Running-Together: Some Ethnomethodological Considerations

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Abstract

There is a degree of irony in the fact that in activities as thoroughly embodied as sport and exercise, there is relatively little phenomenological and particularly ethnomethodological analysis of members' subjective experiences of accomplishing these practical activities. This paper aims to address this lacuna in a modest way, by analysing one particular sporting activity, distance running, and more specifically, 'running-together' as a joint accomplishment. Based upon data generated from a collective autoethnographic research project on distance running, the paper seeks to combine the autoethnographic approach with the insights of phenomenology and specifically, ethnomethodology, in order to examine the production of running-together, and thereby to 'mark' this particular mundane activity.

Introduction

There is a degree of irony in the fact that in activities as thoroughly embodied as sport and exercise, there is relatively little written on the phenomenology of participants' actual experiences of 'doing' these activities. In a recent extensive review of the literature, Kerry and Armour (2000) found only six published articles which might be considered phenomenologically-orientated, and which were located within the sociology of sport (see: Pronger, 1990; Rail, 1990, 1992; Woods, 1992; Smith, 1992; Wessinger, 1994). This paper seeks to add to that small literature and represents an attempt to analyse a specific sporting activity, distance running, or more precisely 'running-together', as an 'interactionally co-ordinated and locally accomplished form of social action' (Coates, 1999: 14). As Brekhus (1998: 36) has noted in relation to social research in general: 'The unmarked generally remains unnamed and unaccented ...'. Based upon data generated from a collective autoethnographic research project on distance running, this paper seeks to combine the autoethnographic approach with the insights of phenomenology and specifically, ethnomethodology, in order to examine the accomplishment of running-together, and thereby to 'mark' this particular mundane activity.

The particular phenomenological perspective which is employed derives primarily from the work of Alfred Schutz (1967), elements of which focus upon the ways in which individuals construct and manage routine social life using a 'stock of knowledge at hand', constituted of layers or sedimentations of previous experience, permitting them to make sense of particular contexts. The great epistemological problem for Schutz was discovering ***how*** such common-sense understanding is possible. In his formulation, common-sense knowledge is constituted of ***typfications*** which are linked to practical activities; typifications being the common-sense constructs which individuals use to order the social world on a moment-to-moment basis, and which: 'organize our impressions, at the start, into objects, events, and categories and so structure our experience' (Benson & Hughes, 1983: 53). Such typifications are generally taken for granted in the normal, everyday scheme of things; for the most part they are tacitly held and

operationalised, and 'marking' them for ***dénouement*** is one of the challenges facing researchers within this tradition.

Subsequently, applying Schutzian insights to his own study of eveyday life and more specifically to the study of members' methods for producing everyday social order, Harold Garfinkel (1967) instigated ***ethnomethodology***, the pioneering study of 'the procedures members use to do "going about knowing the world"' (Benson & Hughes, 1983: 56) As Mehan & Wood (1975: 3) have noted, ethnomethodology has been identified variously with a methodological style, a body of findings, a theory and sometimes a world view, and perhaps its power lies in linking all these. Seeking to analyse in detail the precise ways in which social order is constructed and maintained at the micro-level of social interaction, ethnomethodology demands the close empirical examination of the 'detailed and observable practices which make up the incarnate production of ordinary social facts' (Lynch ***et al***, 1983). Garfinkel's work has subsequently been developed by writers within a tradition which Kew (1986: 308) has termed 'ethnomethodological ethnography', with a focus upon the 'accounting' practices which actors use to manage social order; accountable in that they are observable and reportable (Sharrock & Anderson, 1986: 56). It is primarily with some of the concerns of ethnomethodological ethnography or more accurately in this case, ethnomethodological auto-ethnography, that this paper engages.

At the time of writing, with some notable exceptions (see for example, Kew, 1986; Coates, 1999) there is little developed ethnomethodolgical literature relating directly to sport. Indeed, ethnomethodological analysis has only rarely focussed upon sporting or other physical activities such as walking (for these, see for example: Ryave & Schenkein, 1975; Sudnow, 1978; Goode, 1994; Coates, 1999; Robillard, 1999). The following account therefore attempts to contribute to this literature and is based upon data derived from a collective autoethnographic research project, details of which are given below. The object of analysis is the performance of routine training runs, and more specifically, the ways in which two runners accomplish or 'do' co-running, or 'running-together', for the accomplishment of activities such as walking and running relies upon an elaborated collection of methodic practices (cf Ryave & Schenkein, 1975; Bueno, 2002). As Weeks has noted in relation to musical coordination in his case, the essential interest of the paper is in: 'members' methods for ***maintaining as well as restoring synchrony***' (1996: 201; emphasis in original). Maintaining and restoring running-together, as doing walking-together, seems such a mundane, unremarkable and unremarked activity as to be entirely appropriate for subjection to ethnomethodological analysis. First, a brief description of the research approach will help situate the study.

The autoethnographic approach

As indicated, the research approach employed in the study was autoethnographic. In recent decades, autoethnography has gained more widespread usage and acceptance within the sociological and anthropological communities (see for example: Hayano, 1979; Ellis, 1997; Hayano, 1982; Reed-Danahay, 1997; Okley & Callaway, 1992; Van Maanen, 1995; Coffey, 1999; Sparkes, 2000),

with David Hayano typically being credited with coining the term. It is not, however, without its critics, and is still deemed a contentious research approach in many quarters. Debate continues about the appropriateness of the terminology, and a whole panoply of other terms co-exists, for example, self-narratives, récits de soi/moi, personal narratives, ethnographic autobiography (see Ellis & Bochner, 2000: 739 for a comprehensive listing). Defined as an autobiographical genre of research and writing (Ellis & Bochner, 2000: 739), autoethnography focusses upon the dialectics of subjectivity and culture and in general entails the detailed analysis of oneself ***qua*** member of a social group or category, for example as an Olympic rower (Tsang, 2000), or in this particular case, as a distance runner (Allen Collinson & Hockey, 2001; Denison, 2002; Allen Collinson, 2003). It is usually distinguished from autobiography by its particular forms of analysis and writing and its emphasis on experiences within the writer's life which aim to illuminate wider cultural or subcultural aspects. The distinctiveness of autoethnography as an investigative process lies in its efforts to combine detailed fieldnotes analysing the research field, with 'headnotes' (Sanjek, 1990), the researcher's experience of engaging with the phenomena under study. The self and the ethnographic field are then symbiotic, and in effect this combination forms the pivot of analysis (Coffey, 1999).

Autoethnographers have sought to 'write themselves in' to their accounts of fieldwork (Tedlock, 1991), in a rigorous, analytic fashion, and by so doing are engaged in writing about aspects of their identities (Coffey, 1999) as an ***integral*** part of the research process. Some ethnographic researchers in sport, exercise and dance, for example, have seized upon this challenging development and begun to utlise their own embodied sporting experiences to produce a range of detailed autoethnographies or 'narratives of the self' (Sparkes, 2000) relating to various sporting and physical activities, and also to sports injuries and other health problems (see for example: Tiihonen, 1994; Rinehart, 1995; Sparkes, 1996, 2003; Fernandez-Balboa, 1998; Denison, 1999; Silvennoinen, 1999a, 1999b; Sudwell, 1999; Duncan, 2000; Allen Collinson & Hockey, 2001).

Accountable knowledge

At this juncture, in congruence with the spirit of the autoethnographic enterprise, it is necessary to render visible some relevant 'accountable knowledge' (Stanley, 1990), in order to explain my own interest and involvement in the particular autoethnographic research project. In this context, in common with Granskog (2003, p 48), my definition of self has three critical components, in my own case: being a woman, a distance runner and a feminist sociologist. In brief, I have an athletic biography of distance running and racing which has required a commitment to training 6 or 7 days a week, sometimes twice a day, for 17 years. My (male) running partner with whom I have trained on a regular basis for 16 years, has 36 years of distance-running experience. Now technically deemed 'veteran' runners, our involvement in the activity mirrors Stebbins' (2001) concept of 'serious leisure', and requires considerable personal effort, knowledge and training. Although we do not undertake all our training together, the vast majority of our aerobic work is done jointly, whilst we tend to do the anaerobic component of our training separately.

By one of those strange coincidences some years ago we both suffered severe running injuries during the same week of winter training, and a few days later arrived at a collective decision systematically to document our responses to the injuries and our subsequent rehabilitation, the principal motive being to achieve something positive out of a highly negative experience. In this sense, it was one of those unhappy accidents of current biography which provided access, physical and psychological, to the research setting (Lofland & Lofland, 1985: 11) and stimulated our interest in autoethnography as a methodological approach. The injury and subsequent rehabilitative process took just over two years, during which time data collection took place, as detailed below. During our attempts at rehabilitation, and through the systematic analysis of our data, certain questions of an ethnomethodological order began to occur to us both, stimulated by the fact that we were obliged to re-learn how to run and this re-learning brought into sharp relief the complexities of accomplishing running. These questions concerned, for example, the stock of knowledge at hand upon which we draw, how we actually perceive and traverse our running routes, and above all, how we manage the complex achievement of running-together. The focus of this paper falls upon this latter issue: the ways in which we accomplish the co-production of running-together. Prior to proceeding to an examination of our members' practices, a brief description of the research method will be given.

The research method

In terms of method, each of the participants constructed a personal log, and a third collective log synthesised the salient common themes which were emerging, together with any differences in our individual adaptation to and management of the injured state. The recording of our experiences was done via micro-tape recorders which accompanied us during daily training and rehabilitation, and also at other appropriate times. As 'veteran' runners, we were relatively confident of fulfilling Garfinkel's 'unique adequacy requirement' that:

> ... for the analyst to recognize, or identify, or follow the development of, or describe phenomena of order in local production of coherent detail the analyst must be ***vulgarly*** competent to the local production and reflexively natural accountability of the phenomenon or order he (sic) is "studying". (2002: 175) (italics in original)

As veteran runners, we considered ourselves sufficiently technically competent in the activity of running to be able to experience and understand the phenomenon as 'insider members'. In alignment with Weeks' analysis of achieving musical co-ordination, I would contend that it is essential to have 'insider knowledge in order to recover just what members are doing' (1996: 199) when accomplishing running co-ordination. In contrast to other ethnomethodological studies of physical activities, we did not attempt the videotaping of our running, preferring instead to rely upon the daily, detailed recording of our experience of the phenomenon, both via tape-recorders and extensive fieldnotes. Tape recordings were transcribed as soon as practicable after the event. Creating the collective log, within which analytical themes and concepts were generated, was effected via a method somewhat akin to the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), although to a much less formalised degree.

As indicated, the focus of this paper is

an examination of the ways in which running-together is accomplished, and represents an attempt to provide some insight into the methods for 'producing the distinctive orderliness of this activity' (Weeks, 1996: 205), as a co-production. As it is not within the scope of the paper to provide a full portrayal of the many ways in which running-together is 'done' certain specific facets have been selected for examination, and the paper should therefore be regarded as an indicative, exploratory study rather than a comprehensive, 'fleshed out' account.

Running-together: a co-production

Accomplishing running-together in training usually involves running in close proximity to one's training partner or partners, in my own case this being primarily a male training partner. The paper seeks to delineate some of the methods we employ for the accomplishment of running-together as distinct from running alone. As Ryave & Schenkein (1975: 269) note, members are involved in a double task of both a) production work - in this case our production of running-together; and b) recognition work on the part of observers. I would also include myself and my partner as being involved in such recognition work; observing and recognizing ourselves as doing running-together. It is, however, primarily the intricacies of ***production*** work which this account aims to portray. First, I will examine the notion of proximity as a key component of running-together.

Proximity and pace

As has been noted in relation to pedestrian activity, the production of walking-together involves the participants in at least maintaining spatial proximity in some recognizable pattern (Ryave & Schenkein, 1975: 271), and requires some degree of physical co-presence. Co-presence can certainly be seen as a necessary, but not sufficient criterion for running-together. Its insufficiency or inadequacy is evidenced by the fact that people in each other's co-presence are not necessarily perceived or perceive themselves as socially 'together', or, as Ryave & Schenkein (1975: 270) neatly term it, 'identifiable as a proper togethering'. For example, two individuals may be sitting in very close promiximity, even in physical contact, on a train or other form of public transport, but their togetherness is primarily accidental and incidental in that they find themselves in close proximity by chance, not design, and also attribute no real social significance to their co-presence.

Accomplishing running-together shares many of the characteristics of achieving walking-together in terms of its being recognisable on the basis of various observational cues, an important one being spatial proximity, as indicated, but also including visual cues such as conversing, physical contact, uniformity of direction and pace. In particular, running-together requires of participants considerable effort and attention to the maintenance of approximately the same ***pace*** in order not to lose too great a degree of proximity, which might lead to a state of running-alone. Accomplishing running at more or less the same pace represents, however, quite a challenge, given that the co-runners are highly unlikely to run at the same pace 'naturally', that is left to set their own pace independent of the other. In the case of my male training partner and I, having trained together on a regular basis for over 16 years, we have become very practised at judging and

achieving a mutually acceptable pace. This we arrive at by using a series of indicators of each other's current state of running-being, and some of these cues, both visual and aural will now be examined. First, some key aural cues will be considered.

Pacing cues

Aural indicators

Various aural cues are utilised to judge the appropriate pace to produce running-together at any given point on the running route. A primary aural cue used to assess one another's current state of 'going' (a term which runners use to describe both the terrain upon which they are moving, and also their own and others' performance), is that of breathing rate and style, by which I mean the rapidity, depth and general noise characteristics of breathing. As I suffer from mild exercise-induced asthma, my partner has over the years become particularly attuned to the importance of breathing cues as indicators of whether I am running with relative ease and fluidity, or conversely, struggling to maintain the pace. Breathing difficulties may arise either through general fatigue or because of specific air conditions such as high concentrations of vehicle pollution. I also attend to his breathing patterns, and we both tend to reduce our individual pace if receiving signals that the other is breathing more heavily than usual, always taking into account contextual factors such as the demands of the terrain being covered (for example, running up an incline, or over a muddy, ploughed field) which might also produce a quickening or deepening of breath. Steady, even breathing is, conversely, employed as an indicator that a partner is running well, as is holding a conversation without any indication of breathlessness.

Other aural cues such as conversational forms are used in order to assist in establishing and maintaining running synchrony. Conversational pointers may be direct questions or utterances to our partner either to elicit information about the other's general state of running-being or to describe one's own self-feelings. Some of these utterances take on a ritual aspect in that the same or a very similar expression is used repeatedly. Both of us, for example, are known to articulate the following statement on a regular basis: 'Well, the old body doesn't want to go today/tonight/this evening', normally at the start of a training run, thus indicating that the run is unlikely to be a relatively effortless outing, and that the other partner should bear in mind that the speaker is definitely not on 'top form'. Cursing and swearing by my partner can also provide a colourful verbal indicator of whether he is performing the run with some difficulty, and I have become relatively practised at judging form by the rate at which swear words erupt into the conversation. Not all sound cues take the form of words, however: grunting, groaning, sighing and other non-verbal cues may provide indications which are equally as precise as worded statements in conveying feelings. As an addendum, in relation to aural cues, during the autumn months the sound of footfall upon fallen leaves also provides audible feedback as to the proximity and pace of one's training partner.

Visual checks

In relation to visual cues, both of us regularly use 'the glance' throughout the training run to check and monitor various indications of the other's running form. In an interesting paper, Sudnow (1972) has noted the seriousness and efficacy of the glance, especially in contexts where ***only*** glances are possible or permissible.

During running, more extended visual checking, such as looking or staring, is not generally possible due to the need to keep one's eyes primarily focussed upon the terrain of the foreground in order to anticipate foot placement, the best line to take, and so on. Quick glances, however, are efficient means of gauging facial expression, for example, as a good indicator of the other's subjective experience of the run. Grimaces, frowning, tense jawline, sunken eyes, all provide testimony to a state of running not characterised by ease. This may provide the observer with advance notice to slow her or his pace either imminently or, depending upon the particular facial expression, at a subsequent point in the training run. Body expressions are checked and monitored in an analogous fashion. So, for example, we use factors such as the angle of the upper body, tenseness of neck, shoulders and/or arms, stride length, ***inter alia***, to judge the going of our partner. Stumbling, tripping over, rolling the head, moving the upper body laterally more than usual, dragging the feet, and generally looking 'ragged', would also signal that the other is struggling to some degree and may require her/his partner to reduce the pace in order to achieve a mutually appropriate tempo.

All this monitoring activity of course requires a good deal of prior knowledge of, and familiarity with the other's routine facial and corporeal expressions. In addition to using each other's physical presence to gauge and monitor proximity and pace, when weather and lighting conditions permit we also use the other's shadow in a similar fashion. Even if the other is not within the visual field, her or his shadow can be used to estimate proximity. These, then, are some of the visual and aural cues we employ to assist regulate our individual running pace in order to achieve running-together. The ways in which we decide on trajectory and who will act as 'leadperson' at given points of the run will now be considered.

Taking a line and a lead

It is interesting to consider precisely how we navigate the route together in terms of selecting a trajectory from the myriad of different possible 'paths' (Wolff, 1973) or 'lines' over any particular piece of ground. Given the scope of the paper, I shall, however, confine myself to an analysis of convergence and divergence points; the former being points on the run where our paths, geographical and temporal, converge.

As Weeks (1996) has noted in relation to achieving synchrony in musical performance, each performer must take into account the other's actions, and this 'practical reflexivity' requires mutual interpretation and anticipation. An analogous reflexivity is required in running-together. On routes with a high degree of familiarity to both partners, this is rendered easier by the fact that we are both familiar with not only our own preferred trajectory or line over particular terrain, but also with the other person's chosen line. So for example, when crossing a certain section of open parkland on a slight incline, I typically take the upper ground whilst my partner opts for the flatter stretch. As we approach this section of the route, both of us diverge slightly in preparation for taking separate lines. Over many runs, we have both come to recognise and anticipate the divergence point. Over this section, we typically run at about 3 metres' distance from each other. Once the section has been completed, we converge again to cross a road on to the next part of the route, both recognising and anticipating the convergence point.

If one or other of us happens to be in the lead when a convergence point is encountered, then she or he will by tradition wait for the other to catch up, before progressing. Convergence points are many and varied over our running routes, mainly comprising 'natural boundaries' (Ryave & Schenkein, 1975: 266) such as road intersections, roundabouts, traffic islands, underpasses, the apex of slopes, and also changes in terrain such as where grassland gives way to woodland. All these features act as convergence points where, if necessary, one of us will slow down or even stop to wait for the other. Such waiting and catching-up may also occur outside of convergence points, for example, whenever one of us judges that the other is running 'off the back' or has been 'dropped', that is running off the pace, lagging behind, and may consequently be in need of support or encouragement in order to re-establish running-together. Given differences over a range of parameters, such as our preferred 'natural' pace, different degrees of sure-footedness over rough ground and other terrain hazards, different abilities with regard to hill-climbing and descent, not to mention different levels of 'form' on any given day, achieving running-together often demands concentrated convergence activity. At times, of course, running alongside each other in close proximity may be precluded or constrained by the demands of the terrain, and single-file running has to be instituted.

Contested terrain

Movement towards single-file running usually follows tradition where the route is familiar and we have established a convention of who takes the role of leadperson at various points in the route. Some of these points are 'uncontested', in that we each know without question who will take the lead. Other points are more open to debate and contest; sometimes one takes the lead, sometimes the other, depending on a range of factors, for example, which of us is running a little faster, or who happens to be in the lead at the time. Over such contested sections, although rare, it may sometimes even become necessary to articulate who will take the lead via performative utterances such as in the following field note.

> It's the first night of winter running when we are obliged to train in the dark after work. Always difficult for a few weeks as we reluctantly adjust to night-time training. Routes have to be renegotiated in order to provide as much lit ground as possible. Tonight we nearly collided at the little gate to the park, which we don't usually use in daylight runs. Elbows and shoulders jostled to the point where J. muttered in annoyance: 'Me!' (ie 'me first')

The utterance in this case is 'performative' in the ethno-methodological sense (see Turner, 1975) in that the talk also refers to an action. Being obliged to resort to articulating this particular action, however, is highly unusual. Where the route is unfamiliar, the general, tacit rule is for me to take the lead, not on account of any 'women first' convention, but for the functional reason that I tend to be more sure-footed than my partner. This means I am consequently less likely to stumble on unfamiliar, rough or unstable terrain, and can report back to him if necessary, on the characteristics of the ground, any peculiarities, and so on. The convention of my lead-taking in such instances has actually been articulated explicitly between us, not usually during the performance of a run, but in reflective discussion outside the activity.

In addition to the demands of the terrain, other factors impinge upon, indeed often seek to subvert, our best attempts at synchrony, and some of these navigational hazards will now be considered.

Pedestrians and other hazards

The 'navigational problem' of walking has been described in some depth by Ryave & Schenkein (1975), who observe that co-walkers managing not to collide with one another or with some other physical obstacle is the outcome of concerted work on the part of the co-participants. Such 'self-management' (Hunt & Wickham, 1994: 79) can require even greater concentrated effort when one is running at some speed, over uneven ground and/or in space-constrained contexts. The actual degree of proximity may vary widely during the training session, even when we as participants agree to be running 'together'. At points during the run, for example where the path is narrow and constricted, my co-runner and I find ourselves so closely aligned as to be touching elbows, which generally results in slight annoyance, and a consequent readjustment of line in order to avoid further jostling. At other times, however, there may be several metres distance between us, either laterally or with one partner in front of the other. Avoiding collisions with, or 'cutting up' (precipitously moving in front of) one's partner requires a good deal of concentration, attention, checking and regulation of position, both of self and other, adjustment and readjustment.

Collision with other pedestrians is a regular and routine hazard for those who undertake their running in non pedestrian-free zones, in what Smith (1997: 60) has termed 'normatively-ordered spaces' which are regulated not only by law and traffic codes, but also by a number of largely taken-for-granted, indeterminate (Gerholm, 1990) rules of interactional conduct. In the majority of cases we experienced and recorded, the expectation of the other pedestrian(s) appeared quite clearly to be that we, as runners, should make every effort to take avoidance action with regard to walkers. Without quizzing our co-pedestrians, it is not of course possible to ascertain whether this expectation was based purely upon the notion that we were engaged in running ***per se*** (as opposed to walking for example) and therefore should feel obliged to make way for the walker, due to the somewhat 'deviant' nature of our minority activity in comparison with the overwhelming majority of pedestrians who walk rather than run. Another possibility is that the expectation was based upon velocity, in that the walker was moving more slowly (usually) than the runner, who was consequently expected to make allowance for the slower-moving object on the grounds of the speed of movement, rather than the actual action of running.

In a small minority of cases, we noted that the reverse situation applied: walkers would politely cede passage to us, an event usually accompanied by a direct look, and sometimes a positive remark such as a standard greeting, 'after you' or 'well done!'. In the majority of these cases we recorded, it was more mature adults aged 50 and above, who tended to make way in this fashion, whether walking solo, in pairs or in a group. Interestingly, we noted some national variations in ceding way behaviour. When running in France, for example, there was a noticeable tendency for most walkers, of all ages, to give way to runners, particularly when in rural or parkland contexts. Different social norms were clearly in operation, but it is beyond the scope of this paper to examine such national

behavioural differences or to speculate as to their basis, interesting though this would be. The strength of the normative expectation that runners in Britain should give way to walkers could be ascertained by the fact that any violation of this unstated, tacit norm resulted in certain visible and/or audible social consequences, ranging from mildly disapproving looks, utterings such as 'tut-tutting', through to highly 'uncivil attention' (Smith, 1997: 64) such as verbal abuse and jostling.

As a brief postscript to the above portrayal, it should be noted that these norms relate primarily to adult co-pedestrians; young children, teenagers and dogs were found to form distinct categories in terms of behavioural forms. The data revealed, unsurprisingly perhaps, that young children and dogs were found to be largely exempted from any requirement for they themselves to be responsible for taking avoidance action, at least upon their own initiative. Only if adults instructed them specifically to stand aside, or to make allowance for us in other ways, were young children and to some extent, dogs, expected to give way to oncoming runners. Adolescents and teenagers formed a very distinct behavioural unit, certainly when in a group of two or more, analogous to the notorious 'lolling group', described by Goffman (1963: 58). The lolling group generally proved the most challenging navigational problem.

Concluding remarks

As noted, currently there is a dearth of phenomenological and particularly of ethnomethodological studies of sporting and physical activity.

This paper, based upon a joint autoethnographic research study, has sought in a small way to address this lacuna via the examination of one particular routine sporting activity, distance running, and more specifically the ways in which two partners accomplish running-together during training sessions. Despite the relative mundanity of the activity under analysis, the effort and concentration required to produce running-together should not be underestimated. Indeed, the high degree of concentration and practical work demanded to accomplish running-together is regularly made salient to both myself and my training partner when we contrast the demands of running-together with running-alone; the latter being a relatively easy solo production in comparison. It is hoped that this brief analysis has started to unveil and to provide some insight into the routine, mundane, but also complex and intricate practices involved in accomplishing running-together. This represents merely a first step however, and there would seem to be great potential for the application of ethnomethodological analysis and insight into the 'field' of sporting and physical activity in order both to extend the ethnomethodological literature into relatively under-researched areas, and also to provide a fresh perspective through which to expand the sociology of sport.

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