

Welcome to the Towerrunning Association of Singapore's official newsletter! Here, you will find the latest news from the world of the Towerrunning.

After two years of lockdowns, restrictions, travel lanes, rule changes and what-not, it looks like the world (at least in some places) is starting to open up again. And along with opening up, Towerrunners are salivating over the prospect of racing once again. Indeed, in Singapore the government announced several changes on April 26 which will make it easier to hold sporting events again by eliminating safe distancing requirements and group size limits. With these changes, NTU Sports announced that the National Vertical Marathon will make its return on June 11-12. The race was previously conducted in one day but will now be covered over two days, partly because of the strong expected demand. They are expecting over 3,000 runners to sign up! We've heard about revenge travel and revenge shopping, could this be an example of revenge.... racing? Here is the information for the upcoming race.

**When:** Sat-Sun, June 11-12, 2022

**Where:** Suntec City Tower 1, Singapore

**Registration:** opens early May, for more info: <https://www.facebook.com/ntunvm>



There are other upcoming races on the race calendar that are worth mentioning. The very competitive European Championships will be held in Warsaw, Poland at the Rondo 1 Runup on May 11, 2022. This event, which could see the highest level of towerrunning competition this year, will see Soh Wai Ching, Piotr Łobodzinski, George Heimann, Michal Kovac, and others battling it out for the coveted title. Each year, this event is livestreamed and covered by the local media. The race format will be a bit different from other years. Each runner will run up the 38-floor tower twice with little rest in between, and the lowest combined time will determine the winner. This will be the first time Soh Wai Ching will be running this race, and it will be interesting to see how he fares against the elite towerrunners in Europe. Piotr will no doubt be his main competition as Piotr was the world number one for many years, a title that seems destined for Soh Wai Ching in the future.





**What:** MSWA Step Up

**When:** Sunday, June 19, 2022

**Where:** Central Park (tallest building in Perth), Perth, Western Australia

**Registration:** open now, for more info: <https://stepupformswa.org.au/>

Another upcoming event will be Step Up for MSWA on 19 June in Perth, Australia. This climb features several different race categories (mini climb, 1x, 2x or multiple times). As this climb seems to be one of the few in the Asia Pacific region listed for 2022, we may see some international towerrunners there, as well as the top Australian athletes. Some of our Association members have expressed interest in going, and there are indications that Soh Wai Ching is planning on going as well. It should be a good race! If you are planning on going, please check the latest Covid-19 regulations for travel to Australia.



**What:** Japan tower running races

**When and Where:** Sat, May 21, 2022 (Nagoya Mirai Tower), Sun, Sep 11, 2022 (Tokyo Skytree Tower), Sun, Nov 6, 2022 (Osaka Abeno Harukas)

**Registration:** check the website Verticalrunning Japan Circuit : <https://verticaljapancircuit.jp/>

Last but not least, it's worth mentioning the races planned in Japan. Japan has an active tower-running community and elite towerrunners that can challenge the world's best. Unfortunately, the country has been cut off to travel (with the exception of business travel) due to covid travel restrictions. There is no indication when these restrictions will be lifted, so for the time being, these races will only be for Japanese residents. However, restrictions will need to be lifted at some point, and if so, then the races in Tokyo and Osaka later in the year could be of interest to some towerrunners.

### Other tower running race calendars around the world

WTA races: <https://www.towerrunning.com/races/>

Races in the USA: <http://stairlife.weebly.com/>

Races in Australia: <https://www.stairclimbing.com.au/events>

Races in Japan: <https://verticaljapancircuit.jp/>

Races in Germany: <https://www.towerrunning-germany.de/startseite/wettkämpfe-2022/>

Races in UK: <https://towerrunninguk.com/uk-stair-race-calendar/>





### Time Trial is Back!

The TASG ran another successful time trial event on April 19, in a repeat of last year's time trial at the 40-floor Toa Payoh Central. We welcomed a few new participants to the trial this year as we encouraged entrants to bring along a friend. The results? It was yet another lung busting, jelly legged, heart-in-the-throat, fall-across-the-finish-line affair- in other words, a good time was had by all! Thanks so much to all the volunteers and organisers who ran the show. We can't wait for the next one. Congrats to Serene who broke 4 minutes and smashed her PB by 19 seconds! **Results:** Charles 3:26, Serene 3:57, Dan 4:16, Wei Pin 3:55, Angelina 9:30, Eddie 4:36, Jimmy 7:13, Vanz 7:59.



## Training for Towerrunning in the Mountains of Johor

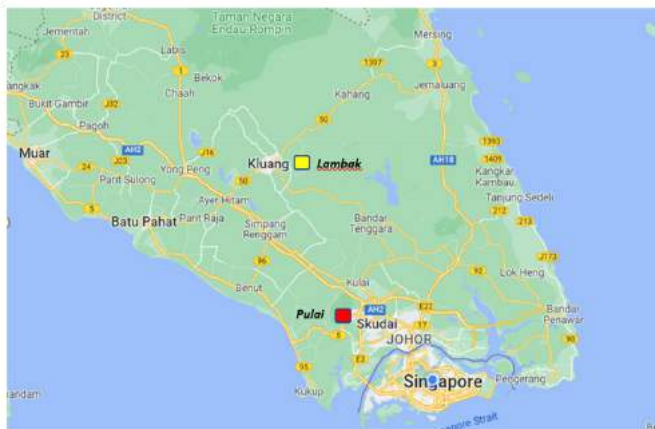
by Rich Sirrs

Featured Article

The benefits of training on mountains to excel in Towerrunning races is well known. In fact, some of the greatest Towerrunners ever – Paul Crake, Andrea Mayr, Mark Bourne, Emmanuel Manzi – are world-class mountain runners and train primarily outdoors on the hills with some sessions on stairs to improve footwork and technique.

Singapore does have one mountain (if you could call it that), Bukit Timah, topping out at 160m, with various slopes and stepped routes which can be easily tackled in less than 10 minutes for a fit individual. Therefore, if you are looking for a climb with a bit more meat, that will allow you to extend the time that you are working at your threshold heart rate, then a trip to Johor could be in order.

There are many mountains in Johor but for me, two particular spots are the best for a short training trip – Gunung Pulai and Gunung Lambak. They are not the highest mountains but they are the best fuss-free training spots. The biggest peaks, Ledang and Belmut are options for hikes but you are required to obtain a guide and there's more admin involved, whereas the two climbs I detailed below can be accessed without the need for a park guide or paying any fees. Just rock up and climb!



### Gunung Pulai

**Height:** 654m

**Amenities at Base:** Toilet, Parking, Showerblock, Small provisions store

Gunung Pulai can be reached from Singapore in around 1.5 hours. I typically take the MRT to Woodlands Interchange, jump on the 856 bus to the Checkpoint and then it's a 10 minute walk through the passport control and on to one of the CIQ shuttle busses which cost \$2. Just a few minutes later and you're in Malaysia! I usually arrange a rental car from WAHDAH | Your car, everywhere. I've hired about 20 times from this company and had zero problems and find them exceptionally accommodating. I get the car to meet me at the Malaysia side of the checkpoint and after 10 minutes checking over the vehicle they hand over the keys and I am on my way on the one hour drive up to Pulai.

One of the best things about Gunung Pulai is you actually have two workout options. Upon entering through the park's entrance gates, you walk along a steep and winding road for approximately 1km before you decide to either turn right to enter the trail or carry on up the road.



### Steep Trail

The trail is a legit jungle trail with roots and branches to navigate and steep muddy climbs. There are some sections where the gradient eases off but essentially this is a tough power hike and there are two very steep sections that can only be described as lung busting. Additionally, you need to grab onto the ropes and tree, a good workout for your arms which mimics stair climber's use of the handrail.



### Road Slog

If you take the road route, expect a painful 5km slog that is arguably a more difficult challenge than the trail with some parts of the road hitting 30%+ and nowhere to hide from the hot sun. The road winds around the mountains and takes around 30 – 50 minutes if you are fit enough to jog it. You'll be sure to hit your threshold or even max HR just jogging up the 30% gradient. You can even cycle up this route but trust me, as someone who has bagged this peak by bicycle, it's a torture.



## Gunung Lambak

**Height:** 550m

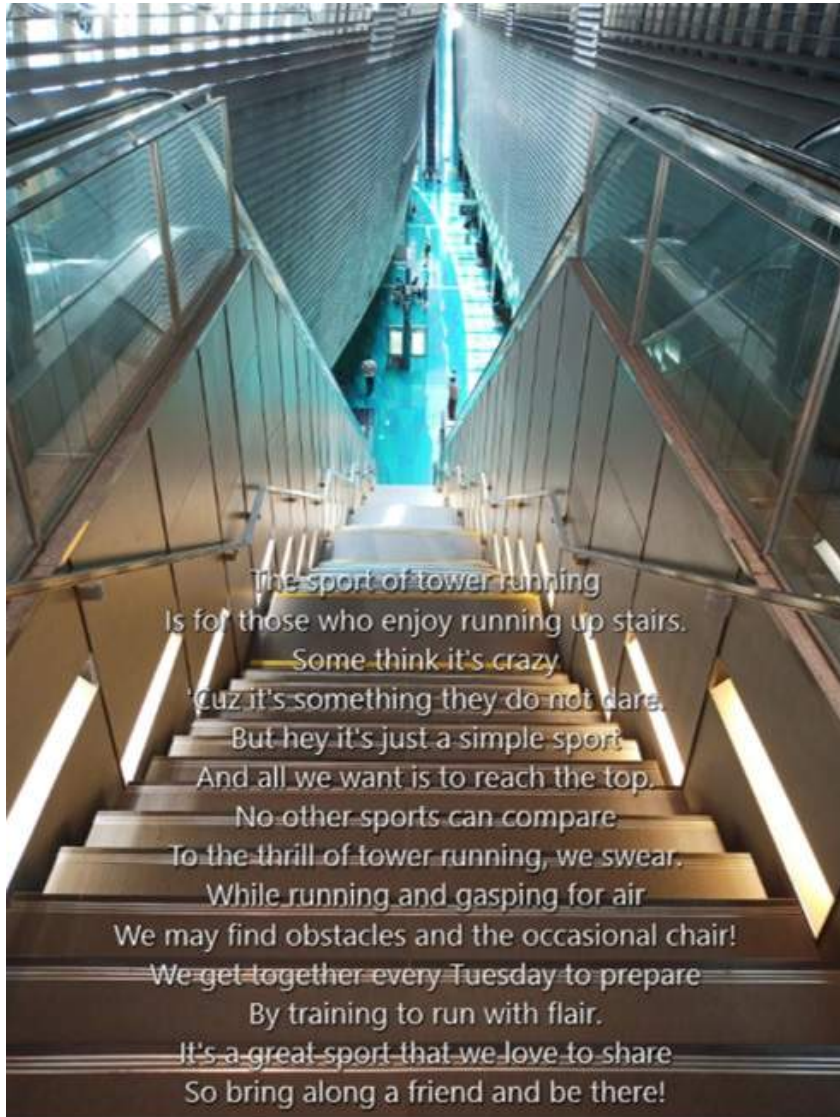
**Amenities at Base:** Parking, Small provisions store

From the town of Kluang in Johor, the peak of Gunung Lambak is easily visible. Actually Lambak (which means Flea Mountain) has twin peaks, the higher of which reaches 510m (1673ft) and has a TV broadcasting mast on the summit. The town of Kluang is around three hours from Johor. It's quite a nice little spot and worth staying overnight if you have the time. The hotels are cheap and pretty good.

Gunung Lambak doesn't have a road workout option like Gunung Pulai; instead the only option is a jungle trail which starts off tame and runnable and morphs into a super steep beast of a scramble which ascends 440m in around 1.5km of gnarly jungle trail.

This climb is a total lung buster and I would not recommend it for anyone who is afraid of heights as some stretches are 70% gradient and coming down, especially when it is wet, is quite an ordeal! In typical Johor mountain fashion, there isn't much of a view at the top but it's a great workout and guaranteed to get your muscles firing and your lungs burning for 30 minutes!





The sport of tower running  
Is for those who enjoy running up stairs.  
Some think it's crazy  
'cuz it's something they do not dare.  
But hey it's just a simple sport  
And all we want is to reach the top.  
No other sports can compare  
To the thrill of tower running, we swear.  
While running and gasping for air  
We may find obstacles and the occasional chair!  
We get together every Tuesday to prepare  
By training to run with flair.  
It's a great sport that we love to share  
So bring along a friend and be there!

### **Let's continue to grow!**

Towerrunning is the sport of stair climbing. Our members are attracted to this sport for many reasons. One of our missions is to grow awareness for Towerrunning to the general community. Do you know anyone who is interested in stair climbing? Invite them to join and help our Association grow! Membership is only \$20/year; benefits include weekly training and much more.

#### **Towerrunning Association of Singapore**

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