Running with Friends

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The Problem

Running is a great way to stay healthy and active, but can also be a dull and repetitive routine. Running with friends can be an effective way to be kept accountable and encouraged.

Challenges

- Coordinating conflicting schedules
- Varying levels of running ability

Proposal

We propose Running With Friends, a mobile application that supports the ability to conveniently find friends to run with and organize running events.

Features:

- One-click signal to notify friends about a run
- SmartMatch to suggest other runners of similar ability to run with

The Inquiries (Real names have been changed)

Jade

- Routine: runs around the neighborhood (sometimes with her dog)
  - Runs alone because she finds it hard to find friends to run with
- Goal: to run 2-3 times a week

Alex and Eric

- Other friends prefer to lift weights or play basketball.

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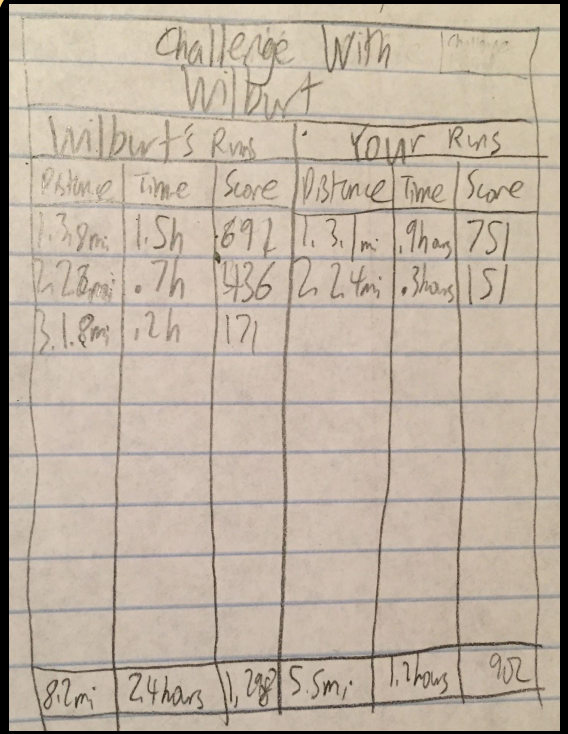
Three Women at Marymoor

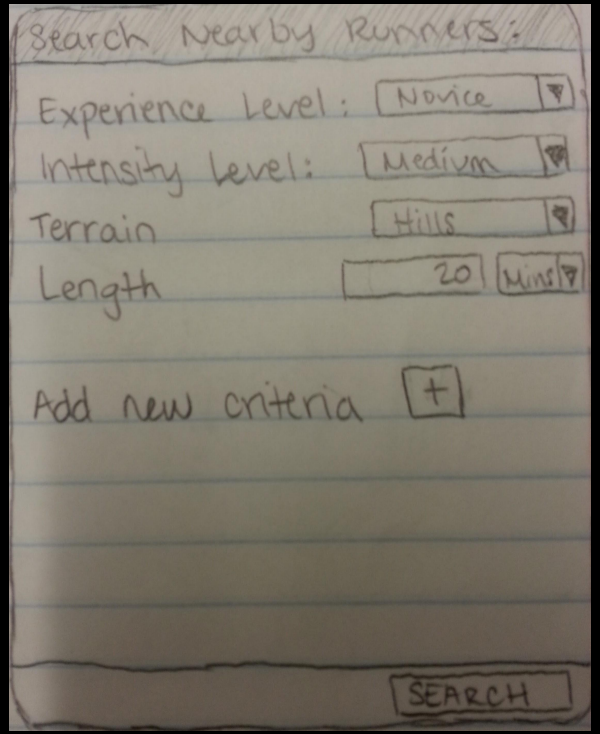
- Run together when they can because of similar running ability and style.

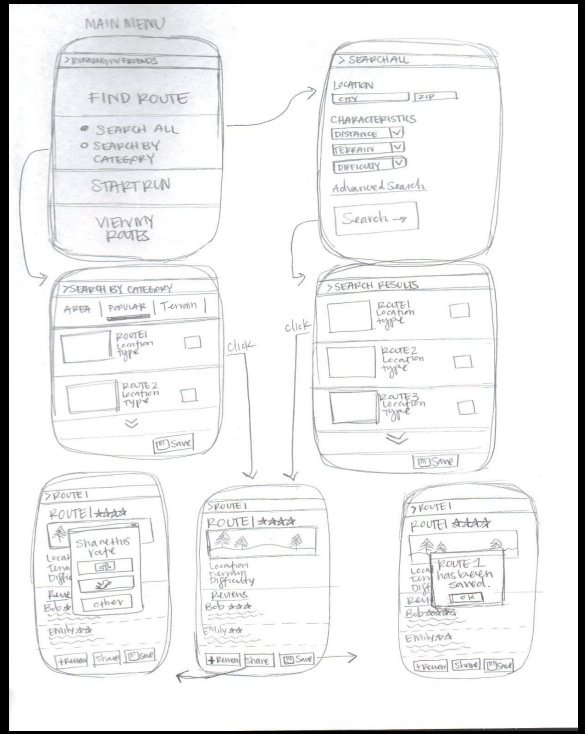
Things to Do (Tasks)

1. Ability to record running statistics such as distance run, speed, number of runs, etc.
2. Share statistics with friends
3. Create running events and invite friends
4. Send mass notifications to friends for a spontaneous run
5. Find a SmartMatch (based on various criteria) to run with
6. Write and search for reviews on the route/experience

Getting to the Right Design: Initial Designs





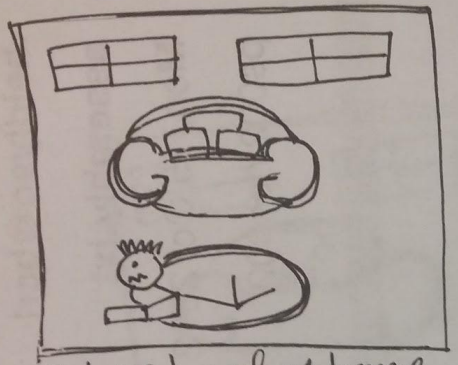


Getting to the Right Design: Selected Designs

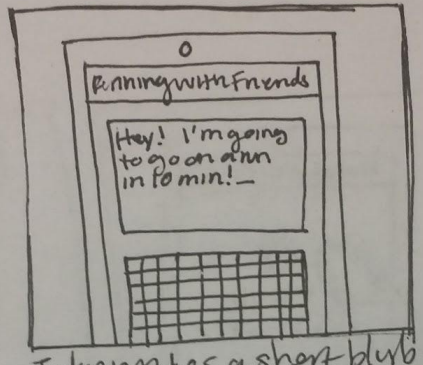
Design 1: Running separately
May add some motivation but does not provide the full experience of running with a companion

Design 2: Coordinating running events in advance
Tasks can be accomplished using Facebook events or other similar tools

Design 3: Spontaneous Running
Tasks are unique and they also address the concerns raised in our contextual inquiries. Our chosen design also provides us with an interesting opportunity to explore personal informatics

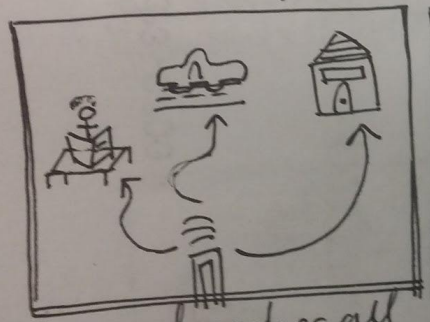


Jake is bored at home. He wants to go on a run and decide where.

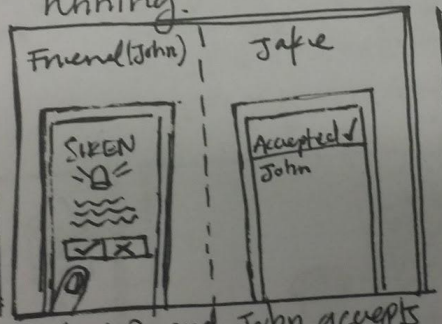


Jake writes a short blurb describing where he plans on running.

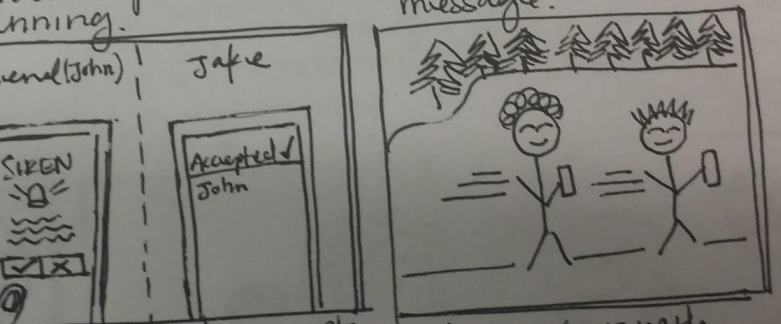
Then he sends a mass notification to friends to tell them his message.



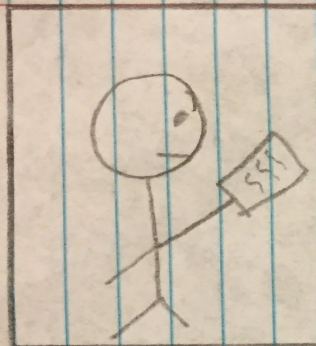
The signal reaches all Jake's friends.



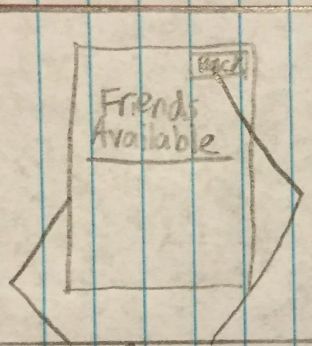
Jake's friend, John accepts Jake's siren and Jake gets a notification of the acceptance.



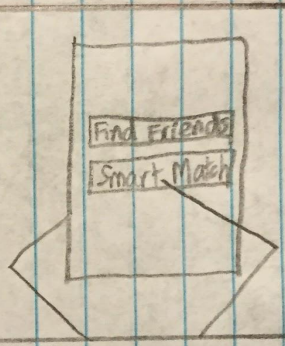
Jake meets up with a friend and goes on a great run!



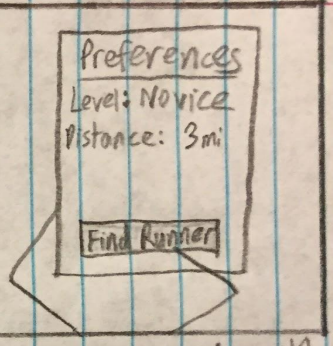
Looking for people to run with



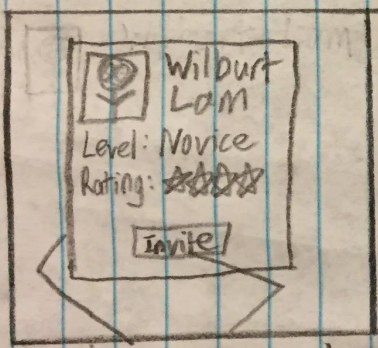
No friends available to run



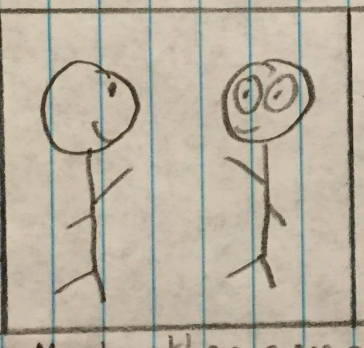
Use Smartmatch to find other runners



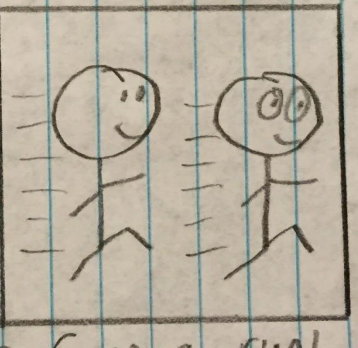
Get matched with another runner



Invite runner to run with you



Meet other runner at predetermined location



Go on a run!

Summary

- Fieldwork/contextual inquiries reveal real needs/concerns
  - difficulty finding friends (of similar level)
  - conflicting schedules

- Approaching the problem in various angles to design unique solutions
  - Initially, designs were distinguished by tasks
  - Eventually, they each encompassed a social theme