NAME: Junichiro Kono
HOMETOWN: Tokyo, Japan
CURRENT RESIDENCE: Houston, TX
OCCUPATION: Professor at Rice University
AGE: 51
STREAK BEGAN: April 5, 2016
TRAINING FOR: Houston Marathon
CLOSE CALL: crossing the International Date Line when traveling to conferences provides a challenge as Kono will often have to dash out for a run shortly after checking into his hotel before the clock strikes midnight.

Junichiro Kono began his running streak just prior to turning 50, when he was looking for a new challenge.

“When I encountered the (United States Running Streak Association) list and discovered that the craziest runners have been running every day for over 45 years, I immediately decided that this is my next goal.

“I want to continue to run every day until April 14, 2066, when I will have lived for one century.”

Kono took up the sport in 2005 and has completed 25 marathons, 11 full marathons along with a handful of other events, including a triathlon, trail run and mountain races. He moved to the United States in 1992 to pursue his career. Along the way, he’s made stops in Buffalo, NY; Santa Barbara, CA; and Mountain View, CA; before settling in Houston, where he certainly gives fits to the Rice University employee in charge of designing staff members’ business cards.

Kono, a professor at the prestigious institution of higher learning, has the title “Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Physics and Astronomy, and Materials Science and Nanotechnology.” Good luck fitting that on a business card.

“I am heavily involved in my research that focuses on solid state science and engineering, which means that I get to play around with everything from nanomaterials to quantum devices.”

He travels to Asia about half-a-dozen times a year for conferences and research, which creates an interesting situation regarding the International Date Line and keeping his streak alive.

“Even if you run in the morning before you go to the airport in Houston, it is already in the afternoon or evening of the next day when you land (in Asia). So you have to dash to your hotel, check in and go for a run before midnight.

“If I miss a connection, I may have to run inside an airport, which has not happened fortunately.”

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