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43 Years of Running
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THE
**STARTING
LINE**
NEWSLETTER



THE GUANA TRAIL RACES
50k Ultra • 2x25 Team • 12k Trail
Sunday, December 1st, 2019

The Starting Line

Letter from the Editor - Bob Fernee

If you can't go long, go home. Yep, this issue is all about the ultra. The ultra and the other things that go along with it – training, nutrition, injury prevention, how to get started – basically, everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask. Why the ultra, you ask? Two very good reasons. For one thing, we have never paid much attention to the ultra in the pages of this esteemed newsletter and secondly, because our club has its annual ultra coming up in December.

For those who may not know, the ultra is any running event that is longer than a 26.2-mile marathon. Our historic ultra, the Guana Trails, takes place on Sunday December, 1. It is more than just a race, it is three races. At 8 am, the 50k (31-mile) trail ultra begins. It is four loops of a beautiful nature trail inside the Guana Tolomato Matanzas Estuarian Reserve (yes, just "Guana" will do). Guana is in South Ponte Vedra Beach, some would refer to it as Palm Valley, and I guess maybe it is.

Also starting with the ultra is a unique 2x25k (15.5-mile) team race. That means that each runner of the two-person team does two loops of the course. Each loop is just over 7.5 miles. In both events participants will pass the start area where food, drinks and restrooms are on hand. Also, in the start area a timing mat will accurately record every runners' lap times.

At one o'clock a 12k run will begin. So, you see, this is an event for everyone. If you can't run four laps for 50k, or you don't want to do two laps for 25k, you can still play your part and complete just one scenic loop for 7.5 miles. The 12k starts five hours later for a reason; so that all runners will finish more-or-less together. Then, they can all make their way five miles south down A1A to The Reef restaurant for a magnificent post-race party and awards presentation. This is open to all runners, walkers and their support crews. Food and drink and no extra charge, of course.

You won't want to miss this wonderful, unique event. You can enter right now at jtrunning.com or 1stplacesports.com

As I said, this issue is a long-distance running bonanza. You will enjoy (I hope) an interview that is nearly as long as the ultra itself. Five ultraists who also are club members allowed me to ask them a bunch of questions about their passion – super long-distance running. It all began with my pondering the gut-wrenching question, is the ultra the new marathon? In other words, in order to be a standout, a "crazy," or an "eccentric," like in days gone by, does one have to stretch out and do distances that most people would never even consider? Has the

marathon become humdrum? Is there any sheen on a marathon medallion that was achieved by an eight-hour walkathon? These questions may seem rather cruel, but this newsletter is not afraid cut deep in order to expose the truth.

Jay Birmingham delves into history with a recounting of the first ultras ever held in our area. He should know, he organized and executed them. They were tough 40-milers from St. Augustine to Jacksonville. US1 was a much quieter road 40 years ago, you wouldn't want to try it today that's for sure.

When our club began in 1975, the first person to sign on was Rodney Smith. I know Rodney well, and I would never call him crazy, but as he said himself: "Sometimes my enthusiasm got the better of me." When you read his story inside you will see what he means.

When training for, and doing, long-distance running events an injury is always waiting in the wings. A runner must be careful, very careful. Rob Coltman has some excellent advice on injury prevention. If you are planning to run an ultra, a marathon or even just upping your mileage for the next Gate River Run you will want to read what he has to say.

When it comes to training it would be wise to heed the advice of a three-time champion of the Jacksonville Marathon. Sean McCormack. is such a person and we have his latest column within this issue. It is Sean's ten steps to a successful marathon. These are ten steps worth taking, believe me.

There is even more history, as club member Everett Crum takes us back to Kiawah. That would be the popular Kiawah Marathon in South Carolina. Once again, Everett delights us with another of his recollections.

In addition to the physical, running, especially a long way, takes a lot of mental training and discipline. Our friends at the JU human performance lab are here to make you mentally strong and resilient. Check out Jeff Wight's Four Psychological Tips inside.

We love to hear from our new members as much as we do from the old ones. Teri Chenot has written a nice piece about her involvement in running, finishing the Gate River Run and completing the marathon. It is always great to get these personal stories, and if you, or someone you know, would like to submit something please do. You can reach me at Bobfernee@aol.com

Regardless what type of running you are doing I hope you are doing it in good health and with great enjoyment. Keep at it and keep in touch.

President's Letter - Larry Roberts



"It just doesn't seem right that September brings cooler fall weather AND hurricanes! Oh well, at least it's better running weather!"

Greetings!

As I write to you, Jacksonville has just dodged a fair-sized hurricane. I hope by the time you are reading my column the city is still unscathed. It just doesn't seem right that September brings cooler fall weather AND hurricanes! Oh well, at least it's better running weather!

We have a great group in the Club's Fall Half Marathon Training Class preparing for the Community First Thanksgiving Distance Classic. The class kickoff was delayed a week to let Dorian pass but is in full swing now. If you missed this class keep in mind that the 2020 Gate River Run class will start in early January.

Registration is open now for the Club's annual Guana 50k and 12k Trail Races at the Guana Research Reserve in South Ponte Vedra Beach. The date is December 1 this year with the 50k starting at 8:00 AM and 12k at 1:00 PM. The race sells out quickly so sign up now at www.1stplacesports.com/races/guana/.

Also open for registration is the Club's annual end of year cross country race, the Last Gasp 5k, December 28th, at Jacksonville University. Fun Run at 1:30 PM and 5k at 2:00 PM, followed by an awards ceremony and social

at the JU Kinne University Center on campus. Members pay just \$7 for all that!

Sign up now at <https://jtc.wildapricot.org/event-3457975>. If you have the Wild Apricot for Members app on your android phone registration just a couple of clicks.

There is a lot of good news on the Emerald Trail. Groundwork Jacksonville recently announced two major donors, the Pajcic and Pajcic law firm and Vystar Credit Union. And the City Council has approved Mayor Curry's 2020 fiscal year budget including the city's 75% share of the cost of the detailed engineering design for the Emerald Trail's first segment.

Lastly, mark your calendar for the Holiday Social at 1st Place Sports San Marco store after the Festival of Lights 5k on December 14th. The race is at 6:00 PM and social at 6:30 PM. It's always fun and festive!

The Starting Line
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New & Returning Members

Richard	Allen	Leslie	Hague	Alison	Ronzon
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Sara	Andrews	Ian	Hardington	Kimberly	Ross
Katharine	Banaszek	Leslie	Hart	Sara	Rowe
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Mary	Bascom-Pooler	John	Heisner	Mark	Sekelsky
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Megghan	Brooks	Genie	Hilton	Kuganeswary	Somasundaram
Susan	Chadwell	Jennifer	Holtzapple	Stacie	Stemm
Chris	Champion	Mark	Johnson	Leah	Strommer
Chris	Champion	Gary	Jones	Janet	Swaim
Ashly	Clarke	Susanne	Jones	Amanda	Sweeney
Bernardita	Coronado	Erin	Juzapavicus	James	Sylvester
Everett	Crum	Donna	Kelley	Lori	Theus
Carol	Culley	Mark	Kelm	Nadine	Thomas
Michael	De La Fuente	Greg	Kimball	Ronda	Thompson
Christy	DeRienzi	Drew	Landgrebe	Kathy	Tucker
Steven	Derin	Gary	Ledman	George	White
Alice	Derreberry	Trish	Livesay	Christopher	Wyatt
Jennifer	DeSantis	James	McDonald	Vladimir	Zidovec
Melissa	DiSciascio-	David	McKinney II		
Maynard		Lisa	Miller		
Sharon	Dixon	Tracy	Milligan		
Justin	Duncklee	Walt	Mitchell		
Richard	Elkins	Catherine	O'Brien		
Tim	Eymer	Steve	O'Brien		
Brian	Fry	Alan	Pickert		
Gary	Gerdeman	Patrick	Pritchett		
James	Giancola	Michael	Remisiewicz		
Joe	Gilbert	Felicia	Rivera		
Molly	Gray	Joseph	Roberts		
Jared	Graybeal	Lawrence	Roberts		
Christina	Groger	Susan	Roche		
Michael	Gruber	Greg	Rock		

Nine Days of Racing Bliss

Looking at the local race calendar, it seems you could run a 5k nearly every weekend if you chose. How different from the early beginnings of the track club when we desperately looked for races. Other than the Summer Beach Run and out-of-town events, there weren't many racing opportunities. When we did learn of a race, we jumped at the chance to enter. As more races came along and some of us became interested in running marathons and even ultras, such as Jay Birmingham's 40-miler, our enthusiasm sometimes got the best of us. Before long, it seemed we were racing nearly every weekend!

Looking back at my old logbooks recently, I saw that during a 5-year span from 1977 to 1981, I competed in 252 races, ranging from 200-meters on the track to 100 kilometers. Also included, were numerous marathons and a couple of 24-hour relays. This averages to 50 races a year over that time period. No wonder I recently needed a new hip! Yep, I guess my enthusiasm got the best of me. By the way, I would not recommend racing that often, but it was fun at the time.

My most insane stretch was over a period of nine days in 1979, from February 10 through February 18. During which I won the Jacksonville University Dolphin 10k in 33 minutes and 29-seconds, ran Jay's 40-mile race the next day, finishing fourth, and ran the New Orleans Marathon the following Sunday, finishing in 2:44:21, a new personal record. Not surprisingly, I came down with the flu soon afterward.

Looking back, I would say racing 76.4 miles in nine days was a bit foolhardy, but I loved the challenge. Now I average maybe four or five races a year. Time and injuries tend to catch up with you, but the enthusiasm never leaves. I recently ran Richard Fannin's Cecil Field cross-country 5k with my old running pals, Jay Birmingham and Bob Fernee, the newsletter editor. I found the old enthusiasm for a race returning, and though the times were much slower, it was still fun.

I certainly do not plan on starting to race every weekend and I try to stick to cross-country races now to lessen the impact on the hip. However, I am looking forward to running next year's Gate River Run with my pals Jay and "streaker" Bob Fernee. I also plan on keeping my 42-year streak alive in JTC Running's cross-country race, The Last Gasp. Thank goodness it is only a 5k now! Happy racing!

Editor's note: A humble fellow, is Rodney, and his modest recounting of his racing exploits deserves more. I have asked Jay Birmingham, who was a witness, to tell the unvarnished truth behind Rodney Smith's running prowess and bravery. Now Jay takes up the story...

Too humble, indeed. Wow! Over 500 races in five years. But those three races in nine days deserve more ink.

Saturday October 10, 1979:

Rodney Smith, 25, led from the gun at the Dolphin 10K, beating a field that included Lamont Dickey, Bob Beaudreau, Doug Alfred, and 225 others. Smith's time was 33:29.

Sunday October 11, 1979:

Smith matched me stride-for-stride for the first 20 miles of the St. Augustine to Jacksonville 40 Mile Run, then held fourth place for the final 20 miles to Friendship Park. His time of 5:30:48 beat 27 other runners.

Sunday October 18, 1979:

Following an all-day drive to New Orleans on Saturday, Smith led a 14-person contingent of JTC runners in the Mardi Gras Marathon, clocking a PR 2:44:21. Rodney placed 67th in the field of over 1,400 runners.

Jacksonville's First Ultramarathon

Phidippides Running Center of Jacksonville sponsored the area's first ultra in February 1979 from historic St. Augustine to Friendship Park in Jacksonville. The 31 finishers were paced by 36-year-old Barry Sales who credited the cool weather and recent hill training for his comfortable win. Twenty-eight of the 31 finishers were from the Greater Jacksonville area.

February 11, 1979

1. Barry Sales	4:42:56	17. Rodney Harris	6:40:31
2. Frank Jones	4:53:30	18. Mike Boyle	6:41:56
3. Jay Birmingham	5:20:12	19. Terry St. John	6:46:40
4. Rodney Smith	5:30:48	20. Mike Thompson	6:48:14
5. Robbie Crosby	5:35:02	21. Glen Thomas	6:49:18
6. Bill Longenecker	5:47:24	22. Fred Eicher	6:54:45
7. Walt Allen	5:51:53	23. Moudie Master	6:56:57
8. Russ Winko	5:53:50	24. H. D. Rowe	7:10:33
9. Dick Benson	5:57:25	25. Leo Vogel	7:11:26
10. Joe Paskoski	6:03:50	26. John Hampton (64)	7:15:50
11. Bob Shimp (tie)		27. Heidi Schleifer	tie
11. Larry Laroque	6:20:45	27. Ron Nauret	7:34:37
13. Alan Simons	6:28:06	29. Mitch Berkman	tie
14. Ray Widdowson	6:31:01	29. Bob Wid-Halm	7:42:40
15. Roy Brinkman	6:35:01	31. Scott Motley	7:47:10
16. Bob Reardean (16)	6:37:42		

The Second Phidippides 40-mile race was held Feb. 10, 1980. The course was altered from the previous year's, eliminating ten miles on US 1 by starting in Palm Valley, then joining the original route on Race Track Road, SR 13 to Mandarin Rd., Scott Mill, Beauclerc, Hendricks, San Marco, to finish at Friendship Park.

1. Dave Fields, Columbus, GA	4:51:17
2. Mark Dorion	4:59:28
3. Buddy Dale	5:10:45
4. Jay Birmingham	5:26:22
5. Bill Longenecker	5:32:58

21 finishers

Jacksonville's First Ultramarathon

The third Palm Valley to Jacksonville 40-mile race was held Feb 8, 1981.

1. Randy Barnett 4:57:29
2. Roger Bunn 5:17:13
3. Bob Reardean 5:19:03
4. Bill Longenecker 5:27:14
5. Mark Dorion 5:38:10

15 finishers

The fourth Palm Valley to Jacksonville 40-mile race was held Feb 14, 1982.

1. Skip Choate 4:47:59
2. Randy Barnett 4:48:34
3. Jay Birmingham 5:03:51
4. Scott Motley 5:38:48
5. Everett Crum 5:44:06

16 finishers

The fifth Palm Valley to Jacksonville 40-mile race was held January 30, 1983.

1. Tony Credico, NYC 5:02:20
2. Scott Motley 5:34:08
3. Wally Robinson 5:42:52
4. Bill Longenecker 5:49:09
5. Don Ehlen 5:55:00

12 finishers

After a five-year hiatus, the Palm Valley to Jacksonville 40-mile race was held a final time on Feb. 12, 1989.

1. Adrian Lilburn 5:48:52
2. Jay Birmingham 5:50:34
3. Janet Johnson, New Jersey tie
3. Clive Johnson, New Jersey 6:16:03
5. Scott Motley 6:23:10
6. Jim Emmert 6:50:13

Scott Motley finished all six 40-milers.

The Leadville 100

History is fragile, easily lost, forgotten and sometimes distorted. The Leadville Trail 100 is an iconic race with a rich history. This history has been compiled and told in excellent fashion by authors Marge Hickman and Steve Siguaw. Both have witnessed the 36-year history of what is 100 miles of racing at high altitude. Marge is a 14-time finisher and 1985 female champion and Steve is ranked sixth all-time for most finishes with 18. The book opens with forwards by Frank Shorter and Marshall Ulrich who offer their unique experience with this race. Many runners, including the legendary Ann Trason tell their memories at Leadville. The inclusion of these memories throughout the book is effective in telling this story and giving insight about the sport.

The race is thoroughly chronicled over its history with all finishers listed in the book. One of the most important aspects of this story, well emphasized, is the proper recognition of Jim Butera as the race founder in 1983.

If you've read the book *Born to Run* you owe it to yourself to learn the rest of the story of the Tarahumara Indians of Mexico and their visit to the race in 1992, 1993 and 1994. As a running historian, I particularly enjoyed the chapter *In the Footsteps of Legends*, which gives brief descriptions of the many people who are the history of this race.

Leadville Trail 100 is a quick read and offers a rich array of ultramarathon and trail running advice. Marge Hickman makes a point to encourage women to be a part of this race as either a pacer or competitor and to "get a sense of what it's like and experience the unexpected."

I thank Marge and Steve for setting the record straight about the true history of Leadville Trail 100 and presenting the story of this unique and difficult race. Here is a link to order your copy: <http://www.leadvilletrail100history.com/index.html>

Gary Corbitt, August 2019

Curator: Ted Corbitt Archives

Historian: National Black Marathoners Association

It's Marathon Training Time!

Well its that time of year where if you are shooting for a late fall/winter marathon, it's time to get geared up and into your training plan. This was always my favorite time of year to gradually build my training volume & intensity especially as the weather starts to break in mid - October. Since everyone's focus & abilities are different its difficult to lay out a "one size fits all" but I do believe there are some universal principles that can fit everyone. So, without further ado, here is my top 10 and two cents....

1. Have a clear goal. This needs to be focused, realistic, measurable, achievable & time driven (i.e. a specific race you are pointing towards). This will keep you motivated during the dog days of your training plan. My plan tended to be approximately four months in length for a specific marathon.

2. Be consistent. This doesn't mean never deviate from your plan based on how your body feels but be consistent in all your training. Stick to your plan but also be smart and listen to your body. It also means stay consistent with your cross training. (i.e. yoga/core). This leads

It's Marathon Training Time!

to be to the next point...

3. Be somewhat flexible. So, if your plan calls for a quality day and your body is telling you you're tired, take the day off or go easy. If you have planned, you have enough weeks built into your plan to bounce back. On the flip side, if you feel great, perhaps exceed your goals for that day. Bottom line listen to your body and adjust.

4. Keep a log. As you move forward, look at trends in your progressions. Are you on track? Getting stronger & fitter? Don't hesitate to ask for advice from a training partner or coach. Do I need more repetition runs? Do I need to adjust my intervals? Do I need to adjust my recovery interval? Do I need to slow down my pace on easy days? There are many variables to consider. Don't be afraid to ask.

5. Build up your long runs. Remember the purpose here is to acclimate your legs to be running for a marathon. Your long runs are not to see how fast you can go. They should be done at an easy pace and increasing in length. That isn't to say you won't be tired when you finish but remember the purpose. What's right for you may be different than others. For me, it was a build up to long runs of 22 miles of about a half dozen in total.

6. Start your taper a full two weeks before your race. Rule of thumb, each week should decrease by about 50% in volume and intensity. So, an 80-mile week should be reduced to 40 two weeks before and 20 the week of the race. Also, if the race is on a Saturday, I always found taking Thursday off and jogging 2 miles on Friday worked best. I call it my rule of 48 hours, and on the flip side whenever I have done a hard workout its usually 48 hours later, I am most fatigued. So, 48 hours before the marathon...relax.

7. HYDRATE THE WEEK OF THE RACE. This is very important. In 1983 when I ran Boston, I did not hydrate enough the week leading up

to the race. I drank plenty the day before and during the race, but it was far too late.

I experienced severe hypothermia and it was a painful experience as the cramping was severe. Don't make that mistake, start drinking water and perhaps some electrolyte drinks the days leading up. I like the ratio 3:1 water to supplement drinks.

8. Relax on race day. You are already amped up. Go somewhere quiet if you can to prepare. Visualize how you want your race to unfold. Remember you can't necessarily achieve your goals in the first few miles, but you certainly can ruin them if you are not disciplined. In my 30 marathons, I have never failed to see people go out beyond their means. Believe me... they will come back and pay the price. Since you are already pumped up, you probably are going faster than you think. Use those first two miles to find your stride and pace that you have trained for.

9. Adjust for the weather. If the weather is warm, you need to adjust your strategy and perhaps goals. That is perhaps the most frustrating thing about the marathon. Since our body performs like an engine, the warmer it gets the more it will affect your performance. Also, it is not a linear effect but rather a logarithmic effect as the distance increases. In other words, the effect is far greater in the marathon than a 5k. Your body just can't provide enough fuel over the distance if its warm. And you are working for 2, 3, 4, or more hours. If you want to know how much to adjust your pace, just contact me with your pace and goals and I can provide more insight.

10. Good luck & have fun. Remember, you are awesome to get to this point. Enjoy the ride!

Sean McCormack is 3-time winner of the Jacksonville Marathon & 3-time winner of the U.S. Navy Marathon.

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Return to Kiawah

Kiawah; to me the name seems to ring out with music. There are many rivers, islands, and even towns along the eastern seaboard that adopted these “singing” names; Kiawah, Santee, Yemassee, Cherokee, and many others. Names from tribes of a once proud people that, for a thousand years, lived among the lush green lands from the hills of the Appalachians to the shining sea of the Carolinas. They endured in nature, until the Europeans came and all but exterminated the race, in order to steal their land and claim it for themselves. Yet, I like to think that their spirit lives on, as surely as the names do.

But what does this have to do with running? Well, Kiawah Island just happens to have one of the finest marathons in the South. I have a wealthy friend that has a ranch on Wadmalaw Island, adjacent to Kiawah. He has a private air strip on his land and he recently took me for an aerial view of Kiawah. We spent a day flying over and around the island. You can still spot a deer now and then, though most of their habitat too has been taken by the greed of man. This once little known island is now one of the richest resorts on the east coast, and it has a marathon. The following is an article I wrote many years ago about running at Kiawah.

Kiawah and “The Proud Pelican”

There are numerous islands and rivers along the South Carolina coast that are named after Indians. On December 10th I drove up to Kiawah Island for the 10th Anniversary of the Kiawah Marathon. This was my first visit to the island in nearly 50 years. As a boy my father used to take me there. I remember Kiawah as an isolated, deserted jungle that was rich in coastal wildlife and could only be reached by boat. When I was in high school this seemingly wasteland of woods and marsh was sold for \$100,000 which, even back then, seemed like a “gift” to me. About 30 years ago the “Arabs” purchased this piece of land for 25 million dollars. They built a causeway to

the island and stripped the land of its natural beauty in timber and wildlife for commercial development. Today, Kiawah is all luxurious hotels, condos, and villas with numerous golf courses and tennis courts, and more. The island is now one of the richest resort areas on the Atlantic coast, with a value of probably 25 billion or more. (That \$100,000 was a bargain.)

Kiawah is about 17 miles south of Charleston. I spent the night in Charleston and drove to the island the next morning for the race. In conjunction with the marathon, they had a 5K and a half-marathon. The weather was good but I didn't feel ready for a marathon, so opted for the 5K. I noted on the entry list that there were approximately 350 each entered in the 5K and the marathon. The half-marathon drew over 700. All three were quite competitive.

We almost had a major catastrophe at the start of the 5K. About a mile out, I was in the lead pack of about 20, just behind the two leading women, when two full-grown deer sprinted across the road right through the pack of runners. They barely missed one of the women. Their momentum nearly knocked her down. If they had hit one of us, it could have been fatal for they were “moving out”.

After the race, starting at 10 a.m., they had food to spare -- pasta salads, soup, bagels, breads, cakes, pastry, etc. The food was all excellent and they also had ten kegs of ice cold beer, plenty of fresh hot coffee and just about anything you wanted. That night there was a banquet, but it wasn't free. The awards presentation was orderly and on time. It was held in the large banquet room where all the free food was located. The top five and first master in all races (male and female) received the “Proud Pelican” awards. These are some of the most unique awards that I've ever seen. The pelican is an original sculpture created by a noted artist, specifically for this race, as a symbol to represent a balance between man and the environment. They are a pewter color (first place is a dull gold and slightly

Return to Kiawah

larger), standing about a foot tall, mounted on a wooden base. The pelican is standing upright, with a kind of slim and cocky profile, kind of a “classical-cartoon” look. You have to see them to appreciate their uniqueness. I would rather win one of these trophies than any I’ve ever won, but age groups only get plaques. If I could have run my PR I would have won the masters, but I guess the only way

a Strider will get a “Proud Pelican” is to have Dr. Radical go up there and win the 5K masters. All in all, this was one of the better races I’ve attended. It was top-quality; long-sleeved shirts with the Kiawah Island logo and no advertisement, plenty to eat and drink, good hospitality, well organized, and “Proud Pelicans.” I would highly recommend it to anyone.

The Starting Line / Written by Robert Paxton, MS/Jeff T. Wight PhD

Four Psychological Techniques for Runners

Robert Paxton, MS

JU Kinesiology graduate, 2019

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Member, First Place Sports Racing Team

The “mental” side of running typically lacks attention; physical training tends to dominate for most runners. However, sport psychology strategies can dramatically elevate and engage runners. In this article I share four effective techniques that have the potential to take you to the next level. Now obviously I don’t mean to tell you to do a crossword puzzle while you’re running... so what exactly am I referring to?

Unique people require unique training. The mental side of exercise has two major approaches. First, there are techniques used for developing personalized training programs, unique to your skills, goals, and personality (even if you have a coach or trainer, this could give you some common



terminology or ideas when working together to create your program). Second, there are psychological techniques, often utilized in elite sports and athletics to maintain a level head during intense competition.

1) Goal Setting

Goal setting really does work! It simplifies and clarifies direction for the runner. Goal-setting materializes motivations, giving concise mile-markers to hit during training. Research on the topic has revealed that solidifying outcome or process goals improves mood and concentration as well as performance in endurance sports (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

What to do: I recommend a two-step approach. First, I urge you to begin with a far-reaching “crazy goal,” something big. What is the end result of this training? Why are you wanting to train in the first place? This will give form to your motivation, allow you to picture what success will look like. For example, do you want to run a marathon?

Four Psychological Techniques for Runners

Set that in your mind, craft an image of what you will look like running.

The next step is to separate the big goal into smaller, more directly achievable goals. Formalize the daily goals that will help you “climb the ladder.”

2) Self-Talk

Self-talk, specifically negative self-talk, has been shown to have a significant impact on cognitive and somatic anxiety. We’ve all experienced “negative symptoms” such as fatigue, sweating, increased heart rate, etc. It is important to address your negative and overly anxious mindset—this can lead to physical maladies that can decrease performance (Duncan and Cheyne, 1999).

With that said, research has revealed that some anxiety is good; it can actually enhance performance. A little arousal (being “scared” or “nervous”) can be beneficial to performance. Therefore, the key is to choose goals that balance the amount of arousal (to achieve peak performance).

What to do: Putting Self-Talk into practice is fairly easy but does take some practice. During races or training some negative thoughts might “bubble up to the surface”. For example, you may get tired, or the weather could be bad. These are the times when you need to intervene with some positive self-talk. Instead of thinking about how much of a race is left, praise yourself for what you’ve already completed... Or think back to training runs and all your practice. These simple strategies can “turn the tides” during the tough moments. Try various strategies during challenging training runs to determine what works best for you.

3) Imagery

Imagery is a logical strategy. There are similarities to self-talk, like positive reinforcement during training or competition. But there are also some additional benefits. Here is what is really important

to understand: perfect mental projection of an action activates the same neural pathways as the physical action (Morris, Spittle, and Watt, 2005). For example, imagine yourself doing a push-up. If you have already done push-ups before, those neural pathways will already exist in your brain; science has shown that this stuff really works. Therefore, “going through the motions” in your mind will activate, and strengthen neural pathways. Imagery is not a replacement for physical training, but it is a good supplement.

From a motivation standpoint, imagery of success, or successful completion of a goal, works to reduce anxiety, promote positive thinking, and act as a source of positive reinforcement. Again, this is a great complement to positive self-talk.

What to do: Imagine running at your peak physical condition, utilizing your best running form. If you are racing for the top position, imagine yourself winning; if you’re running against yourself, imagine not how you were, but how you will be. Really, it’s your imagination, you can imagine whatever you want!

4) Relaxation

Much like Goal-Setting, you probably already value and use relaxation. But there are more scientific concepts to link to relaxation that are important and useful for training. It is important to understand the connection with stress. While there are some general physical practices to reduce stress (meditation, deep breathing, music, etc.) there is no cure-all—it will depend on the individual.

Pre-competition routines are common among elite athletes—in fact in many sports they have an almost spiritualistic superstition. We all know that athletes (and even fans) take precautions to prevent bad luck. These routines are an extreme example of relaxation in sport, but it shows the relevance. It is important to find a routine that works well for you.

Four Psychological Techniques for Runners

What to do: pre-exercise or pre-competition routines are typically developed over time and are unique to every runner. However, there are always additional techniques to sparse in if you are interested. Meditation is a good stress reliever before competitions; while it is important to mentally prepare for an event, emptying your mind and just focusing on your breathing can be very effective—it

should be helpful at lowering your heart rate and anxiety.

Conclusion

In closing, I urge you to experiment with these psychological tips, even if your running goals are modest. A little attention can go a long way!

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Key Concepts to Avoiding Injury in Training for an Ultra Distance Race

So, you’ve done a few marathons, had some good performances, but want to try a new challenge, an ultra-distance race. An ultra is defined as a race that’s distance is longer than a traditional marathon. The current most popular ultra-distances are the 50K (31 miles), the 50 mile and the 100-mile. Actually, there are many variations of distances, and most take place on challenging terrain, not just on the road. As you can see, all are significantly longer than a marathon, even the 50K, which is the most popular starting point in your journey to becoming an ultra-runner.

One can easily see that navigating the training methodology for these races can be extremely difficult from an injury standpoint. In training for a marathon, the most common peak long run training distance is 20 miles, and by the time you have finished your training plan and raced, you may have run a handful of 20 milers as well as a few 16-18-mile runs. Those 20 milers, and the race itself, are pretty challenging, and require a decent amount of recovery time following them during the training week to feel strong again as well as to avoid injury.

You may ask yourself, how can I possibly run even more volume and a longer long run to prepare myself for an ultra without getting injured?

There are three parts to this answer:

1. For the general weekly volume, the answer to this is similar to what you have always done. Increasing overall volume per week by approximately 8-10%. This allows the body to adapt to the progressive overload of the increased distance. You will need to start far in advance of your race to make sure that you don’t make any quick jumps in overall distance and that the volume that you are running supports the distance of the race that you are doing. This is even more important when training for an ultra.
2. Ultra-distance run pacing is significantly slower than marathon pacing, especially until you master these distances, so there is initially much less need for speed work and track, and therefore much less of this should be done for the beginning ultra-runner, especially as weekly volume increases, because speed work increases injury risk on top of

Key Concepts to Avoiding Injury in Training for an Ultra Distance Race

the injury risk of adding volume. In fact, many ultra-training programs integrate some walk/run concepts into the plan as well as when the distances get long and the terrain gets more challenging, walking during the race is a normal part of ultra-running. Walking during training also reduces the stress of the overall volume, thus decreasing injury risk.

3. The third part of this answer involves the long run. There are many ultra-training methodologies and coaches out there, but one of the things that is most common in these ultra-training plans are that they integrate 'back-to-back long runs.' The reason for this is that the injury risk of running say, 15 miles on day one and 10 miles on day 2 followed by 1-2 easier days is significantly lower than a 25 mile run non-stop, AND it requires less recovery time afterward, due to the rest and recovery in between each run. One can easily see how with this type of workout one can rack up some pretty decent mileage that will support even the longest versions of these events.

The goal in presenting this is not for you to create a training plan based on what is written here, but to understand and recognize the key concepts of

building to the ultra-distance: being patient with very gradual progression, reduction of overall intensity, and not running too far or long at one time. If your ultra-training plan, or coach, follows these principles, you are much more likely to be successful at racing an ultra-distance race, as well as less likely to get injured before you get to the starting line.

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I started running in 1996 with the encouragement of my supervisor at the time that was well-known in the Jacksonville running community and was a transformational leader that wound up changing my life with running. Several nurses in the department started walking and we eventually completed our first 5k. It took me five months of huffing and puffing around the lake in my Baymeadows community to prepare for it. My husband thought that would be the end of it. I joined the Jacksonville Track Club during that timeframe and still have a classic JTC sweatshirt with the seagull logo on it! I continued to run and completed my first River Run in 1997, reflected for a week, and made the decision to take on a marathon. I completed the Marine Corps Marathon later that year as it was recommended as a first-time marathon. It gave me a running tour of Washington, DC with an emotional patriotic finish at the Marine Corps War Memorial statue with a time of 4:24:39. I became hooked on the marathon at that point.

Over the years I have completed 19 Gate River Runs and am training for my ninth marathon which will be my fourth New York City Marathon. Locally – I enjoy the Gate River Run because of all the action that it brings to Jacksonville. It's fun running through the Jax communities, i.e. San Marco, etc. with the cheering crowds and looking at downtown Jax as you cross over the Hart Bridge and enjoy the JTC Running tent at the end to discuss running stories.

Why do I continue to pursue marathons? I have a busy career as a nursing professor at Jacksonville University so I am already 24/7 with courses, grading, and working with my students. I'm not sure if the marathons enhanced my discipline in life or if the discipline made me gravitate to marathons but both compliment each other. I share my running updates with my students and it provides an inspirational motivation to them and many come and talk to me about it. I feel that it is important



2014 New York City Marathon (awaiting 3rd start on Staten Island at the base of the Verrazano Bridge)



2018 Gate River Run (19th finish)

as a professor to instill positive motivation above and beyond the course content. I have completed the Chicago Marathon, Marine Corps Marathon, New York City Marathon, and my best PR was at the Jacksonville Marathon (6 weeks after completing a NYC Marathon!). I love everything about the marathon (except the grueling training!) and the time management for it. Steve Prefontaine had a quote that he “ran to see who had the most guts” so I guess I run to see how much guts I have! My last marathon was the NYC Marathon in 2014. It is difficult to get selected into the lottery. Frank Shorter quoted that “you have to forget your last marathon before you try another – your mind can't know what's coming.” Marathons are serious and the major ones are a big deal. You train for a year for that one special day. Enjoy every minute of it. I always fly in on a Friday, pick up my race packet, tour the city on Saturday, race on Sunday, and fly back on Monday. Everyone wears their medal to the airport and the pilots announce it on the flight. I love talking with the racers because you know what they have gone through to prepare. I grow as a person and spiritually by the completion of each race. Many people take on a marathon because of a life-changing experience, i.e. divorce, loss of a loved one, etc. and share their life with you along the route. It's really about the growth of the human race besides the 26.2 miles. There comes a point in the marathon (usually at the wall) where I feel an emotion (possibly a teary eye) that my mind takes over from the physical push and I know that I have made it through another one.

Is the Ultra the New Marathon?

There was a time when a runner would go to work on Monday morning, take his newest marathon finishers medallion out of his pocket, drape it over the company watercooler and stand aside while fellow workers admired in awe. Basking in the adulation while feigning modesty, he was on top of his world.

“Yeah, I’m a little sore but otherwise I feel great. Running hard for 26.2 miles is never easy,” he’d say.

Today he would have to arrive at the office mighty early to even find room on the company cooler for his bigger-than-ever medal. He is merely one of many to finish a marathon. He’s about as special as a Sylvester Stallone sequel. What happened? 26.2 miles is still 26.2 miles and like he said, running it is never easy.

Somewhere along the way, someone proclaimed that the marathon was “for everyone.” So, everyone started doing them. Nothing wrong with that, of course, anything that gets people off the couch and into a pair of running shoes is undeniably wonderful.

But did the prestige, the image and the reputation of the marathon suffer because of it? Quantity took over from quality. Finish times plummeted. I know an old timer who said to me, “back in the day, if you went out of town to run a marathon and you didn’t break three hours you didn’t want to come back.” The three-hour standard is now a four-hour one and it is still slipping. Has this prompted the more hardcore marathoners, who were once called crazy or eccentric (which they liked) to seek greener grass? Grass that, so far, is untrod by the masses. Perhaps they also yearn for yesterday’s smaller races. Those crowd-less competitions where everybody seemed to know each other, and the post-race fest felt like a family reunion.

A question burned in my feeble brain: Is the ultra

the new marathon?

The ultra is any distance longer than a marathon. Typical race lengths are 50k, 50 miles, 100k and 100 miles. JTC Running has one coming up soon. Race director Mark Ryan, and our club, is hosting the Guana Trail Runs, a 50k (30-mile) ultra, a two-person 50k team race (each runner does 25k), and a 12k (7.5-mile) trail race. All three races take place on Sunday, December 1st in the Guana Tolomato Matanzas Reserve in South Ponte Vedra. You can get all the facts and enter on either website, JTCRunning.com or 1stplacesports.com.

I reached out to some of our most active local ultramarathoners. I wanted to know what was going on with the sport and get their opinions. Mark Ryan, Gary Corbitt, Chris Twiggs, Jay Birmingham and Regina Sooe were all happy to help and I am thankful that they did.

Bob Fernee: Is today’s Ultra runner like the marathoner of years gone by? Back when marathoners were considered eccentric and even crazy, in the 1970s and before. Have Ultra runners taken over that image, that mantle?

Mark Ryan: Most non-Ultra folks think Ultra runners are crazy, but it is a good crazy.

Gary Corbitt: I’m not sure how ultrarunners are perceived. The numbers do indicate this segment of our sport is growing and becoming a bit more mainstream. I do hear more people having ultras on their bucket list. It should be noted that in the infancy of the modern era of road running the low number of participants and the fact that women couldn’t officially compete in long distance races. A large field of racers in the early 1960s for all distances was 35 to 50 runners. My father’s first ultra (30 miles) in 1959 had 14 starters and 4 finishers. The first national championship at 50 miles in 1966 had 19 starters and 7 finishers on an extremely hot day. That year the national marathon

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at Yonkers and the Boston Marathon had 105 and 415 starters respectively.

Chris Twiggs: There are a lot of contenders for “eccentric” or “crazy” athletes these days: Triathlon, cross-fit, Spartan races, Ragnar, etc. Ultramarathoning is certainly on the list.

Jay Birmingham: So many people have run marathons (or walked them) that it is no longer unusual, except among the sedentary. Whereas marathoners used to protest that running a marathon was NOT crazy, I have met many Ultra runners who embrace the crazy label.

Regina Soeey: Yes and no. Yes ... Now that marathons are more accessible and doable for everyone, people feel they need to go longer or weirder to stand out or feel they have really accomplished something difficult. No ... While many believe the above statement is true, I feel that running a competitive marathon requires just as much talent, training and toughness as running a competitive ultra. They are different animals and being competitive in either discipline is something special.

BF: What makes ultrarunners do it? It is a long time just to be on your feet, it's even harder to try and run it. What's the appeal?

MR: I think the appeal is that it is different. Once you get into it you will find the Ultra community is amazing, people would do anything to help a fellow runner in distress, even dropping out to help them. I think social media has helped grow the Ultra community; it is easy to keep in touch with Ultra folks you meet and when non-Ultra folks read about some of the Ultra events it makes them very curious.

CT: T.S. Elliot is credited with saying, “Only those who risk going too far can possibly know how far one can go.” Ultrarunners are not afraid of taking that risk. They want to know what they are capable

of, not in terms of speed or strength, but in terms of guts. Can they keep going when the faster, stronger runners fall away? The only way to find out is to try.

JB: Like many running accomplishments, the appeal is doing what others cannot. There is also great satisfaction in having trained for, and finished, 50 or 100 miles.

RS: I just got in a rut in my training and wanted to try something different. I went to a 24-hour race with a bunch of friends, had an amazing experience, loved the culture and the people, and got hooked on this whole different world of running. It is long and hard. I have learned so much about myself through all the alone time on the roads or trails. The people in the ultra community are wonderful, some of the venues are beautiful and relaxing, it is a way to truly unplug from the stressful electronic world, and a great sense of accomplishment.

BF: The marathon used to be held in awe, it has now become “everyone's” race. Has the marathon lost its luster?

MR: I do not think it has lost its luster. There are ebbs and flows in everything and I think the marathon has been in a little down cycle, but I think it is coming back. For example, the Boston Marathon went through a phase when it did not sell out until just prior to the event, now it sells out in the first two days of registration.

GC: I believe 100,000 runners annually attempt at getting into the New York City Marathon. Non-runners are in awe of the marathon. The large number of people doing marathons indicates finishing a marathon isn't hard provided you put in the training. Running a long-distance race fast is hard and very few runners accomplish this today. The appeal is quite strong particularly big city marathons worldwide. However, the competitive nature (people running fast) in the sport has been

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lost forever. I believe today some marathons have time limits of 8 hours with the average finishing time being 4:30. In the 1960s you had to finish below 4 hours to be considered an official finisher. If you ran 40 minutes in a 6-mile race during this era you would finish near last place.

CT: A runner's accomplishment when finishing a marathon is not diminished just because thousands of other runners have crossed the finish line, yet many people do find themselves looking for a way to distinguish themselves. Ultras are one way to find that higher level of accomplishment, but it is not an easy path.

JB: Luster? No. I believe that runners who race the marathon, pushing themselves hard from start to finish, still deserve to be held in awe. But the vast herd of joggers, walkers, and stroller-pushers who treat the marathon like a half-day ambulatory party, do not.

RS: No way. The marathon will always have an amazing luster. It's still a sexy beast I always want to slay. I still often cry when I cross that finish line and celebrate new milestones or PRs.

BF: What do Ultra runners think about the marathon today?

MR: Great training runs.

CT: I know several Ultrarunners who haven't run a marathon in decades or maybe not even at all. The marathon is on their radar. Trail runners particularly are all about being out in nature. Crowded road races aren't their style.

JB: I believe it is still a worthwhile challenge when training has been serious and racing effort is applied. If a marathon is just the week's "long run," then it is not a marathon race.

RS: Some ultra people were once very competitive shorter distance runners who got older, or injured, or wanted to unplug more. I feel most ultra runners

respect marathon runners who get out there and give it their all. There are elitists in every sport who don't respect anyone other than other elite runners.

BF: Do you foresee a time when the Ultra will become what the marathon is today? Do you think attendance will increase a lot in the future, or will it remain a cult event and only attract the serious Ultraist?

MR: Probably, when the next "new thing" pops up. I do not believe ultras are a cult event anymore. On most weekends in our country there are five or six 100-mile events scheduled.

CT: Some people will test the waters of an ultra, just to tick off an item from their bucket list. Some will catch the bug and keep coming back. I think ultras are here to stay, and they will keep growing, but as a percentage of overall races or race participants they will remain relatively small.

GC: Yes; it appears the numbers are growing in participants and racing opportunities. As people look for new challenges, I'd expect the trend to continue. I can't see Ultra numbers reaching anywhere near the appeal that big city marathons achieve today, but there will be significant growth. In 1958 and 1959 when the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) was formed, the inventors of our sport had no idea how big the sport would grow. The New York Road Runners Club reached 100 members in the early 1960s, today the membership is over 70,000. I find it remarkable the number of racing opportunities that exists today in the Ultra. This includes the number of people running marathons and ultras in all 50 states and 7 continents. Ultra Running Magazine reports these stats for 2018:

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Ultramarathons 2018 - United States

	Races	Finishers
50k	786	50,612
50 Miles	272	16,000
100 Miles	164	9,016
24 Hours	96	3,469

CT: Ultras require a lot of work to put on, and very few of them make much money. Trail ultras need to be small to reduce the impact on the trail. These and other reasons lead me to believe that while ultras may continue to gain in popularity, they won't become ubiquitous like marathons.

JB: If you mean fields of thousands, probably not. Most of the popular ultras have caps on their fields for numerous reasons. It is impossible to predict the future accurately. Those ultras with stiff cutoff times that limit the field will remain small.

RS: I don't think it will ever become like the marathon. For elite runners, there are more financial perks via sponsorships, race entries, prize money. This is so much smaller in the ultra world. Ultras are less commercial, unlike many marathons today. Ultras in parks or protected lands will never grow to the size of the big marathons. In 1998, about 11,000 people completed an ultra, last year it was about 150,000. I feel the attendance at big running events like the Gate River Run, peaked out and has decreased, so I'm not sure when the ultra's peak will be. And who knows what the future trends will be.

BF: The people who participate in ultras, are they all hardcore ultraists?

MR: Most of them are pretty hardcore, but I'm seeing more people trying one or two to get a taste and then they're done with them. Many ultrarunners are retired, so they have the time to train. There are many ultrarunners who are recovering addicts or alcoholics and they do them to stay away from their addictions; in most cases ultras prove to be good medicine.

CT: Ultra runners are not hardcore anything. Sure, they are badass in terms of the distances they run, how many hours they can keep going, and the type of terrain they cover, but for the most part ultrarunners are pretty chill. They are a real contrast to the intense, fire-breathing, no-pain no-gain, road warriors I've seen at local road races.

JB: The ultrarunners I know best are quite competitive, train year-round, want to set PRs and beat other people. However, I have met many who, inspired by the book *Born to Run* and TV shows covering endurance races of many hours and days, treat their ultrarunning as a hobby. Nothing wrong with that, but I would not call them hardcore.

RS: Absolutely not. There are about 5-10% of the field who are in it to win, set a PR or record of some sort. Everyone else is there to have fun while staying in shape, they care much less in their than the mid or back of the pack marathoner does.

BF: What is your history in the ultra?

MR: I've done five 100 milers, eight 50s, one 100k, and five 50ks.

GC: I had a front row seat watching the sport of ultramarathon running evolve. I attended many of my father's ultra races during the 1960s. The ultramarathon running scene in the US was invented in the New York area. My father, Ted Corbitt, is considered the "Father of Ultramarathon Running in the United States." Andy Milroy the global ultrarunning historian credits my father with coining the term "Ultramarathon." The longest I've run in training is 28-32 miles in preparing for marathons.

CT: I ran my first 50k here in Jacksonville in the inaugural Guana 50k. I read in the JTC Running newsletter that club president Doug Tillett was going to run the race. I didn't want Doug to have one up on me, so I ran it with him. We stayed together for all 31 miles, and I was hooked. I had

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given up on qualifying for Boston, so I figured I'd see if I was better at running far as opposed to fast. I entered and completed a 50-miler the next fall. I moved up to an "easy" 100-miler the following year. Then I went to a harder 100, and finally I took on the hardest 100-mile trail ultra in the country, The Hardrock 100. Somewhere along the line I got faster as well and was able to run Boston a few times. So, I am one of those ultrarunners who still lives in both worlds -- trail ultras and road marathons.

JB: I've raced 35 ultramarathons, distances from 50k to 135 miles.

RS: In 2014, I went to a 24-hour race, logged 101 miles and was hooked. I did a few very cool international races, Del Passatorre 100k in Italy, Comrades 87k in South Africa, as well as a few pretty fast road 50s and 100s. I was fortunate to qualify for the Spartathlon 250k in Greece, and finish on my second try, that is one tough race. I tried 24 hours on a track, I have done three 48-hour races. Last year I did four Lazarus Lake races. I am going back to the Hinson 24-hour and next summer I am running 6 Days in the Dome, just because I want to know how far I can go in six days on a 55-degree indoor track.

BF: What made you get started in the ultra?

MR: About ten years ago a new guy joined one of my training groups and he was a 100-mile guy. We had several conversations during training runs and four months after I met him, I ran my first ultra, a 50k trail run in St. Augustine. I was hooked after that. Three months after that race I ran the Ironhorse 100k in Florahome, Florida. Then a year later entered my first 100-mile event, the Javelina Jundred, in Phoenix, Arizona.

CT: I made the decision to move up to 100 miles after reading an article about an ultrarunner who was diagnosed with cardiomyopathy and had to

stop running. I didn't know if I could run 100 miles, but I wanted to find out by trying. I didn't want to get some diagnosis someday and be told I was done running before I had taken the chance. It is better to try and fail than never to have tried in the first place.

JB: I had been a serious marathoner for seven years and wanted to see what I could do in the JF Kennedy 50-mile race in Maryland.

RS: I just wanted to do something different. I felt I had plateaued in shorter distances.

BF: What do you like, and dislike, about ultras? What is the hardest part?

MR: The hardest part is training for one and that is what I dislike the most. The best is the "Zen" feeling I get during the event and seeing ultra friends I have not seen in a while.

CT: I like the community of ultrarunners, and I like the challenge. The hardest part is the recovery. For weeks afterward I cannot run anywhere near as fast as I could before, and that's frustrating.

JB: I still like the satisfaction of dealing with the challenges of fatigue, logistics (food, water, rest), and the mostly nice people who race them. I dislike the widespread use of "pacers." Used to be, the most help you had was a handler or a small crew; now many ultras allow you to have "company" on the road nearly the entire route.

RS: Love the people, the beautiful venues, the journey into self, the sense of accomplishment, doing things I never thought I could do, feeling free. I dislike stomach problems, the recovery, and sometimes the long training hours, and recovering from sleep deprivation. Getting the nutrition right to avoid stomach issues and proper pacing are the hardest parts for me.

BF: If someone has never done an ultra before, how would you advise them to get started?

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MR: There are several ultra training guides online. I always recommend Hal Higdon's web site it has a great training guide.

GC: Always follow the theory of progression with gradual increases in mileage and speed. Always error on the side of rest and listen to the body for signs of an injury surfacing. Experiment with nutrition. Prepare the mind for the challenge.

CT: Just sign up for the local 50k and find a training plan to follow so you'll be ready for the distance. Jeff Galloway's book, Trail Running, has great beginners' schedules. If there's a race close by and you're not ready to run it, go volunteer. When you see the finishers, you will realize they are not superhuman. You can do this!

JB: Develop a serious running routine, run a few marathons, then enter a 50-miler.

RS: Pick something that sounds interesting and go with a group of friends with no expectations but to have fun. Don't obsess over training the first time. Do train some and be in at least marathon shape.

BF: Realistically, how does one train for an ultra?

MR: When I am training for a 100, I put together a twelve-week plan. I build my mileage up from 30 miles a week to 100 miles a week and then taper the last three weeks. Shorter distance means less training miles.

CT: A 50k can be trained for just like a marathon. Just bump up the long runs by a few miles and there you are. 50-milers and longer require more work on nutrition and weekly mileage. You must be able to run with food in your gut, and you have to be able to run when you're tired.

JB: I like Ted Corbitt's advice to get in top marathon shape, then just do it (run an ultra). I advise folks to do some six to eight-hour training efforts at any pace, just to learn patience and to deal with weariness.

RS: Ask others, listen to a variety of opinions, try different things, and just learn all you can. Problem solve as you go. It is a very large body of knowledge and you make new mistakes every race.

BF: What are your favorite ultra race distances?

MR: 50-mile is my favorite; just the time you start to get tired, you are finished. It is still daylight when you finish, which is nice.

CT: I love the 100-miler. There is something magical about running through the night and feeling at your worst then having the sun come up to provide new energy in abundance. I positively cherish that feeling of flying down the trail on the second day of an event.

JB: 50-miles and 100-kilometers.

RS: 50-miles, 100k, 100-miles on road in a pretty place.

BF: As a course for an ultra, do you prefer road or trail?

MR: I prefer trail because it is more interesting, there is more nature to see. Road races are easier to run but tougher on the body.

GC: During the 1960s races were all on the roads. I was told recently that nearly 80% of the races today are on trails.

CT: I prefer trails, specifically mountains, but I will admit I really enjoyed The Keys 100. Road races are much faster, and it was great feeling like I was running to the end of the road.

JB: Smooth trails away from traffic are great, but I enjoy roads and tracks, too.

RS: Road.

BF: What do you think are the glory ultras (their version of Boston)?

MR: The granddaddy is Spartathlon, which runs from Athens to Sparta, Greece. It is 250k (153

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miles) and must be completed in 36 hours. This is the same course Pheidippides ran. The biggest trail race in our country is the Western States 100-Mile Endurance Run, from Squaw Valley to Auburn, California. Our biggest road race is Badwater 135 that begins in Badwater Basin, 280 feet below sea level and ends 135 miles later half-way up Mt. Whitney, 8300 feet above seas level. It is billed as The World's Toughest Foot Race.

GC: Due to apartheid in South Africa (the system of segregation on the grounds of race) my father was denied the opportunity of running the Comrades Marathon where he would have been one of the favorites from the late 1950s to the late 1960s. The London to Brighton, a 52-mile road race became the de facto world championship of ultramarathoning, a race my father competed in five times.

CT: The Hard Rock 100 has over 2,000 people in the lottery trying for 145 spots. Runners must complete another 100-miler just to enter the lottery. Many runners wait five or six years to get their chance to run it. As a 14-time finisher there, I know I am blessed. Western States is a Hardrock qualifier, and the oldest trail 100 in the country. On the road, Badwater is clearly the king. Running 135 miles is not enough for this race; participants must start in Death Valley in July. The largest ultra in the country is the JFK 50. It is a combination of road, trail and canal tow path, and has the historical connection to the 50-mile walks Kennedy encouraged to get our nation healthy.

JB: The JFK 50 is still going strong. The Western States 100-miler was special, but entry limits and a lottery have diminished it in my view. The Badwater135 in Death Valley is world famous. The Comrades Marathon (54 miles) is a national treasure in South Africa and London to Brighton (52 miles, now defunct) are iconic. There are several 100-milers that are so difficult that no one can average four miles an hour – Hard Rock in

Colorado is such a one.

RS: Badwater, Western States, Hard Rock, Comrades and Spartathlon.

BF: How many pairs of running shoes do you go through every year? What are your favorites?

MR: I buy two pairs of shoes a year; one is usually Altra and the other Hoka.

CT: The Hoka Speedgoat 2 is the best shoe for mountain ultras that I have ever owned. I go through three pairs of those each year, plus another four or five pairs of road shoes.

JB: I rotate through seven pairs of shoes each week and keep them until they fall apart. Some are over five years old. I'm always breaking in one or two pairs. I used to run in New Balance but now most of mine are Asics. I race ultras in trainers now.

RS: I have accumulated about 30 pairs that I wear out gradually and buy a few new pairs every year. Adidas Ultra Boost ST for anything from a marathon to 314 miles is the shoe for me.

BF: I probably forgot something, anything else?

MR: In the last couple of years 200-mile events have been popping up and people are doing them. I think this is just the next step as people stretch their limits.

GC: I am just beginning to learn about the trail running scene. The Grand Slam of Ultrarunning sounds interesting. You run three of the four first Grand Slam series of 100-milers: Old Dominion, Western States, Vermont and Leadville Trail. Your fourth 100-mile race is Wasatch Front.

JB: It helps to be able to enjoy solitude and entertain yourself (I never use headphones).

Thanks everyone. Phew, this column was an ultra in itself.

Long Distance Running History – 50 Years Ago Today!

September 28, 1969

Ted Corbitt places 2nd at London to Brighton Road Race

*Ted Corbitt was ranked #2 in the world for Ultramarathons throughout the 1960's. This is based on his five appearances at the famed London-to-Brighton 52.5 mile road race where he place second on three occasions.

*He set American Road Records in this race in 1962, 1964, and 1969

*On September 28, 1969, Ted Corbitt achieved his fastest performance of 5:38:11 at age 50.

*Due to South Africa's apartheid system of racial segregation, Ted Corbitt couldn't compete at the Comrades Marathon and thus London to Brighton became the de facto world championship for ultramarathons in the 1960's.

*The race was won by 25 year old Dave Bagshaw in 5:28:53.

Ted Corbitt post race comment:

"I never got tired during the race, but couldn't run any faster. I could have gone another 10 miles at this pace."

Unofficial American Age Group Record:

Ted Corbitt's estimated 50 mile split time in this race of 5:22:06 or 6:26 per mile pace is about 2 miles superior to his official age 50 – 54 record of 5:34:01 set a year later in Rocklin CA. This age group record is currently 49 years old.

*The Ted Corbitt Record at London to Brighton:

1962	4th Place	5:53:37
1964	2nd Place	5:40:42
1965	2nd Place	5:44:35
1966	5th Place	5:52:07
1969	2nd Place	5:38:11

*Bernard Gomersall was the dominant ultramarathoner of this era with four London-to-Brighton wins and one Comrades Marathon win.

Gary Corbitt

Curator: Ted Corbitt Archives

www.tedcorbitt.com

Historian: National Black Marathoners Association (NBMA)

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Weekly Training Runs

Sunday 6:30 am, Mandarin: Various locations and distance. See Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pg/JaxSundayRun/posts/ NO Facebook account necessary

Sunday 6:30 am, Atlantic Beach: Atlantic Bl. & 1st Street. 5-10 miles. Contact: Linda White (C) 662-4928 whitelindab@bellsouth.net

Sunday 6:30 am, Orange Park: IHOP, Blanding Bl. 6-20 miles. Contact: John 264-8024 john.powers@floridapowertrain.com

Sunday 8:00 am, Jax Trails Group Run: visit Jax Group Trail Running on Facebook

Monday 5:00 pm, Bridges Run: River City Brewing Co. 2-6 miles. Acosta & Main St. Bridges. Contact: Bill Krause billkrause615@gmail.com 904-860-9189

Tuesday 5:45 am, San Marco: Southside Methodist Church 5-6 miles. 7-8:30 pace. Contact: JC Pinto, 655-1044

Tuesday 6:00 pm, Baymeadows: 1st Place Sports, Baymeadows Rd. 3-6 miles. All abilities, 731-3676

Wednesday 5:30 am, Bolles School: Track Interval Training, (JTC Running Members) Contact: Paul Smith, smithfccj@hotmail.com, 982-3730

Wednesday 5:30 pm, Bolles School: Track Interval Training (JTC Running Members) Contact: Paul Smith, smithfccj@hotmail.com, 982-3730

Wednesday 6:30 pm, Jax Beach: 1st Place Sports various runs designed to improve your running. Contact: Simon 270-2221

Wednesday 6:30 pm, San Marco: 1st Place Sports/ Aardwolf Brewery, 4 miles, includes bridges. Contact: 399-8880

Thursday 6:00 pm, Tapestry Park: 1st Place Sports, Bottlenose Brewing, 3-6 miles. Contact: 620-9991

Thursday 6:30 pm, Springfield: Hyperion Brewery, 3-4 miles Contact: Bill Dunn, wmdunn222@gmail.com

Friday 5:40 am, Mandarin: Beauclerc, Forest Circle, 7.5 miles. Contact: Paul Smith, smithfccj@hotmail.com, 982-3730

Disclaimer on Weekly Workout Sessions:

The Wednesday morning and afternoon sessions at the Bolles School are sanctioned by JTC Running and open only to registered members. Information on all other sessions is provided as a courtesy only. JTC Running does not sanction, manage, or insure these workouts.