

# EPIC ULTRAS NEWS



## Welcome From Epic Ultras Founder, Eric Steele



So, we kicked off the New Year properly this past Saturday with our first Epic Ultra Event of 2014, the 2nd Annual WinterRock 25 & 12K's. We were grateful to the ultra-gods that allowed us to sandwich our little fun-runs in between two nasty winter storms that brought much snow and ice to the area. Though the trail was a little muddy and snowy in parts, we finished 77 runners from four different states, including Iowa, and an "epic time" was had by all, of course! Our next event is the 2nd Annual Prairie Spirit Trail 100 & 50 Mile Ultras, scheduled for March 29th on a beautiful "rails-to-trails" course starting in Ottawa, Kansas. We are currently at almost 65% capacity and only have a little over 70 spots left. Chances are very high we will "sell out" within the next several weeks, so don't delay if you want to join us on this "extremely beginner friendly" course. If you have yet to do a 50 or 100

miler, this is the one for you! Not to mention, we have "ultrarunning legend" David Horton lined up as our guest speaker. Also, please note that the "special discount" we are offering our newsletter readers for Prairie Spirit will be the final time we offer a discount for this race. For those of you that have heard or think that Prairie Spirit is too easy and are looking for MUCH more of a challenge... well, we certainly have it for you at our 2nd Annual FlatRock 101K, scheduled for April 26th. The FlatRock 101K is most definitely a "graduate level" trail race and unarguably the toughest course of this distance in the Midwest...hands down. If you think of yourself as some resident trail running badass, we say, it's time to step up your game and tackle the FlatRock 101K. And for those who have competed at the Bandera 100K and claim it is tough, which it is, I will simply quote veteran ultrarunner, Randy Ellis, who upon finishing our Inaugural 101K last year simply stated; "Bandera has nothing on this!" Or, how about veteran ultrarunner, Adam Monaghan, who has now claimed several times that his Inaugural FlatRock 101K finish last year was more difficult and challenging than many of his Heartland 100 Mile finishes. Needless to say, I think this quite simply "speaks volumes" about the extremely rugged nature of this course. So, if you think you have the "right stuff" we highly encourage you to get registered for the FlatRock 101K and come EARN your bragging rights as a Midwestern Trail Ultrarunning Legend!

Be Epic,  
Eric

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## Our Mission

The primary mission of EPIC ULTRAS is to organize, manage, facilitate and deliver the highest quality ultrarunning events in the world. Our vision is to create an environment that strongly encourages runners of all ability levels to discover, nurture and maintain their own personal greatness and "Be Epic."



# UPCOMING EVENTS



2nd Annual Prairie Spirit Trail  
100 & 50 Mile Ultra Races  
March 29, 2014 / Ottawa, KS

Click Here To Register Using The Discount Code Below Good Through Sunday, January 19th, 2014!

Enter Code At Checkout to receive a \$20 discount:  
**20EUNNEWSBUCKS**  
(All one word, no spaces)

## BREAKING NEWS!

Epic Ultras is elated to announce that ultrarunning founding father and legend, David Horton, will be the guest speaker at the 2nd Annual Prairie Spirit Trail 100 & 50 Mile Ultra Races! Horton began running in 1977 while attending the University of Arkansas and has logged in excess of 113,000 miles! A few of David's notable ultrarunning accomplishments include record setting runs on both the Appalachian and Pacific Crest trails, winning the notorious Hardrock 100, and running across the United States in the Trans American Run, covering 2906 miles in 64 days. David is also one of only a handful of runners to successfully complete the obscure, infamous, and nearly impossible 100 mile Barkley Marathon.



Horton has contributed substantially to the ultrarunning community not only as a competitor, but as mentor, coach, and race director. He is directly responsible for the Hellgate 100K, Mountain Masochist 50 mile, and Holiday Lake and Promise Land 50Ks. David is a professor of health sciences at Liberty University, where his running class has the unique requirement of running a 50k ultramarathon. He continues to inspire runners of all ages and abilities, and we are honored to have him as our guest speaker for the 2nd Annual Prairie Spirit Trail 100 & 50 Mile Ultra Races in on March 29th in Ottawa, Kansas! And don't forget that the Prarie Spirit 100 is the first race in the Inaugural Kansas Grand Slam! For more info on the slam, check out [kansasgrandslam.com](http://kansasgrandslam.com)!

**March 29, 2014**  
**Prairie Spirit Trail**  
**100M/50M**

**April 26, 2014**  
**FlatRock 101**  
**101K**

**July 12, 2014**  
**Honey Badger**  
**100M**

**Sept 27, 2014**  
**FlatRock**  
**50K/25K**

**October 25, 2014**  
**Prairie Spirit Trail**  
**"Fall Classic"**  
**50M/50K**

**January 3, 2015**  
**WinterRock**  
**25K/12K**



All EPIC ULTRA events sponsored by:



# Newsletter Bios

## Triple Crown Series



### Scott Demaree - Newsletter Contributor

With a diverse past as a computer programmer, graduate student researcher, personal trainer, shoe salesman, and physics teacher, one pursuit has dominated Scott Demaree's life like no other: high performance distance running/walking. To date, he has accumulated over 104,000 miles on foot, including nearly 10,000 miles in competitive races (113 ultras and 49 marathons). He won 26 ultras and 1 marathon. Two wins were National Championships: 1989 24-

Hour run and 1986 100K racewalk. Some of his personal bests were not even wins, including 230.4 miles for 48-Hours, 143.4 miles for 24-Hours and 14:57:32 for 100 miles. Fascinated by the difficulties of these events, he went back to school to earn Masters degrees at Wichita State University and Texas A&M University, involving extensive study/research in nutrition and exercise science. He currently challenges Texas high school students to high achievement in physics and AP physics.

### Zach Adams - Blogger Extraordinaire

Zach's been competing in ultras for about three years and is most certainly an EPIC ultrarunner. He loves running and has the sense of humor that Epic Ultras thrives upon! He's been our blog contributor since our inception and has a true passion for this sport. If you're easily offended, well, read his blog and get pissed, or don't! He "calls it like he sees it" and has no shame in doing so. Visit page six to "get a taste" of Zach's most Epic humor about our sport!



### Justin Chockley - Featured Runner

Justin has always been a runner in some form. He grew up playing soccer, so running with a ball at his feet has always been second nature. According to Justin, he can actually only remember an 8-9 month time period when he didn't play some sport. At 8 years old, Chockley had heart surgery and spent almost a month in the hospital, never entertaining the idea of running "just to run". After marrying Joell, he promised to quit smoking once kids were added to the family. In 2006, the Chockley's were graced with the birth of a daughter, Kaitlyn. She was soon followed by a set of twins, Alexis and Paige, in 2008. Living up to his promise, on Sept. 14 2009, Justin smoked his last cigarette. This would also mark his first day as a full time stay-at-home dad. About six months later, realizing that he was "losing sight of my feet due to my belly", Justin started running. According to Chockley, "At first, I could not have run 3 miles with Joell to save my life!" Running a 5k was all it took to get him hooked on running. Justin ran a 25:21 and told Joell that he wanted to go farther and faster. In 2010, he convinced his wife to run their first marathon. Justin recalls that experience saying, "I had a horrible race and when I saw her finish I immediately knew that she had beat me.

I have never been happier to get beat by someone." On the way back to the hotel, he once again declared that he wanted to go farther. After one failed attempt, Chockley marked the completion of his first ultramarathon - the FlatRock 50K. A few weeks later, Justin wandered through the night in the Flint Hills of Kansas at Heartland, finishing his first 50 miler - the same course where he would complete his first 100 miler the following year. No matter his accomplishments or failures Justin says, "I know I have friends that are there to tell me it's alright - or to get up and quit being a wuss." Chockley says he looks forward to what the future has to offer, including failures. "I tend to learn things the hard way, so, while sometimes discouraging, failure is always a welcome lesson."

The FlatRock Triple Crown Series was rolled out at the beginning of 2013 and subsequently awarded to eight outstanding individuals! The eight dedicated ultrarunners who earned the title of "2013 FlatRock Triple Crown Honoree" were Dennis Haig, Scott Hill, Ron LaPoint, Adam Monaghan, Michael Mora, Candi Paulin, Paul Rejda, and Kimberly Myers. Immediately following the EPIC and nail-biting final minute of the SOLD OUT 19th FlatRock in September, a golden chalice was awarded to each of the brave souls who took on "The Rock" for all 3 events in 2013.

2013 WinterRock is now in the books and the 20th Annual FlatRock 50K, scheduled for September 27th, is SOLD OUT. If you are one of the 77 runners who completed either distance at WinterRock and were already registered for the FlatRock 50K, then you are in the running for the 2014 FlatRock Triple Crown. All you need to do is make sure you get into the FlatRock 101K before it fills up...then finish it! Don't let procrastination cheat you out of your chance at the FlatRock Triple Crown Golden Chalice. Register today at [ultrasignup.com](http://ultrasignup.com) and get \$20 off of normal registration using promo code 20EUNWSBUCKS (good until January 19th 2014). Do it now, and BE EPIC!

These "Most Epic" events will SELL OUT!



# Altitude Training

by Scott Demaree

I just came across a journal article about training at altitude that may be applicable to folks looking for an epic altitude experience. The study involved 48 college cross country and track runners in the Dallas area and attempted to determine the best altitude to train at, in order to get the most endurance boost.

After four weeks of monitored training in the Dallas area, they were flown to Utah for four weeks of altitude training. Twelve runners were assigned to each group, training at different altitudes: 5838 ft., 6839 ft., 8049 ft., and 9184 ft. The athletes had red blood cell counts and EPO concentrations measured regularly during the 8 weeks of the study. They also ran a timed 3,000 meter trial before and after altitude training.

EPO is the famous compound that has sunk many an endurance athlete's (mainly cyclists) reputation. It is naturally produced by your body when exposed to low oxygen concentrations (as occurs at high altitudes) and causes it to produce more red blood cells so you can process oxygen more efficiently. It is only considered cheating if you take artificially produced EPO, or have your own stored blood transfused back into your bloodstream. Doing that is called blood doping. Both would give you an enhanced ability to process oxygen and improve your performance for a short time. The fair way to get more EPO and red blood cells is through altitude training.

The results showed that only the athletes who trained at 6839 and 8049 ft. improved their performance on the 3,000 meter time trials (the best functional test of a runner's ability to process oxygen). The researchers concluded that the optimum altitude for boosting endurance is in the range of 6500 to 8000 ft.

Keep in mind that they were looking for performance gains at low elevations in fast races as a result of altitude training. It has long been known that workout quality suffers at very high elevations, and this can hurt a runner's preparations at sea level races. Another thing you lose at high altitudes is tolerance for heat stress. Any runner who lives at high elevations can attest to how difficult low elevation races can be when it is hot and humid, conditions they never see at home.

What most of us engaged in trail racing are interested in is how much altitude training is needed to improve our performances at high altitude. Longer term studies over the years have validated the "live high, train low" method. In other words, if you can arrange to live somewhere at high altitude, but travel to low elevations for your training sessions, you could have the best of both worlds. The ultra runners in Colorado Springs used to talk that the best thing to do would be to live at the top of Pike's Peak at 14,110 ft. and train every day in Colorado Springs at 6,000 ft.

Lacking that, you have two choices. Either live at altitude for a few weeks before your race, or arrive the day before. The latter may allow you to run your race before your body goes into major red blood cell production mode. When that happens, you are likely to see your performance ability drop off.

All I know is my own results when I moved to Colorado Springs in 1987. I moved in early July and ran Leadville in August about seven weeks later. I was moving much faster through the race than in previous years, but dropped at 87 miles with extreme nausea. Maybe the problem was I was not sleeping at the top of Pike's Peak. Anyway, by the summer of 1988, my altitude races improved enormously.

# Featured Runner - Justin Chockley

## The Basics

**Date of Birth:** 12/22/1982  
**Place of Birth:** Berkeley, CA  
**Currently Residing:** Topeka, KS  
**Marital Status:** Married 9 years  
**Job(s):** Stay-at-home dad  
**Children:** Kaitlyn (7), Paige (5), Alexis (5)  
**Height:** 5'9" **Weight:** 190 lbs.  
**Shoe Size:** 11  
**Best Physical Feature:** Broad shoulders  
**Worst Physical Feature:** All the fatty/calcium deposits I have (> 2 dozen)  
**Religion:** I learned at a young age there are two things you don't talk about unless you are looking for a fight and that is religion and politics.  
**Political Affiliation:** Like religion you don't talk it about unless you are looking for a fight.  
**Educational Background:** 2 years college  
**Personal Strength(s):** Helping others  
**Personal Weakness(es):** Trying to do everything at once  
**Make Of Car You Drive:** Jeep Liberty  
**Make Of Car You Would Like To Drive:** 57 Chevy Stepside pickup  
**Pets:** Boomer (Malamute/Lab) and Ultra (GSH/Lab)

## Ultra Stuff

**# Years Running Ultras:** 1 year 3 mo. **# Ultras Finished:** 7  
**Best Ultra Performance(s):** Hawkeye 50k- even with 6 inches of snow nothing went wrong and Heartland 100, overcame adversity and bounced back to finish solid with the help of my pacers/crew Kristi Mayo, Joell Chockley, Melissa Bruce, and Marcia Henderson.  
**Most Memorable Ultra:** Although it was my slowest I would say FlatRock 50k 2013. Running with Jen Ogden during her first 50k was great. Then to see 5 runners finish within 2 minutes of the cut-off was amazing. From the sound at the finish line you would've thought Ryan Schwatken had just thrown a no-hitter in Game 7 of the World Series.  
**Typical Training Week(s) Before A Major Race:** Average 45-50 miles a week. I peak at 70 miles a week. I try to log as many back to back long runs as my family will allow.  
**Injuries:** Stress fracture in foot twice, tendonitis in my knee, and strained quad.  
**Ultrarunning Idol:** I don't have an idol, but I do look up to Eric Steele. While I have gotten help and advice from many experienced runners, Eric has always been there to bombard with questions at nearly any hour.  
**Why Do You Run Ultras:** I run ultras cause I can and because others tell me I can't.  
**Advice For Other Ultrarunners:** Sherrie Klover told me the best advice I have heard in a while when it comes to running ultras close together. "Respect the recovery."

## Favorites

**Author:** Don't have one... don't read much  
**Book:** Run!: 26.2 Stories of Blisters and Bliss by Dean Karnazes (it planted the seed to see how far I could run)  
**Non-running Magazine:** Do those even exist?  
**Movie:** Braveheart  
**TV Show:** Anything on the History Channel  
**Actor/Actress:** Sandra Bullock (she is also the only person my wife said I could leave her for)  
**Favorite Music:** Anything but country  
**Favorite Musical Performer:** Metallica  
**Favorite Artist:** Heather Beam (my tattoo artist)  
**Spectator Sport:** None (if I am not involved I get bored)  
**Favorite Game:** Any game my girls will play with me  
**Favorite Vacation Destination:** Colorado in the mountains  
**Favorite Time Of Day:** Early morning  
**Favorite Item Of Clothing:** Salomon shoes and Epic Ultras hoodie  
**Most Prized Possession:** My family and memories are more important than any possession I have.  
**Non-Running Leisure Activity:** Mountain biking  
**Running Shoe:** Salomon Speedcross 3  
**Food/Drink During An Ultra:** Soda and Pringles  
**Food/Drink Before An Ultra:** Qudoba Queso Chicken Burrito  
**Food/Drink After An Ultra:** A shot of bourbon with friends and then a greasy burger or pizza.  
**Famous Quote:** I have two:  
"Find the level of intolerance you can tolerate and stay there." - David Horton  
"Say what you want but only God can judge me." -2Pac  
**Favorite Crew Person(s):** My wife Joell and Melissa Bruce  
**Favorite Pacer:** Kristi Mayo  
**Favorite Place To Run:** Elk City Lake (FlatRock)  
**Favorite Type Of Running Surface:** Technical trail keeps my mind busy.

## Dislikes / Fears

**Favorite Subject in School:** Sociology in college.  
**Least Liked Subject:** English  
**Least Liked Household Chore:** Cleaning the bathroom  
**Pet Peeve:** People who are disrespectful and then say it was a joke when confronted about it.  
**Greatest Fear:** Mortality

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**BE EPIC**

# The Epic Mafia

By Epic Ultras Blogger Zach Adams

## Featured Runner

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The word “mafia” may possibly have a negative connotation, but that is what we are. No, there is no organized crime, racketeering, or money laundering. We don’t lean on small business owners and threaten them if they don’t pay for protection. Hell, we aren’t even all Italian. More or less we are just a bunch of crazy drinkers with a slight running problem. The Epic Mafia.

The name came out of an inside joke with my friend and fellow ultrarunner Justin Chockley. We really started to get to know each other after the blizzard at the Prairie Spirit 100 last year. In our conversations we discovered we were both also in for the FlatRock 101K in April and it got to be somewhat of a friendly competition – given the fact that our pace, training, and ultrarunning experience were very similar. One conversation about how he would take out my knee on the trail with a tire iron at the 101K if I passed him led me to call him Chocko (like Rocko), and it kind of stuck.

Now, fast forward to the FlatRock 50K in late September of 2013. Individual friendships built around ultras (primarily Epic Ultras events), pacing gigs, and chat messages all began to form into a small tight group that was all converging at Elk City Lake at the same time. After a shot of bourbon under the Epic Finish line at the conclusion of the 50K, the Epic Mafia was born. A group of 4 or 5 tight-knit group individuals had formed who would not even know each other had it not had been for ultrarunning - and more specifically Epic Ultras events. The point is that while I love running ultras, I love the relationships that I have forged because of ultras even more. Since Flatrock 50K in September, several more crazy-ass runners have informally joined the mafia.

This brings me to WinterRock. I have been super excited for this race since FlatRock – and not just because of the amazing trail and event surrounding it – but because I knew the “Epic Mafia” was going to be there in full force. The mafia had grown by several members since September, and we had gotten even tighter as a group. While not every unofficial member of the Mafia could make it, most did, and we had a blast! Our trademarked shot of bourbon at the finish was complemented by a pre-race shot as well (it was only a 25k, right?). We have joked that we should all get together sometime when we aren’t punishing our bodies at a trail run. What a novel idea! But alas, as of yet, it has not happened. Aside from having friends you know cheering you on, bonding with other ultrarunners helps ensure you don’t hear the dreaded statements, “You run the whole {insert insane distance here}?” or “I don’t even like to drive that far!”

As far as the race goes, WinterRock was great. The event was executed flawlessly from start to finish, including an excellent pot of homemade chicken and noodle soup, and delicious bean soup for the veggies, courtesy of Epic Ultras Chief of Operations and chef extraordinaire - Mr. Warren Bushey. Although it was a “fatass” event, Epic made it feel more like a full blown race. Personally, I don’t think you need much aid for a 25K, so even having water on the course was more than adequate for me. Once again, if you want to be at THE BEST EVENT FOR YOUR MONEY, choose Epic Ultras events. As far as the running goes, it was snowy, slick, muddy, and of course – ROCKY. I ran very well aside from twisting my ankles multiple times (Hoka’s fault maybe?) I ultimately rolled my right ankle a lot worse with about 10 miles left and it slowed me down considerably. Despite the pain, I still had a very solid finish. In the words of fictional ultrarunning legend Forrest Gump, “That’s all I have to say about that.”

For me, this race was more about the people running than the running itself. Great job to all the Mafioso who race at WinterRock... you know who you are. And if you have any problem with anything in this article, please send a formal complaint on over to Chocko and his tire iron.

### Achievements / Goals / Memories

#### **Personal Hero:**

My 7 year old daughter Kaitlyn is my hero.

#### **Personal Philosophy:**

Always make changes for yourself. If you make them for others, they usually don’t stick.

#### **Short-Term Goal:**

Sub 23:00:00 at Prairie Spirit 100

#### **Long-Term Goal:**

To still be running in my 70s and 80s.

#### **Most Proud**

**Achievement:** Finishing my first ultra. The FlatRock 50k is the race that opened the flood gates for me.

#### **Happiest Memory:**

Seeing my daughters for the first time.

#### **Secret Ambition/**

**Fantasy:** I don’t have any secret ones, but I would like to run an ultra on every continent and would like to qualify and run Badwater in the future.

#### **Greatest Adventure:**

Traveling through Eastern Europe

### Spare Time

#### **Book Currently Reading:**

Eat & Run

#### **Hobbies:**

Drawing

#### **Collections:**

I have a decent running shoe collection

