The Cybernetics of Kenyan Running
The Cybernetics of Kenyan Running
Hurry, Hurry Has No Blessing

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Carolina Academic Press
Durham, North Carolina
Dedicated to Syed Shariq, Valentin Mudimbe, and George Brooks
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Foreword

After graduating from the University of Southern Indiana in 1998, my life changed: I decided to become a full-time runner. Initially, things did not go as expected, as I was going from one city to another in search of paid road races. That led me to Washington D.C. for a race. There I met Randy Mayes who later became interested in writing a book about Kenyan runners. Since then he has been a friend to me.

In running, focusing is the most important ingredient; most people like to refer to this as the sports psychology. My self motivation has enabled me to accomplish what I have. My running ability may have also come naturally because running is such a big part of the Kenyan culture. Compared to other sports, however, runners do make that much money—so, it is more of an interest in running that has kept me devoted.

For now, my goal is to run faster times. I’m hoping that everything will be good on my side. I have realized that running sub 2:10 is not an easy thing to do, but with speed work, long runs, hill work, tempo runs, and planning, this will be an easy goal.

Randy has been a very helpful person to me several times during my running career. More than one time I stayed in his house in Washington D.C. waiting for a race. We drove to different cities together—Baltimore, twice to Pennsylvania, and a number of road races in the Washington area. For all these activities, Randy was a huge help to me and other Kenyan runners. For someone to be doing all this without any pay in the U.S., I know he has to be great friend who loves running.

We have had many discussions about sport psychology and the mental preparation that runners need to succeed. I personally find it to be the most effective part of my success in running marathons. I have made all kinds of changes in training from when I started pro running. When I was making a critical decision to adopt new training methods, Randy was one of the people who helped me.

Elly Rono, professional runner from Nandi
Acknowledgments

I am extremely grateful to the Duke community for its support—Alumni affairs, Carson Holloway, Richenel Ansano, and the East Campus Trinity Café which was equipped with a generator and free gourmet coffee during the 2002 ice storms and power outages. My special thanks go to Professor Mudimbe, one of Duke’s most respected and decorated intellectuals, for reviewing my manuscript.

I am also grateful to the following people for their insight: Syed Shariq, Ph.D., introduced me to the esoteric field of cybernetics. Stuart Umpleby, Ph.D., taught me the intricacies of second and third order cybernetics. Valentin Helou advised me on categories of intelligence to gather and modeling techniques. Brian Cantwell Smith, Ph.D., helped categorize intelligence. Richard Moon, M.D., led me to George A. Brooks, Ph.D., who was gracious enough to review the biology section of my manuscript. Brian Bergemann and Rafael Escamillia, Ph.D., provided technical analysis of preliminary physiological testing. Naomi Quinn, Ph.D. and Claudia Strauss, Ph.D. walked me through the basics of their book on cognitive anthropology. Wayne Hurr, Ph.D. and Gregory Dale, Ph.D. provided insights into Western sport psychology theory and practice. Susana Zabala de Utreras, Ph.D., provided insight into the concept of self and consciousness. Robert Daniels, Ph.D. and John Jackson, Ph.D. provided a balance of old school/new school ethnography. Hiram Kibui and runner Ben Kapsoiya assisted with Initiation. Manager Konstantin Selenivich and his Russian runners in Rockville, MD provided their cultural perspective. Kwasi Wiredu, Ph.D., Grant Farred, Ph.D., and Alphonse Mutima all provided an African perspective to view the African psyche. Road racing rankings were provided by Lucas Meyer, an intern at Running Times magazine. Track and Field News granted permission to use their track rankings.

Thanks also to Frank Gagliano, the Reebok Enclave, and the many Kenyan runners allowed me to interview them and offered their friendship: Eliud Barngetuny (Nandi), Joshua Chelanga (Kipsigis), Simon Cheregony (Saboat),
Kibet Cherop (Tugen), Reuben Cheruiyot (Nandi), Reuben Chesang (Tugen), Peter Githuka (Kikuyu), Milka Jipchirchir (Nandi), Margaret Kagiri (Kikuyu), Ben Kapsoiya (Marakwet), Joseph Kariuki (Kikuyu), Simon Karori (Kisii), Kefah Keraro (Kisii), Daniel Kihara (Kikuyu), Joseph Kimani (Kikuyu), Julius Kimtai (Kipsigis), Amos Kipyegen (Tugen), Paul Koech (Nandi), Daniel Komen (Keiyo), John Korir (Kipsigis), Shem Kororia (Sabot), Augustus Kuvutu (Kamba), Hillary Lelei (Nandi), Felix Limo (Nandi), David Maritim (Kipsigis), Andrew Masaii (Sabot), Leonard Mucheru (Kikuyu), Joseph Muchuka (Kisii), Jimmy Muindi (Kamba), Paul Mwangi (Kikuyu), Joseph Nderitu (Kikuyu), John Ngugi (Kikuyu), Nelson Njeru (Kikuyu), Sammy Nyamongo (Kisii), Elly Rono (Nandi), Peter Rono (Nandi), Emily Samoei (Nandi), Vincent Temu (Kisii), Paul Tergat (Tugen), and Daniel Too (Nandi).