Once a month on the Friday closest to the full moon at 7:15 p.m.
- **New Amsterdam Summer Sunday H3:** Every other Sunday at 3 p.m.

For more information, such as the starting locations of hashes, visit hashnyc.com.



"Rude Boy," 47, of Hoboken, N.J., enjoys a pre-hash drink.