

VICTORY IN DEFEAT.

It was the day of the marathon, and the heavens had decided to open. Heather Johnson had been coached by Barney 'The punchball' Brown, who had achieved his greatest accolades as a boxer, when he was famous for 'The Brown Boogie' which involved breaking into a dance in the middle of a series of punches, thus encouraging his opponent to lose his balance, before Barney landed the winning blow. Some commentators had accused Barney's opponents of 'making a meal of it' as they lay there on the canvas, refusing to get up. But Barney didn't care. He was determined that Heather would be as successful as he was. 'You gotta fly like a bird, moving de feet if you wanna win!' he told her.

Following Barney's example, Heather had devised 'The Johnson Jive', which became a popular move with young people, particularly boys, who would imitate the shapes, always accompanied by the same piece of music. Some had even tried the strategy when out clubbing in an attempt to win the affections of the opposite sex, but this usually resulted in the desired target leaving to go to the bathroom, never to return.

Before the race, Barney and Heather warmed up by stretching to 'The Johnson Jive', lifting their legs in the air and pirouetting in unison. Then the time came for the race to start. Heather took up her place at the front, against her greatest rival, Penny Somerton.

'Bang!'

The race began. With three miles to go, the two women were alone at the front. At that moment, as if from nowhere, one of the 'Cool Kids' standing at the side, played 'The Johnson Jive' at full blast, in an attempt to encourage Heather. Unfortunately, the music had the reverse effect, as Heather, without thinking, responded automatically, by moving her arms and legs in 'Johnson Jive' fashion, just as she arrived at a puddle.

'Splash!'

Heather's body keeled over as she landed in the water. The groans from her supporters could be heard in the surrounding streets. Regardless, Heather struggled to her feet and finished the race, coming second to her leading opponent. However, any disappointment she felt was offset by the reaction of her fans and the subsequent world-wide popularity of 'The Johnson Jive'. Heather had become a national treasure.

Heather's fame as 'The Coolest Runner' spread across the globe, as fans demanded to witness 'The Johnson Jive' in every one of her races. On one occasion, having finished the race, Heather was rewarded by a fan with an ice cream. Unfortunately, it was promptly taken away by a passing seagull. She had not made a meal of her new-found fame, but the seagull had.

Heather hadn't learned to 'fly like a bird', but she had certainly moved from 'de feet' and achieved victory.