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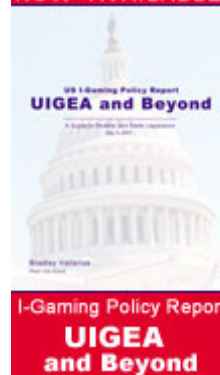
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Friday, December 7, 2007

A Conversation with David Carruthers

by Mark Balestra

No one would dispute that most people have it better than David Carruthers right now, but Carruthers himself is the first to point out that a lot of people have it worse. Eighteen months into his forced stay in St. Louis, the former BetOnSports CEO is making the best of an unfortunate situation.

Rather than wither away under the weight of the U.S. justice system, Carruthers, who awaits his perpetually postponed day in court to face charges related to Internet gambling, has kept busy. In October he launched a Web site featuring news and information related to the online gambling industry as well as information about him. He updates the site regularly, and blogs daily on politics, sports, health and whatever else comes to mind.

And if you read his blog, you know about his latest endeavor: the St. Louis Marathon. The next one will take place in April 2008, and Carruthers has signed up to participate. It is an effort to strengthen his mind body and spirit, but he's also raising money for two local charities, and he's imploring the I-gaming industry to make donations in his name.

But keeping in character, he's also adding another twist: He's making his running vest available for exclusive sponsorship and he's asking the top bidder to double up the donation if he breaks the four-hour mark. He doesn't just want to survive the grueling 26.2 miles, he wants to finish strong.

So, as the I-gaming industry collectively winds down for a holiday breather, Carruthers is in the fitness center of a hotel in Clayton, Missouri, logging mile after mile on a treadmill. And in between blogs, he's writing in his exercise log and reading up on fitness and dietary routines. And despite all that's been thrown at him in the last 18 months, he's feeling and looking as fit as ever.

On Tuesday, I had an opportunity to chat with him for a bit about his new Web site and his lofty marathon ambitions. Before reading any further, though, be aware that he is not, and will not be, commenting on his current legal situation until after his trial.

[IGN: A marathon. . . How did you come to this?](#)



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David Carruthers: I've been here in St. Louis nearly 18 months--in fact I got to St. Louis on 31 July 2006--and after the first Christmas and New Year festivities here, one of my resolutions was to do something about getting myself into better shape. And I started to work out in the gym here at the hotel. My first day I walked three miles. . . . It nearly killed me. But, I've been working out fairly constantly since January. I started with walking, and I probably didn't start running until mid to late summer, and even that was an effort. But through my trials on the treadmill, I came up with the idea of perhaps looking for some competition or something to do that's a bit more interesting than just going down there and keeping fit.

So I did some research, and to my surprise I discovered that St. Louis has a marathon and it takes place in April, which was perfect timing if I wanted to take the leap and fulfill the ambition that many people have but never execute, and that's run a marathon. So I did some thinking, did the usual to-do list of what I need to do to get myself over the finishing line, thought about it for a couple of days, bounced it off a couple of friends--who didn't think I was crazy and needed to be restrained in a straight jacket--and I then put pen to paper and committed myself to do it. So I've signed up, I've paid my \$90 deposit.

IGN: [Were you a runner before this idea came to you?](#)

DC: I reached the landmark of 50 in September of this year, and I'm rather ashamed to say that for approximately 30, 35 years I've been training- or sports-dormant, so taking on the challenge of a marathon is not to be underestimated. But when I was athletically active, running was my sport. As a school boy and as a young teenager, I did track and field and I ran cross country, and I was reasonably successful. On my Web site under my profile it gives you my personal best times for the 800 meters and the 1,500 meters, and I think it's 1:57 for the 800 meters, which at the age of 15 is quite respectable. It wouldn't get me on the Commonwealth Games team, but certainly it was good enough to represent my school at county level. I thoroughly enjoyed my time as a teenager in athletics.

IGN: [And then there's the charity component.](#)

DC: We've engineered some special pages on my Web site to inform those that might be interested in what my intent is. And the good thing about doing this, apart from the obvious benefits of having time used fruitfully that will help me physically and mentally, but it gives me an opportunity to give something back to St. Louis. A lot of people in this town have been extremely kind and good to me and my wife in our time here. And I appreciate that, and this gives me an opportunity to do something positive and give something back to people who are less fortunate than me. That might sound quite funny, given the currant circumstances, but there are always people that are less fortunate than you, and I'm sure that thought and what I can do to raise some cash to help those will help me get through some of these 26 miles.

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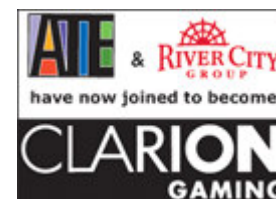
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IGN: And which charities have you chosen?

DC: I was focused on trying to find a charity that was local and would help perhaps children, and I discovered that the race, the event itself, has two nominated charities – the first one being leukemia, which involves children as well as adults, and the second one being back stoppers, which is a local charity focused on people that are here to protect and serve others that have suffered great loss, and supports their families after that great loss. And I think they were very fitting and worthwhile charities. So I've decided to run with them. . . . No pun intended. And I look forward to being able to raise some money for them.

One additional factor is that back in the U.K., my son's best friend for over 20 years was struck with leukemia in 2006 and is currently battling back well post bone marrow transplant. His name is Jonjo Rooney. He is additional motivation and an inspiration to me. His troubles started almost the same time as mine.

IGN: And you're just looking for straightforward donations?

DC: There are two ways in which you can help me raise some money for these charities. One is to make a straightforward donation, to reward them for my efforts in running this race. And the other one is that I'm going to put my running vest up for sponsorship opportunity. And I intend to hold a silent auction for that opportunity. Those that are interested can submit a bid by email. There's two catches: The first catch is that it will be exclusive, so it will be expensive. And the second one is that if I can get around to 26.2 miles of a very hilly marathon course in St. Louis in under four hours, I'd like them to double their commitment, which will give me more even more motivation to ensure that we can get around this course in a respectable time.

I've not gone about this with the view of hobbling around in six hours. I'm going to try to do it in a respectable time. And I think under four hours for the first-time marathon for a 50-year-old who's been sat on his ass for 35 years is quite a high bar.

IGN: It looks like time not spent training is being spent on your Web site.

DC: I think it's now about two months since I launched my personal Web site, which has been a very good tool to keep people informed as to what's going on in the industry, and also to perhaps right a few wrongs on the knowledge and background of me and what I've done in my life and how I've gone about my life. I'm very proud of the content on the Web site and I try to make the blog interesting every day. It's another thing that's a good discipline . . . to actually sit down and think of something and communicate. I've been heartened by the comments I've got back and surprised by the number of comments I've got back to some of the things that I've said on the Web site. And I think the Web site stands up there as good as any in informing and communicating. There's some very interesting stuff there. And you can always track the stock prices if like minded anyway.

IGN: It's interesting that you don't focus much on gaming in these blogs.

DC: I think none of it is related to gaming, and again that is a kind of overhang for the case.

IGN: Is it difficult staying away from that topic?

DC: If I had a dollar for every blog that I didn't write, I'd be a wealthy man again.

IGN: Was there ever an instance in which you wrote the "forbidden blog" just to get a thought out of your mind? Of course you wouldn't be able to post it, but . . .

DC: Several. There's a very strong internal filtering process that manages the blog content that comes out of my Web site.

IGN: It must be painful at times.

DC: Yes, sometimes it's painful. There are so many targets, actually. There really are. And there's so much happening in the world today that you could write fury and thunder constantly, quite honestly.

IGN: Shifting gears, it sounds like you've gotten quite an education on this country in the last 18 months.

DC: I have been astounded with the depth of my ignorance before I came here. I used to think I knew a little bit about this country and its market. I now know a million times more. It's just bewildering that it's taken an event like this to discover that.

IGN: Do you want to add anything else about what you've been up to?

DC: I continue to be in good spirits and I'm focusing my mind and my muscles where I can, and I'd like to wish anybody that knows me--all my friends and colleagues and associates--a very healthy and wealthy seasons greetings.

To make a donation, contact David Carruthers at carruthers486@msn.com for details. You'll also find more information at his Web site: www.DavidCarruthers.com.

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About the Author

Mark Balestra is the Editor at Interactive Gaming News. He weighs in at 175 lbs., runs the 40 in 8.5 seconds and cooks a mean stew. He can be reached at mark@igamingnews.com.

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