

# EPIC ULTRAS NEWS



## Welcome From Epic Ultras Founder, Eric Steele



In just a little over two years of existence, Epic Ultras has made some MASSIVE waves in the Midwestern ultrarunning community. We have now organized and executed twelve events during this time with runners representing more than 25 states. The Epic Ultras Facebook page and related event pages have more than 14,000 combined "likes" and we have now donated nearly \$7,000 to charities such as Gallant Few, Wounded Warriors and Run To Uganda, just to name a few. Most importantly though, we have helped to instill a love and passion for our "beloved sport" in hundreds of runners who have "earned" the title of "ultrarunner" at an Epic Ultras Event! I am humbled and astounded by what Epic Ultras has accomplished in such a short period of time - which in a large part is driven by the passion and commitment of an amazing group of Midwestern runners. You! Thank you...very much! We certainly look forward

to what will emerge in the months and years ahead, as we KNOW this is truly just the tip of the iceberg. This month's issue features Missouri ultrarunner and recent Arkansas Traveler 100 finisher, Laura Range, an article from Bob Hall about his running experience last year at our upcoming Prairie Spirit Trail Fall Classic 50 Mile & 50K, scheduled for Saturday, October 25th in Ottawa, Kansas, and Zach Adams' race report from our 20th Annual "Sold Out" FlatRock 50K held a little less than two weeks ago. Speaking of our next event, the PST Fall Classic 50 Mile & 50K, we now only have 24 spots left until reaching capacity, and just to entice you "our readers" to join us for all of the fun in a couple weeks, we are offering you a \$20 discount to get registered that is good through this Sunday, October 12th at midnight. Finally, I must mention that we are now at over 75% capacity for next year's 21st Annual FlatRock 50/25K's, scheduled for September 26, 2015, and have less than 50 spots left. All three rounds of "special invitations" have been sent out and whatever remaining spots there are (if any) will be open for registration this Friday, October 10th...and even though we have not quite "sold out" as quickly as we did last year, we strongly encourage you to take action if you don't want to miss out next year on the longest running ultra and trail race in the state of Kansas. Enjoy!

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 provide an environment that strongly encourages runners of ALL ability levels to discover, nurture and maintain their own personal greatness and "Be Epic" while co-creating EPIC "ultrarunning experiences of a lifetime" with us!



# UPCOMING EVENTS



Prairie Spirit Trail "Fall Classic"  
50 Mile & 50K Ultra Races  
October 25, 2014 / Ottawa, KS

Take advantage of a \$20 discount now!  
Click Here To Register Using The  
Discount Code Below Good Through  
Sunday, October 12th, 2014!

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

## Prairie Spirit Trail "Fall Classic"

Not quite ready to run the full 50 or 100 miles? Don't want to train through the heart of winter for a spring race? Wanting to race on the Prairie Spirit Trail but can't wait until March? If any of the above is true, I HIGHLY recommend checking out the Prairie Spirit Trail "Fall Classic" 50 Mile & 50K Ultra Races.

### Course Description

The Prairie Spirit Trail is a beautiful "rails-to-trails" course that runs through numerous quaint little towns and treats runners to "stunning displays" of incredible fall foliage. Runners will do an out-and-back, beginning in Ottawa, KS and traveling south to Garnett (50 milers) or Richmond (50K's), then, back north to the finish. The course is primarily on a crushed limestone trail, with asphalt paths as you travel through each town. Manned and unmanned aid stations will be approximately every 5 miles (with no greater distance than approximately 6 miles) and the course is easily accessible to crew. It's a great event for first timers, as it's a flat and relatively easy course. It's also the perfect course for experienced runners wanting to set a PR. The atmosphere will be family friendly with plenty of places for your crew to hang out and relax while cheering you on. Pacers will be allowed for the second half of the 50 mile event only, no pacers in the 50K allowed.

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

January 3, 2015  
WinterRock  
25K/12K

March 28, 2015  
Prairie Spirit Trail  
100M/50M

April 25, 2015  
FlatRock 101  
101K

May 30, 2015  
Flint Hills Trail  
40M/Marathon

Sept 26, 2015  
FlatRock  
50K/25K

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# Newsletter Bios



## Bob Hall - Newsletter Contributor

Bob took up running in 2011 when he ran his first ever half Marathon with his daughter Jessica @ Run the Burg in Warrensburg Missouri. He later followed his daughter to compete in a sprint tri at Longview Lake in 2012. Bob found his way to the trail running scene by running the roads around the Wyandotte County Lake and seeing a runner run out of the woods one day. He later googled trail running and has entered various trail races here in the Midwest, as a result of that one person.

To date Bob has a couple half marathons, a 40 miler, a couple 50 milers, and 50ks (including the 20th annual 2014 FlatRock 50K) - and of course he has a few 5ks here and there under his belt! Bob feels very blessed to be able to run since he has had two back surgeries in the late 90's and felt like running would never be a thing he could ever do again.



## Zach Adams - Blogger Extraordinaire

Zach's been competing in ultras since 2010 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!



## Laura Range - Featured Runner

*In her own words.*

I started running ultras in 2009 completely by accident. I was injured and needed to rehab so I started walking some trails and heard about trail races from a runner I met. I signed up that night for Psycho Wyco 50k. How hard could it be, it's Kansas and just over a marathon. So after getting lost and coming in last I decided if I could do 35 miles and have fun and not die I should do a 50 miler. So I signed up that night for the Heartland 50 Mile. It was awesome and I didn't come in last. I was astounded by the volunteers and runners I met. It truly is a run with old and new friends each and every time. I decided after running Heartland that I should do a 100 miler. So.....the next month I lined up for Ozark Trail 100 Mile. Well I didn't finish. But I learned a lot. And was undaunted by failure. I finished the Rocky Raccoon 100 Mile 3 months later on my birthday. I felt so much emotion when I finished and I knew this would be something I would want to share with my son. Ultrarunning is not just a hobby. It's a lifestyle. I truly love it!

## Epic Ultras Needs Your Help

Epic Ultras needs YOUR HELP! With the expansion of events on the EU race calendar and the increasing popularity and participation in our beloved sport of ultrarunning, we need to add to the Epic Ultras Brigade. Just because you may not be able to run every event you would like does not mean you can't be a part of Epic Ultra's mission to "co-create experiences of a lifetime". It takes amazing people to pull off the absolute BEST events you will find ANYWHERE. By working at an aid station and assisting in other race day duties, not only will you be a part of the Epic Ultras Brigade, you may even earn your way into an Epic Ultras event. To find out more go to:

[www.epicultras.com/brigade](http://www.epicultras.com/brigade).

Thank You!

# EPIC ULTRAS



# Runaway

## Prairie Spirit Trail "Fall Classic" 50 Mile

by Bob Hall

I knew from the first time I saw the trail, if I ever wanted to run a long one this would be the place. Well I never imagined it would be so soon. It happened, that the first time I saw Prairie Spirit Trails was while I was volunteering with the Trail Nerds. Bad Ben Holmes, RD of the Trail Nerds asked if I would like to help out at the PST 100 & 50 mile race they were going to run in March of this year. Ben said that as a newbie to the sport of trail running it would be great to see how long distance runners manage themselves, to endure such a distance race. I thought, great, I'll jump in and get some good "hands on training" from the ones actually running the race. It was a great time and as many of you know it was a race of a lifetime for most if not all runners, crew & volunteers.

I had the opportunity to meet some new folks at the 100 miler in March; some of whom I still am in contact with. One in particular was Mark Berry from Nebraska. Mark was one of the front runners in the 100 mile race and I was able to witness him and others as they made their way thru our aid station in Welda. I watched him and others as they ate dressed and undressed at our station. All the while I am making mental note of the things they are doing so I might learn all I can.

As the days and months ticked off I had some correspondence with Mark from time to time as we continued to share running interests. I had run a few races this year and decided that I would run the Flatrock 25k and then make Prairie Spirit my first 50k. Sounded like a plan ... at least that was what I thought. Then on or about the 7th of October I got this message from Mark saying...." hey Bob, looks like you should be running the 50 miler instead of the 50k, I think you're ready for it" Mark said. At first I thought wow, what a compliment from Mark, but then I got to thinking, I have never ran any further than 26 miles. I guess all I needed was to hear someone say "you can do it" because, I gave it a little more thought and I said "Hell yes" if Mark wants me to run with him I'll be honored, and will be able to witness technique from a seasoned runner. It's now so close to the race day that any last minute thoughts of how I should train, are out the window. I figured that I had run a lot of hills up here in Wyco and it should be cool, so I started planning my nutrition.

It worked out that I volunteered at the Heartland 100 soon after that decision and got to see Mark one more time before our race. It was good timing also to see more of these crazy people putting themselves thru self educed pain and suffering for a buckle. It worked out that day at Heartland that Ryan Knapp was putting in some time with us at the aid station, ( he was the best), before he went on to pace a runner. While we were there I watched Ryan get some nutrition ready for his runner and it looked like a product I read about a couple weeks before the race so I asked him. Ryan what is that? "It's Generation UCAN". Ryan explained to me the benefits and I was again intrigued. I now had the last piece of the puzzle for me to go to Prairie Spirit and run with Mark.

Race day had arrived and my son Matt had said that he would run the last leg of the race with me as my pacer. It would be his longest distance also to date. Matt had only run, one other trail race in his life, and that was Flatrock 25k with me a couple weeks prior. So I was going from 26 miles to 50 miles and Matt was going from 15 miles to 23 miles.

Now the race: The horn sounded and Eric sent us on our way. The way was a little different than what I expected but it was not a big deal, just a little out and back before we ran south towards Garnett. Mark and I were side by side running and talking and getting to know each other a little bit better as we exchanged stories of family and self. That is one of the things I like most about running with someone is the talking, and how it helps time fly. Talking also is the perfect barometer for pace. Mark had the pace down to a weird science, that is walking running pace, and we were knocking out the miles as we headed south. The temperature was perfect for both of us since we don't like heat. The course is very straight and smooth, which is something I am not familiar with running at Wyco, but it was a pleasant change. The race jitters were gone and I seemed to be feeling good, and not slowing us down at this point. We reached the first manned aid station and I grabbed some more water and Heed and we were on our way. I had learned from doing the aid stations in the past that S-caps were great for leg cramps, and I had started to feel the need for some already. Fortunately I had put some in my vest and started to pop a few. I was thinking that if my legs cramp up on me this early I'll suck at this and that can't happen today.

I think it was somewhere around mile 18 that Mark made mention that his legs were trashed. I thought oh no... I hope this is just a little bump in the road. The thing we both now realized was that running a 50 miler two weeks after a sub 24 hour 100 miler might be something that, one should not do. That is exactly what Mark had done. I know that Mark had made some last minute changes in his schedule to run both races and most likely never really gave it any deep thought as to the amount of demand he was putting on his body in such a short time. Mark loves this stuff and really puts his whole heart into it; I wanted the pain to go away for him. As we proceeded to the next station Mark was very upbeat but still in a state of disbelief about his legs not being there when he wanted them the most. We had for the most part, stayed on course with

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# Featured Runner - Laura Range



HONEY BADGER  
100 MILE ULTRA RACE  
EPIC ULTRAS 2014

## The Basics

**Date of Birth:** February 6, 1966  
**Place of Birth:** St. Louis, MO  
**Currently Residing:** Oakville, MO  
**Marital Status:** Single  
**Job(s):** Nuclear Medicine Technologist  
**Children:** One. Logan  
**Height:** 5' 9"  
**Weight:** 130 lbs  
**Shoe Size:** 10  
**Best Physical Feature:** Curly hair  
**Worst Physical Feature:** Lack of toenails  
**Religion:** Lutheran  
**Educational Background:** Bachelor Science in Allied Health, working on Masters for Environmental Sustainability.  
**Personal Strength(s):** I'm stubborn.  
**Personal Weakness(es):** I'm stubborn.  
**Make Of Car You Drive:** Camry  
**Make Of Car You Would Like To Drive:** Jeep Wrangler. Red.  
**Pets:** 3 Cats, 2 fish, countless snails.

## Favorites

**Favorite Book:** Oh The Places You Will Go by Dr. Suess  
**Favorite Movie:** True Romance  
**Favorite Music:** Pop, alternative  
**Favorite Vacation Destination:** Anywhere  
**Favorite Time Of Day:** Sunrise  
**Favorite Item Of Clothing:** Light up tutu  
**Running Shoe:** Montrail  
**Food/Drink During An Ultra:** Tailwind, licorice and cherry poptarts  
**Food/Drink Before An Ultra:** McDonalds egg and cheese biscuit, coffee.  
**Food/Drink After An Ultra:** Beer  
**Favorite Crew Person(s):** Craig Seymour. For crewing me and everyone else at Kettle.  
**Favorite Pacer:** Shawn Goertz for his wonderful sign reading.  
**Favorite Place To Run:** Any trail. Most beautiful was in Laramie Wyoming.  
**Favorite Type Of Running Surface:** Single track  
**Favorite Famous Quote:** "If it was easy I would do something else"

## Achievements / Goals / Memories

**Personal Philosophy:** Have faith.  
**Short-Term Goal:** Finish all the races I signed up for this fall.  
**Long-Term Goal:** Hike the PCT.  
**Most Prized Possession:** None  
**Happiest Memory:** Birth of my son.  
**Greatest Adventure:** Being lost at Zion 100 all night long.

## Ultra Stuff

**# Years Running Ultras:** 5 years  
**# Ultras Finished:** 40  
**Best Ultra Performance(s):** Blackhills 100, second female.  
**Most Memorable Ultra:** Run D' Haiti 50k  
**Typical Training Week(s) Before A Major Race:** 55-75  
**Injuries:** Torn quadricep tendon.  
**Why Do You Run Ultras:** Peace  
**Advice For Other Ultrarunners:** It's all about the journey.

## Spare Time

**Book Currently Reading:** Captive in the Dark  
**Hobbies:** Besides running?

## Dislikes / Fears

**Greatest Fear:** Not being able to run.

# FlatRock Twenty

By Epic Ultras Blogger Zach Adams

## 2014 Triple Crown Series

This year's event has rendered me nearly speechless. Please take note of two specific words in the sentence you just read, with the first being nearly. I am fairly certain that the only thing that would render me truly speechless would be a dismembered tongue or a traumatic brain injury. The second word of particular importance is event. I did not call the 20th annual FlatRock 50/25K's a race. It's not just a race. It is a full blown family trail running extravaganza for any and all who attend. The race may be the draw and one of the main events, but it is only one piece of an overall experience that truly is much greater than the sum of its parts. What makes this place so special? Everything! After 20 years everything surrounding the FlatRock event has become so intertwined that it has taken on a life of its own. FlatRock has its own culture, history, mythology, following, traditions, personality, and attitude that is usually only a found in a living and breathing organism! I love it. No, I love the SHIT out of it!

First, I want to start with a "first" for me at this race. This was the first ultra that a couple of my kids were able to come and be involved from start to finish. We all attended the pre-race festivities, camped out with friends, they sent me off with cheers at the start, and they were there when I crossed the finish line! Slapping the hand and crossing the finish line with my youngest son Mitch while my daughter Molly and Candi's kids Ranie and Durbie were cheering us in was indescribable and unforgettable. Unfortunately, my oldest son Max was unable to attend due to his job and school responsibilities – but I imagine he will get more than his fill when he helps crew for Candi and me at the Ozark Trail 100 miler in November! We all hung out Saturday night to enjoy the traditional post-race bonfire, lots of food and beers, and to swap war stories from the trail. It was amazing.

As far as the race itself went, I had a stellar day. The temps were cool at the start and I was more than sufficiently trained and acclimated for the warmer afternoon temperatures thanks to lots of hot miles training for the Honey Badger 100 in July. My fueling and hydration plan was simple – a Hammer gel every 30 minutes on the dot and a supplemental at each aid station. For water, it was one handheld bottle filled at each aid station. My race plan was simple; run to the point of discomfort all the way to the finish. Not hard enough that I would most likely spectacularly crash and fail due to my efforts, but hard enough that it was still a real possibility. After all, if you don't fail to hit your goals from time to time you aren't setting your sights high enough. I ran with my beautiful girlfriend Candi Paulin and the bandana clad, tattooed Justin Chockley for about 8 miles before pulling away and running solo basically the entire rest of the race. I pushed hard and made it to the turnaround in about 2:40 passing enough people to go from approximately 20th place when we entered the trail to about 10th place leaving the turn around. The three falls I took outbound left me with a few scratches and a nice charlie-horse in my left quadricep, but no turned ankles or twisted knees – which is definitely worse, and always a concern when battling "The Rock". I passed a few more runners and kept pushing just to the point that I felt like I probably wouldn't be able to keep it up until the end. At Dana's aid station inbound I came upon one Johnny Webb – who crewed and paced for me at Honey Badger. Remember his name folks, as he will be a guy taking home winners bling once he gains some experience and learns how to train – I am calling that right now. Johnny had gone out like a bolt of lightning challenging several seriously badass and MUCH MORE EXPERIENCED dudes– in his first official ultra – including eventual sub-5 hour winner Nathan Sicher. Adam Dearing, Aaron Norman, and

The 2014 Triple Crown Series is in the books and we have eight courageous trail running badasses who were successful in earning the coveted title of: "2014 Triple Crown Honoree" They are: *Zach Adams, Candi Paulin, Josh Watson, Carson Galloway, Joseph Galloway, Robert McPherson, Marcus Needham, and Mike Rives. Only one, Candi Paulin, was a 2-time honoree.*

Upon completion of our recent 50K at our Flagship event - FlatRock, a couple weeks ago - each runner who completed the challenge received special recognition, a personalized golden goblet, and was honored as a "FlatRock Triple Crown Series" Recipient. Want to know how YOU can qualify in 2015? Simply COMPLETE each of the three FlatRock events for 2015: WinterRock (12K or 25K), FlatRock 101K, and the FlatRock 50K.

To ensure your "Triple Crown" the first step is to register as soon as registrations are open – these races will fill to capacity very quickly. The first rounds of registration links will always be sent out as INVITATION ONLY to prior competitors. If you did not participate in the 2014 events, make sure to subscribe to Epic Ultras [email list](#) to ensure that you are immediately notified of the opening of general registration.

Congrats to the eight "FlatRockers" who were awarded the 2014 Triple Crown at the 20th annual FlatRock 25/50K on September 27th in Independence, KS!

# FlatRock Twenty

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Ron Micah LaPointe are a group of guys who have WON this race (or the 101K) before and I think 3 of 24 people who have EVER finished the 50k in fewer than 5 hours. My point is this; 2014 FlatRock was loaded with speedy guys ready to RACE, and Johnny decided to take them on. Unfortunately, after about 20 fast miles, he told me he had to throw in the towel due to some IT band issues. After a short, profanity laden pep talk, I convinced Johnny to finish even if he had to walk the remaining 9 miles. After he promised me that he wouldn't quit I popped my gel and hit the trail. At this point I was getting run down by Jeanne Bennett of Tulsa. We battled all the way to aid station #2 where after a brief chat with Harrison Steele and his video camera, I got around her again. Another crash in the rocks had my adrenaline pumping and my heart jumping so I backed off and "let" (yeah right!) her pass. A couple short minutes later, she was out of sight! When I came pumping in to Max and David's aid station they told me she was only 3 or 4 minutes ahead of me. I still felt good and decided to try and catch her rather than partake in my traditional shot of whisky with these two awesome knuckleheads. Blasting out of the final aid station, I fixed my eyes on the trail and told myself that it was faster to fall and get up than run slow and cautiously. I had already passed some guys that I know can run very strong ALL the way to the end and I did not want to get passed, even if I couldn't catch Jeanne. Shortly before I came down off the final steep descent leading to the highway, I heard air horns and plenty of cheering – I decided that I had probably been "chicked" again this year by Jeanne Bennett just like I was last year by Mindy Coolman. Little did I know, that not only was I "chicked" again, but for the second year in a row, the female that passed me in the last quarter of the race set a new female course record! Make no mistake; the women that come out to FlatRock are just as badass as (if not more) than any of the guys! Congrats Jeanne Bennett on an awesome race and new CR! I figured I would try to add to the time I cut off battling the ladies champ by hauling my ass down the pavement to the finish line as fast as I could. I turned into the finish area and trucked down the gravel until Mitch jumped in with me and we crossed the finish together, cheesing for the camera the whole time! Officially, my time was 5:52:28 – roughly an 11 minute FlatRock PR over last year. As always Eric, Polly, Warren and the rest of the Epic Bridage pulled off a perfectly executed event. The food and fun were off the charts. Grooming on the trail was the best I have ever seen it – barely a single eye-poker to be seen. These folks can definitely deliver on Epic Ultras mission of "co-creating experiences of a lifetime". This is not corporate bullshit, but a sincere desire to help make a memory that will last a lifetime – for everyone involved. No one does it better. Best race direction in the state of Kansas and very likely the entire Midwest! I can really look at this race and feel like I used all of my ultrarunning tools, experience, experience on this trail, and training as efficiently as I could have. No recollections of miles where I felt, looking back, that I should have done more. For that, I am really happy how my race on "The Rock" went on September 27th 2014. Of course, I feel like there are ALWAYS ways I can improve, but at this race, on this day, I did the best I could. That is a wonderful feeling.

There are so many inspiring stories out there that I wish I could tell them all. One that I NEED to share is my friend from Arkansas, Dave Renfro, who changed down to the 25k before race day– just to be SURE that chemotherapy wouldn't cost him a finish due to not meeting cutoff times. He never once considered not finishing – just not finishing in time. Outstanding and inspiring! I also want to say great job to my co-workers who finished the 50k this year – Jerime Carpenter, Daniel Droessler, Gene Dixon, and former co-worker Ryan Schwatken. Great job guys! It was been really cool watching you guys get where you are. Jerime's second FlatRock and a 1.5 hour PR, Gene's first FlatRock finish, and Ryan with a nearly 2 hour PR – and especially Dan who JUST STARTED running in January of THIS year and had never run longer than 16 miles before last Saturday and finished sub-9! Gutsy my friend! Another quick but very important side story – this was a reunion of sorts for the "Van Clan" that you might have read about in my Honey Badger blog post. It was great watching Dave Meeth kick some serious ass, Johnny Webb suffer and persevere to the finish, while being taken care of once again by recent (first time) 3rd place Mark Twain 100 mile finisher and all around stud Dave Box. Don't forget about the wonderful laughs and margaritas provided by our favorite hobbit Shay Caffey – who was only NOT racing because she just finished HER first 100 miler at Hawk a couple weeks ago. So many friends finished this race that I might as well just word it like this: Congrats to my friends <insert link to official race results here>! Congrats especially to my "Epic Family" Reina, Joell, Cory, Sean, and "Chocko" who turned the last half of the race into a pub crawl, hosing back 6 PBR "tall boys"

# FlatRock Twenty

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and a shot or two of Crown Royal on the way to the finish. Chocko may or may not have drank enough the night before to intoxicate a couple of Irishmen. Chock definitely sets the bar high in a work hard / play hard life – that’s one reason why we are bros! At least Chocko wasn’t in the a quarter mile from the starting line in the shitter when the race started like my new badass bearded buddy Shawn Walters! Sorry if I left anybody out. I really think the world of you all.

Next order of business: Awards. This was the second year for the Triple Crown, and this year, and I earned mine. A golden chalice that represents the successful efforts of finishing all three annual events held on FlatRock. The Crown was not in the cards for me last year as I was unable to attend WinterRock – so technically I was only 12K away. This was not the case in 2014 when myself, Candi Paulin, Josh Watson, Carson Galloway, Joseph Galloway, Robert McPherson, Marcus Needham and Mike Rives all took on WinterRock, FlatRock 101k, and FlatRock 50K. If you think this is an easy task, well, I challenge you to try it yourself next year. And by the way, Candi – who just so happens to be the love of my life – is the ONLY person who earned the FlatRock Triple Crown for the 2nd year in a row. Yeah, she is a total rock star!

FlatRock 20 was special in another way, as there was a knighting ceremony rewarding a runner who had amassed 10 CONSECUTIVE 50K finishes on FlatRock. Prior to this race only nine people had been knighted into the FlatRock “Hall of Pain” earning a retired bib number, cloth bib, and free lifetime entry into the race. This year marked Scott Hill’s 10th trip across the rock and he was knighted for his efforts – complete with paper crown, an EPIC oath, and a broadsword christening his shoulders. It was a totally unique and amazing sight to behold. Congrats Scott!

Last, but CERTAINLY NOT least, Mr. FlatRock himself – Dennis Haig- was awarded a wonderful plaque for completing his 20th FlatRock 50k race. That’s correct! Dennis has run the 50K at FlatRock EVERY SINGLE YEAR IT HAS EXISTED. Simply amazing, Dennis is a true representation of the rugged toughness and tenacity that characterizes FlatRock.

And finally, I want to thank everyone who stuck around to the very end and helped me ice the cake with by descending to one knee and asking Candi to be my bride. It was one of the most exciting things I have ever been involved in at an ultra, and I am pretty sure by her expression and the unintelligible garbled response that the answer was yes! To understand the full emotion of the moment, go to [www.epicultraphotos.com](http://www.epicultraphotos.com) and check Mile 90’s beautiful pictures of the special moment we shared with our trail running extended family. I feel pretty fortunate that Epic Ultras covered the cost of professional engagement photos – thanks for the added bonus Eric! You ALWAYS get your money’s worth and more at FlatRock.

Every year after FlatRock I find myself asking the question, “What could possibly happen next year to make this any MORE EPIC?” Of course I now fully believe that no matter what it is, SOMETHING will make FlatRock an even crazier and more epic event next year. A finish line wedding perhaps?

# EPIC ULTRAS



# Runaway

## Prairie Spirit Trail "Fall Classic" 50 Mile

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our routine of running and walking, to keep close to our pace. I know now as we are running that I find myself just in front of Mark as he deals with the legs that are "trashed".

We finally reach the turnaround and get some much needed fuel and water, some pictures and I meet up with Matt, my son and my wife Cathy. Mark's wife is there too. I tried to figure out how long it will take us to get back to Ottawa so my wife could meet us. I figured that it would be considerably slower than coming down so I said 4 ½ hours to 5 hours. Little did I know we would beat those times going back and Cathy would not be there when we arrive. We got everything we wanted and said good bye and we were off. We had not gone 50 feet and Mark was not with us. I thought oh shit, slow down Bob; you started out way to fast. But as we looked back Mark said, "Don't worry about me, you guys just go, I'll be ok, legs are slow now". First thing I thought was he will catch up and it will be all good, but as we continued to run I saw that it was not going to happen today. Just that short time at the aid station made my feet really hurt. I was thinking that if they keep up I will have to really slow down myself. But as we clicked off the miles the foot pain seemed to subside. I figure now that it must have just been from standing around and once I got going again it was all good. Matt was now wearing my Garmin and directing me when to run and walk, it was a little uncomfortable without Mark now. I had really wanted for Mark to get to know my son during this run but that was not in the cards today. And besides that I would not even be running this race if it were not for Mark. He was the one that encouraged me to do this, and it sucked, him not being with us. So now it is all in our hands to get this race done. The first thing Matt tells me is that he thought I would be wore out when I made it to the turn, and he was surprised to see that I was in decent shape and not complaining yet.

We kept doing the things that Mark had told me about running a race like this and the miles started to tick off. As we made it thru the aid stations we passed a couple people and that was kind of crazy. Matt had brought his little speaker for his I pod and we were now jamming to some music. I remember complaining about the music because he downloaded the music that was not from the original artist and it did not sound the same; Matt said, "To bad, it's cheaper that way". Matt started doing something that was driving me crazy and I told him to stop telling me how many miles we had run. I really just wanted to know certain things, and I would ask for information when I wanted it. Boy I sound like a real prick don't I? I do remember though when he told me we only had 13 miles to go and that was just a little half Mary... and I thought oh, that isn't anything, just 13 miles, we do that all day. We then made it to the last aid station and Justin was there. I knew we had this thing beat by now and felt pretty good. My legs were tight but not cramping up on me. I never sat down at any of the aid stations and I did not want to start now. Justin said hey Bob you guys want a shot? I thought well, he just ran a 100 miler and maybe it will be like a pain reliever and I said why not. Matt and I had the single shot of Bourbon and we are on our way once again. My son Matt was really enjoying being the watch keeper and directing me when to run I think, but got a little upset with me when I asked for longer walk breaks. I was now really looking forward to the end and I started to ask how many more miles? Matt then said about 2 more now; I said you mean I just ran 48 miles? He said yep. It was about that time that I looked up and could see the "Loves" tower. That single beacon in the horizon was all it took for me to say... "We got this thing beat Matt". I felt great now; we were going to run a little bit faster as I had some renewed strength. We made it under the I-35 Bridge and made the last turn up toward Celebration hall. I could hear the horns and cow bells ringing as we turned on to the last drive. With much pleasure I ran thru the finish line to be greeted by Eric and a handful of onlookers and supporters. I had told my wife we would be back later and she was still out in town but that was my fault and I don't blame her. We got some pictures taken had some water, chili, a cold beer, and waited for Mark to come in. I was worried about him since we had not seen him for so long. I did end up seeing his wife and she insured me that he was fine and was about to come in any minute. Not long after that we rang the bells for Mark and greeted him as he crossed the finish line. I remember him saying, "That sucked". I was so glad to see he made it.

At the end of the day I was glad that Mark had pushed me to step up to the 50 miler and running the first part with him and the last part with Matt must have been how it was meant to be. I will accept that fate and learn from all we endured that day. The distance to me was just right, to test my body and mind, hell maybe someday I'll tackle a 100 miler who knows. Thanks to everyone there, in whatever role you found yourself in, I enjoyed it all.

# EPIC ULTRAS