

Science behind beer, recovery explored in Fishtown Beer Runners documentary

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Justin
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Posted:
Monday,
March 17,
2014, 2:51
AM

Chase a long run with a cold, frosty pint — that's the premise of local running club [Fishtown Beer Runners](#).

The club has garnered the attention of the *New York Times*, *Runner's World*, and now they've captured the interest of Connecticut-based filmmaker [Justin Wirtalla](#).

Wirtalla credits his involvement with the Fishtown Beer Runners to his cousin Chris, who lives in Fishtown.

"Around Thanksgiving we were out having a beer, catching up, and he told me about David April who started the running club," said Wirtalla. "At the time I was looking for new projects so I came down to Philly to check the club out."

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In an upcoming documentary, Wirtalla tells the story of how FBR's founder David April used running as his medicine to overcome personal tragedy. The film shares the uplifting narratives of many of its members and how the Fishtown Beer Runners group inspired them all.

"I originally intended on a short promotional piece but after I started hearing stories about how people turned their lives around with this club I knew I had to do more," Wirtalla recalled.

By "do more," Wirtalla is referring to a trek to Spain next month — the University of Granada, to be exact. That's



where Dr. Manuel J. Castillo (aka The Professor) conducted his research on the effects of beer on athletic performance and found that beer, in moderate quantities, is actually a better recovery drink than water. The Professor's study is the basis of the club.

"There's way more to this story and I feel like it wouldn't be complete without the trip to Spain," Wirtalla said.

In Granada, Beer Runners will meet with The Professor and tour the School of Medicine at the University. The trip will be complete, of course, with a beer run through the narrow streets of Granada.

"I think some people think this is just a crazy club but there's actually a science behind it," Wirtalla said. "In Spain, I'll get to interview [The Professor] — he's conducting some studies now and we'll get to see some of the Beer Runners participating in studies with him."

In order to shoot the second half of the film, Wirtalla took to [Kickstarter.com](https://www.kickstarter.com), an online forum to fund creative projects, for additional help. Aiming to raise \$3,000, the funds from Wirtalla's campaign will go towards airfare, lodging, and other transportation costs.

"Within 24 hours we were almost two-thirds of the way there," Wirtalla said. "I'm just completely overwhelmed by people's generosity."

The campaign launched on March 11th and just three days later, Wirtalla had already surpassed his goal. Any additional funds collected will be used for post-production and film distribution.

The goal is to make a documentary that inspires people in finding ways to enjoy getting active and healthy and to push oneself to achieve the goals that seem insurmountable.

You can watch the trailer for the film and contribute to the Kickstarter fund [here](#).