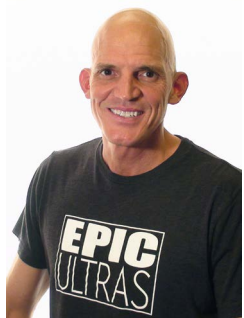


# EPIC ULTRAS NEWS



## Welcome From Epic Ultras Founder, Eric Steele



Welcome to the 6th issue of Epic Ultra News. We have given our regular contributor, Scott Demaree, the month off and are featuring Paul Rejda & Jono Becker, along with their outstanding fundraising efforts for Run To Uganda. Paul and Jono are using the Prairie Spirit Trail 100 as a platform for their last big fundraising push and Epic Ultras is honored to assist by making this our "charity of choice" and donating \$1,000 from race proceeds to Run To Uganda. Read all about Paul & Jono's Run To Uganda efforts in this month's issue. We are now 50 days away from our 2nd Annual Prairie Spirit Trail 100 & 50 Mile Ultras, scheduled for March 29th in Ottawa, Kansas, and are nearly at 85% capacity and only have 34 spots left. Prices increase on the 24th of this month IF we are not sold out by then. If it was your intention to participate and come hear David Horton speak, we highly

encourage you to take action immediately and get registered today. We are also "very excited" to announce that we have launched a new event, the Flint Hills Trail 40 Mile & Marathon, scheduled for May 31st on the beautiful Flint Hills Trail from Ottawa to Osawatomie, Kansas and back. Registration for Flint Hills Trail will open this weekend. Registration is "already opened" for our Inaugural Honey Badger 100 Mile Ultra Road Race, scheduled for July 12th in Kingman County, Kansas. If you have ever even thought about doing Badwater one day, or are just a "summer heat sicko" type of runner, you definitely won't want to miss out on this! And, of course, if highly technical single track is your thing, we have the toughest trail in the state for you to come put your "mettle to the test on" at the end of April in our 2nd Annual FlatRock 101K, scheduled for April 26th. Starting in March, Epic Ultras has four events in the next five months, ranging from 26.2 miles to 100, courses range from beginner friendly to hardcore "graduate level" stuff and we are confident ultra-noobs and seasoned veterans alike, will find one (or several) of these races to their liking. Come join us for our spring and summer line-up!

Be Epic,

Eric

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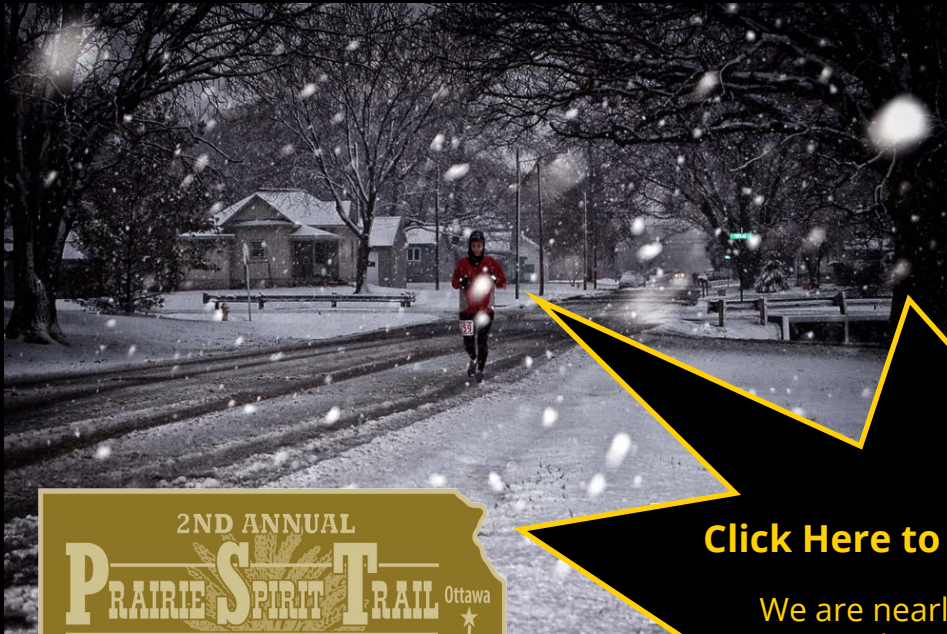
## Our Mission

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



**Click Here to Get Registered Now!**

We are nearly at 85% Capacity and  
Only Have 34 Spots Left.  
Prices Increase on February 24th.



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

## 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 Prairie 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**

**May 31, 2014**  
**Flint Hills Trail**  
**40M/Marathon**

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



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

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

All EPIC ULTRA events  
sponsored by:





# Newsletter Bios



## Paul Rejda - Newsletter Contributor

Before April of 2011 Paul Rejda absolutely despised running. However, all it took was a few minutes of running on the trails of Turkey Mountain for the first time and he became hooked on the sport. A few short weeks after his first time on Turkey he found himself being dragged on an 18 mile "fun run" in the wilderness of Arkansas which initiated a love for the atmosphere of the "low-key" trail racing scene. Since then he has run ten 50k's, four marathons, Flat Rock 101k, and 86 miles of the Inaugural Prairie Spirit Trail 100 mile race.

"For the most part I am not interested in my times. I just want to run in a manner that I feel like I receive something from it both physically and mentally. I like to test myself but I also like to be able to genuinely smile, and mean it, at any point of any race", Paul declares.

As of now Paul is taking a temporary hiatus from running more than once or twice a week due to the arrival of his first daughter. He says, "It is amazing how a child can change your whole perspective on life. I still have a ton of running goals to eventually tackle, but I have come to the realization that those aspirations can be put on hold for the near future."

## Jono Becker - Newsletter Contributor

Jono has always loved to set his sight on the next new and exciting challenge. Growing up he made an attempt at just about every sport but running. He never could have imagined running would provide the excitement that other activities gave him. He believed running was supposed to be the painful sacrifice necessary to stay in shape for other sports. When the high school track coach asked him to run track his senior year Jono actually said, "I am not running anywhere." Instead he decided to pole vault. This was his first introduction to the freaks who actually liked running. Almost 15 years later he woke up one day and said I want to run a marathon.



After the completion of his first marathon, Tulsa's Route 66, he thought that would end this running phase. Then he got on the trails and fell in love. He has since run several more marathons, ultras, and even a little pacing. "The adventure and challenge are a big draw, but it is the interesting passionate people that make me love this sport", Jono says.

Jono and his family are supporters of Project Hope Worldwide, a non-profit organization created to serve orphans throughout the world. His family supports a beautiful 7 year old girl named Mercy, who live in a PHW orphanage Calo Me Lare, in Lira Uganda. Jono is now attempting his first 100 mile race at Prairie Spirit in support of these orphans.



## 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!

## Mindy Coolman - Featured Runner

Mindy started running after gaining her freshman 15#. She did it simply to lose weight and get in shape for summer. Then one day as she was driving to work, she was stopped at an intersection to allow runners in the Lincoln Marathon to cruise by. Mindy sat in her car wondering why these people were running in the rain! The next day she read about it in the paper. That started Mindy training for her first marathon, which was also her first race ever, in 2004. Years later she was running approximately a marathon a month in different states when she decided to run the 20 miler at Psycho Wyco. She figured it would be easy, given her monthly marathons. However, Mindy could barely walk the next day because she was so sore. That started her on the road to running ultras. Now the only road marathon she run every year is Heart of America in Columbia Missouri, which was where it all started in 2004.



## 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!





# Run to Uganda

by Paul Rejda

The idea of Run to Uganda was born on the wilderness trails of Turkey Mountain. But it wasn't always what it has morphed into today. Originally we had a scheme to run from Tulsa to Oklahoma City just to see if we could do it. Then we decided if we were going to do something "crazy" like that we should use the opportunity to raise money to support charity. And what better charity than the orphanage started by Project Hope Worldwide (PHW) which we are both familiar with and know exactly where the money would be going and what it would be used for.

Jono's dad is a co-founder and a board member for PHW and both our families support the orphanage regularly so we are very familiar with how things are run. Project Hope Worldwide partners with the local government, churches, tribal leaders and nationals to address the most critical issues of its 80 orphans. Upon developing a national leadership team, they began to ensure a safe and nurturing home for orphans; a quality education; medical care; food/clothes/water; and spiritual development/mentorship. They are committed to caring for these children until they have completed a minimum of High School education. In addition, they extend these programs to meet the needs of the people in the surrounding areas of the orphanage.

One of the most important things for me when donating to a charity is knowing that most of the money is actually going to the cause that I am supporting and not to pay large salaries, advertising costs, overhead and everything else. PHW is committed to financial integrity, and intentionally keeps its overhead and administrative costs extremely low by working with a vast network of volunteers who donate their professional talents, experience and time. In addition, each year the necessary administrative costs including salaries, marketing, supplies, office space etc. is budgeted and private donations are secured to meet this amount! They call this the 100% model and it allows 100% of all money donated through Child Sponsorships to go directly to the needs of children and 100% of donations to meet critical needs that go directly to that need.

The financial goal Jono and I came up with was \$50,000 and when we met with the Vice President of PHW we were told \$50k is the approximate amount needed to build another school building. We knew a school would fit great with our plans so that is what we committed to. We spent time brainstorming over the next couple of months and our idea became revamped into the present structure of Run to Uganda. We put together a team of runners to log their weekly mileage to total the distance from Tulsa to the orphanage in Uganda, 8225 miles, all while helping raise money and awareness for PHW. It didn't take our team long to reach the original mileage goal so we decided to make it a round trip and log 16,450 miles.

Being friends with amazing runners made it easy to achieve the mileage but we soon found out that reaching the monetary goal would be much harder. Last year we used the inaugural Prairie Spirit 100 mile race to promote our fundraiser and even though the blizzard denied us a belt buckle we were still able to raise \$8,000. This year we are hoping to top that number but cannot do it without a great deal of help. Luckily Eric Steele stepped in to get the ball rolling. Epic Ultras donated a portion of the proceeds of the Inaugural FlatRock 101k to Run

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# Featured Runner - Mindy Coolman



## The Basics

**Date of Birth:** 10/15/1981  
**Place of Birth:** Omaha, Nebraska  
**Currently Residing:** Missouri Valley, IA  
**Marital Status:** Single  
**Job(s):** Team Lead, Clinical Dietitian  
**Children:** None  
**Height:** 5'8" **Weight:** 135 lbs.  
**Shoe Size:** 9  
**Best Physical Feature:** I'm told my smile  
**Worst Physical Feature:** My skinny arms  
**Religion:** Restoration  
**Political Affiliation:** Conservative  
**Educational Background:** Masters in nutrition from KU med  
**Personal Strength(s):** Strong mind, positive attitude.  
**Personal Weakness(es):** I don't have a stop button, till I'm forced.  
**Make Of Car You Drive:** Hyundai  
**Make Of Car You Would Like To Drive:** Contrary to what you would think, given my car, I like American muscle. My brother's '67 mustang did it for me.  
**Pets:** 2 dogs (they are my world!), 3 horses

## Spare Time

**Book Currently Reading:** Touch and Go by Lisa Gardner  
**Hobbies:**  
Riding horses, camping, spending time with family, friends, and my dogs, and of course running  
**Collections:**  
Race medals, plaques, etc. I still have every race bib I've ever worn!

## Favorites

**Author:** Don't have one  
**Book:** Murder mystery/cop type of books. I've never read a book twice.  
**Non-running Magazine:** Today's Dietitian. I read it cover to cover every month  
**Movie:** Elf  
**TV Show:** Friends  
**Actor/Actress:** Steve Carrel, Emma Stone  
**Favorite Music:** I listen to everything but techno, hard rock, and hard rap. Depends on my mood!  
**Favorite Musical Performer:** Don't have one  
**Favorite Artist:** Don't have one  
**Spectator Sport:** Football  
**Favorite Game:** Does running count? I choose running.  
**Favorite Vacation Destination:** Somewhere with mountains with a cabin or campsite, and good friends.  
**Favorite Time Of Day:** I love mornings, as anyone who's been around me in the morning knows, all too well.  
**Favorite Item Of Clothing:** A pair of old sweats. I've had them an embarrassing amount of years (well over a decade), but refuse to give them up!  
**Most Prized Possession:** My dogs!  
**Non-Running Leisure Activity:** Riding horses  
**Running Shoe:** New Balance 110's, Brook's Pure Grit.  
**Food/Drink During An Ultra:** Gels and Nuun tablets. I don't like to take the time to actually eat.  
**Food/Drink Before An Ultra:** The night before – always Chipotle. Race morning, usually a Luna bar or similar, banana, and water.  
**Food/Drink After An Ultra:** Chocolate milk and a cheeseburger.  
**Famous Quote:** "In the end, it's not the years in your life that count, but the life in the years" – Abraham Lincoln  
**Favorite Crew Person(s):** Sarah Norman  
**Favorite Pacer:** Aaron Norman  
**Favorite Place To Run:** Landahl Park in Blue Springs. Mostly for the memories made with some of my closest friends.  
**Favorite Type Of Running Surface:** Dirt trails with some technical spots for the added challenge.

## Dislikes / Fears

**Favorite Subject in School:** Math. I love numbers.  
**Least Liked Subject:** Composition. Boring.  
**Least Liked Household Chore:** All of them! Let me be outside!  
**Pet Peeve:** Gum smackers  
**Greatest Fear:** Loss of loved ones.



# FlatRock 101

By Epic Ultras Blogger Zach Adams

## Ultrarunning Table Talk Tuesdays

@ Connie's Mexico Cafe



FlatRock. This course has been deceiving trail runners for almost 20 years. After all, it's KANSAS. KANSAS is flat. How bad can it be? Go ahead, underestimate this trail – then go home and cry yourself to sleep. Nineteen Septembers in a row, runners have come to the Elk River Hiking Trail to tackle the FlatRock 50K trail ultra. This is the oldest ultra in the state, and it is pretty easy to make the argument that it is the BEST. It is as brutal as it is beautiful, as rugged as it is relaxing, as treacherous as it is tantalizing. An incredible, highly technical trail full of short steep climbs, roots and rocks that seemingly TRY to trip you, and buzzards circling overhead - FlatRock is hard – and strangely addictive. The “Hall of Pain” consists of runners who have run it 10 or more times in a row. So, what would make more sense than running this 50K? Why not running it TWICE? Thus, the FlatRock 101K was born.

Last April, after weeks of rain, about 40 brave souls set out to crack the rock. One hundred and one kilometers in 24 hours should be a walk in the park (or hike in the woods) in Kansas right? The addition of sticky, ankle deep mud, water crossings and incessant rain turned the course into Satan's Slip n' Slide. Trail conditions were more horrendous than normal. The runners simultaneously loved and loathed it. The final finisher came across minutes before the cutoff tired, covered in mud, but not broken. The raucous Epic Ultras finish line brought a welcomed end to runner's suffering and, as always, made each feel like a champion. If you want to read all about my experience at the FlatRock 101K last year, check out the blog archived at <http://epicultras.com/fr101kreport/>. Also, there is a sweet video of FlatRock at <http://flatrock101.com/>.

If you are one of the lucky ones who managed to get into the FlatRock 50K before it sold out, and you showed up and braved the weather for WinterRock, you are only 101 kilometers worth of steps away from earning the FlatRock Triple Crown Award. This prestigious Golden Goblet is only given to those brave (or crazy) enough to sign up and finish the WinterRock 25 or 12K in January, the FlatRock 101K in April, and the FlatRock 50K in September.

If you think you are some kind of trail ultrarunner badass, you need to bring all you got to the 2nd annual FlatRock 101K on April 26th 2014 and put your theory to the test. If you want to see what you are really made of and push yourself to your absolute physical ultrarunning limits, you need to be there. If you are ready to become a true Midwest trail ultrarunner, [get registered now](#). FlatRock might just chew you up, spit you out, step on your face, and THEN send you home crying to your mama. IF you are too scared, that is understandable. I heard there are a few good half marathons that day...maybe you should check into those.

For runners living in the Greater Wichita Area, starting this month on February 18th, and held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month thereafter, Eric Steele will be facilitating a “low key” type of round table discussion each month, from 5:30-7:30 p.m., exploring specific disciplines within our sport where anyone present is welcome to jump in and discuss what has worked for them and what hasn't. After Eric's successful Ultrarunning 101 presentation at Connie's a couple of weeks ago, and feedback from several attendees, proprietor and ultrarunner Adele Jordan, has graciously agreed to make their back room available to meet monthly, eat some great Mexican food, drink a couple of beers and TALK ultrarunning with other runners! Adele is also extending a 10% discount on all food and beverages.

### Next Meeting

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 18th

### Location

Connie's Mexico Cafe  
2227 N. Broadway  
Wichita, KS

**BE EPIC**



# Run to Uganda

...continued from page 4



to Uganda and Eric has also announced that they will be donating a very generous \$1,000 of the proceeds of the 2nd annual Prairie Spirit Races to help us build the school. Anyone who wants to help us raise the final \$20,000 of our goal is invited to do so. We have a very easy way for you to set up your own page where people can find out what you are doing and sponsor you in your running endeavors. It can literally be set up in 5 minutes, just ask Bill Ford. Many of your friends, family and co-workers think you are crazy for attempting a 25k, 50k, 50 or 100 mile race and it doesn't take much to get them to sponsor your effort for a good cause. If that is not your cup of tea there is also a direct link to donate directly to Project Hope Worldwide through RtU on [www.ProjectHopeWorldwide.org](http://www.ProjectHopeWorldwide.org).

We appreciate any and all help. Any questions can be directed to [paulrejda@yahoo.com](mailto:paulrejda@yahoo.com) or [www.Facebook.com/RunToUganda](https://www.facebook.com/RunToUganda) and more info can be found at [www.RunToUganda.com](http://www.RunToUganda.com). Stop by Run to Uganda's aid station at the PST 100 & 50 ultras to say hi and if you want we can put you to work.

Paul Rejda & Jono Becker

## Featured Runner

...continued from page 5

### Acheivements / Goals / Memories

#### **Personal Hero:**

My dad. He's my rock and the best man I know.

#### **Personal Philosophy:**

Life is what you make. If you don't like your situation, change it. If you want more out of life, work harder. Hard times come and go; it's your attitude about it that matters. Most importantly, smile as you go as it's the best thing you can do for yourself and others.

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

Get stronger and faster at shorter ultras (50k's, 50 milers)

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

Apply my short term goal to longer distances (100k's, 100 milers)

**Most Proud Achievement:** Completing my education with near nil financial assistance from others.

#### **Happiest Memory:**

Just one? Probably May 24th, 2013. Closed a chapter in my life that was the hardest thing I've ever done and returned to the Midwest.

**Secret Ambition/Fantasy:** I think I'll keep it just that, a secret. For now.

#### **Greatest Adventure:**

Probably one of several race excursions with my friends Aaron, Sarah, and Rick.

### Ultra Stuff

**# Years Running Ultras:** 3 **# Ultras Finished:** 16

**Best Ultra Performance(s):** Free State 100k 2012, FlatRock 50k 2013, Ozark Trail 100, 2013 (3 wins, 2 course records)

**Most Memorable Ultra:** Ozark Trail 100. Going into it I secretly wanted to sub 24 hours, but didn't think it would be possible on such terrain. With the help of my crew and pacer, and a lot of determination, I smashed my personal goal with a time of 23:01.

**Typical Training Week(s) Before A Major Race:** Taper madness. I usually cut about 10 miles per week, starting 3 weeks out. Race week I keep my runs short, but high quality for the mental boost.

**Injuries:** Fractured my distal tibia at the Lake Tahoe Super Triple in 2011. 124.6 miles on concrete in 2.5 days was too much. Never again.

**Ultrarunning Idol:** Kaci Lickteig. Not just for her running talent, but also the person she is.

**Why Do You Run Ultras:** It satisfies everything I desire to achieve when it comes to running. It's endless in the challenges it presents to the body, as there are always aspects to improve upon.

**Advice For Other Ultrarunners:** Run your own race for your own reasons. Train accordingly. Don't compare yourself to other, more experienced Ultrarunners