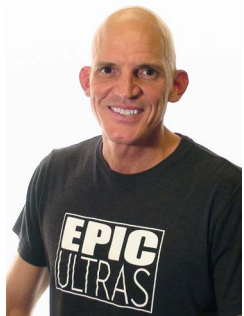


EPIC ULTRAS NEWS



Welcome From Epic Ultras Founder, Eric Steele



Welcome to the 19th issue of Epic Ultra News! Aside from preparations for our 3rd Annual "sold out" Prairie Spirit Trail 100 & 50 Mile Ultra Races, scheduled for the end of this month, it's been a really exciting time as we recently formed an affiliate partnership with Ryan Knapp and his coaching company, Miles to Go Endurance (MTGE). If you are looking for coaching services in the future, MTGE is now our official "go-to" company. Additionally, In-House Blogger and ultrarunner, Zach Adams and I have been discussing doing some type of ultrarunning educational program for noobs and those looking to "make the leap" into ultras for several months now and decided it was time to "jump in" ourselves. We are very honored to be presenting an interactive webinar presentation this Wednesday, March 4th at 7 pm. There is still time to get registered...and the cost is ZERO, with full details below in this newsletter! Both our coaching partnership with MTGE and our webinar presentation is in response to a

significant number of our newsletter readers and participants at our events continuing to send us suggestions/feedback requesting more education...at ALL levels...and we certainly feel confident both of these initiatives will synergistically work together very well to help fill this demand. I am also really stoked to announce that in less than two months since opening registration up for our Inaugural Kansas Rails-to-Trails Fall Ultra Extravaganza, scheduled for October 24th 2015, in Ottawa (KS), we have received 59 entries from 13 different states and Washington DC, with 25 of these entries being into our new Fall 100 Miler. Even though it's still quite a way out, with distances of 50K, 40 Miles, 50 Miles and 100 Miles, there is certainly a "choice distance" for runners of all ability levels...not to even mention the "absolutely incredible" plethora of fall foilage runners are immersed in on two of Kansas' Premier Rails-to-Trails. Make your plans now to be a part of what's bound to be the biggest Kansas' Ultra Event of year. In this month's issue of EU News, we are featuring our other (one of just two) 2014 Kansas Grand Slam Finisher - Kansas ultrarunning legend, William Sprouse. Plus, we decided to try something new this month and run my RD report from last year's Prairie Spirit Trail 100/50 Mile Ultras, to possibly whet the appetite of all those who will be joining us and maybe entice a few more...and, our In-House Epic Ultras Blogger, Zach Adams, zeros in on what it takes to be an outstanding crew person in our beloved sport. 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



3rd Annual FlatRock 101K
101K Trail Ultra Race
April 25, 2015 / Independence, KS

Take advantage of a \$20 discount now!
Click Here To Register Using The
Discount Code Below Good Through
Sunday, March 8th, 2015!

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

FlatRock 101K

FlatRock. This course has been deceiving trail runners for 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. Twenty Septembers in a row, runners have come to the Elk City Hiking Trail to tackle the FlatRock 50k/25K trail ultra. This is the oldest trail 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. A beautiful, 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.

If you think you are some kind of trail ultrarunner badass, you need to bring all you got to the 3rd Annual FlatRock 101K on April 25th 2015 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 ultrarunning badass, sign up. 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. We heard there are a few good half marathons that day...maybe you should check into those!

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

April 25, 2015
FlatRock 101
101K

May 30, 2015
Flint Hills Trail
40M/Marathon

July 11, 2015
Honey Badger
100M

Sept 26, 2015
FlatRock
50K/25K
SOLD OUT

October 24, 2015
Ultra Extravaganza
100M/50M/40M/50K

January 2, 2016
WinterRock
25K/12K

All EPIC ULTRA events
sponsored by:



Newsletter Bios



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!



Will Sprouse - Featured Runner

In his own words.

I started running in 2005 when my marathon-running dad passed away from cancer. I began running to lose weight at 308 lbs. In 2011, I was in a motorcycle wreck with many injuries and many broken bones, so I switched to ultras due to speed loss from injuries. Ran my 1st 100 miler at Rocky Raccoon in 2012. So far, I have collected 21 buckles and 1 kettle.



BECOMING EPIC! March 4th at 7 pm (CST)

with Eric Steele & Zach Adams. A Special Interactive Webinar Presentation!

Are you yearning to take your endurance running to the next level? What type of physical training, mental fortitude and nutritional intake is required for one to survive, and ultimately finish the NEXT BIG RACE – be it 50K, 50 miles or even 100 miles? If you have been asking yourself any of the above questions and have a burning desire to get them answered and possibly take your running game to the next level, you won't want to miss out on this special webinar scheduled for March 4th at 7 pm (CST).

Here is your opportunity to hear firsthand the basics of what, why, when, where, and how you can become an ultrarunner or step up your "ultrarunning game". Join veteran ultrarunners Eric Steele and Zach Adams in an online interactive presentation and discussion of exactly what it takes for the aspiring ultrarunner, or total ultra-noob, to take it to the next level...AND, it's totally FREE! Spots are limited, so get registered now by clicking below if you don't want to miss out on this special presentation.

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.

Thank You!



2014 Prairie Spirit Trail 100 & 50 Mile Ultra Races - RD Report

By Eric Steele

Another Epic Ultras Event, another SMASHING success! Immediately after every Epic Ultras Event, I ask myself - how will we EVER top this? Yet, we do! The answer lies, of course, in the people who participate. The successful execution of events of this magnitude is totally dependent upon the individuals participating...ALL of them, competitors, staff and crew (friends & family). Our competitors' desire, combined with Epic Ultras' total commitment to supporting and helping facilitate these desires, truly does result in the co-creation of EPIC ULTRARUNNING EXPERIENCES OF A LIFETIME...and that is exactly what it was in Ottawa, Kansas a little less than two weeks ago on the last weekend of March.

The usual stress and hectic nature of the last few days before spearheading a big ultra had me and the Epic Ultras Bridge working overtime to make sure every detail was as close to perfect before Saturday morning. Taking on the feeding of nearly 250 people rather than hiring a caterer added a monumental task. This task was spearheaded superbly by Epic Ultras operational guru, and longtime friend, Mr. Warren Bushey. Not only did he and the crew help put together all of the logistics to support nearly 200 runners on a course spanning more than 50 miles and 30 hours, they managed to prepare and set up dinner, serve, then clean up...THE NIGHT BEFORE. Simply amazing! Outstanding effort by Warren and all of "The Epic Ultras Brigade!"

Next order of business: Dr. David Horton. The "Dean of Ultrarunning" himself and our honorary guest speaker gave a wonderful presentation that contained numerous invaluable tips for those taking on the course the following morning. Sharing some of the most important "Lessons Learned in More than 100,000 Miles of Running", Dr. Horton gave many of our runners additional tools they could use in covering a distance of 50 or 100 miles. His friendly and outgoing nature along with his willingness to share his experiences made an amazing presentation even better! David truly did give Prairie Spirit 50 and 100 mile runners a VERY STRONG dose of inspiration to go out there the next day and BE EPIC!

Race morning started early, as it always does, and everything was ready as the first runners started to arrive. Aid stations were packed up and delivered and set up, drop bags were loaded to be delivered, and runners got checked in and made final preparations. Promptly at 6:00 am nearly 98 runners set out to earn a 100 mile brass buckle in the shape of the state of Kansas. Two hours later a pack of 77 50-milers set out to achieve their goal. The 2nd Annual Prairie Spirit Trail 100 & 50 Mile Ultra Races were underway.

A calm cool morning welcomed 100 milers and set many off to the races. Others took out slow and steady, knowing the energy saved would pay dividends in the late stages. I heard many stories unfold throughout the day of runners have insanely fast races early on and bonking once the heat of the day arrived. Other runners locked in a slow and easy pace for the entire duration. A handful of ultra-speedsters raced off, never letting up - 27 runners finished in under 24 hours, 3 of which finished under 19 hours, with John Cash of Missouri taking Male Honors and winning overall, while setting a new course record of 15:10:13. WOW! Equally as impressive was Tralaine Benefiel's (from Wichita, Kansas) Female Victory in 21:29:04, as this was her VERY first 100 mile attempt!

At the other end of the spectrum, 12 runners persevered through the difficulty and pain of running 100 miles using more than 28 hours but finishing before the 30 hour course limit. Staying awake for 30 hours is difficult enough. Relentless forward progress for 30 hours is an outright display of intestinal fortitude that absolutely defines ultrarunners at their core level. It was certainly a totally EPIC effort by the top finishers, the rabidly determined "pit bulls" (according to Dave Horton) who finished just in time, and every single runner in between! Sixty-nine runners earned a beautiful Prairie Spirit Trail 100 Mile buckle by the time the clock ticked noon on Sunday.

At 8:00 am, two hours after the mob of raucous 100 mile runners were unleashed on the Prairie Spirit Trail, the race officially started for the 50 milers. It was obvious by the 50 mile race start that my memos to a Higher Office, prayers and meditations, along with my voodoo chicken bones, mojo manipulation, and various other "quantum deals" I had been brokering with Higher Powers in the preceding weeks had worked...it was going to undoubtedly be a beautiful day to run! The sun and warm temps helped some runners to seemingly fly over the course, while unfortunately giving a few others problems with dehydration, nausea, and cramping. However, compared to last year's "blizzard of the century" at our Inaugural Event, I am confident in stating that I think everyone participating was primarily thankful for the beautiful day we were fortunate enough to experience.

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Featured Runner - Will Sprouse

The Basics

Date of Birth: 04/14/69
Place of Birth: Germany (dad was in the Army).
Currently Residing: Enterprise, KS
Marital Status: Married (25 years).
Job(s): Owner/operator of Tossed n Sauced Pizza-Abilene and Chapman, KS.
Children: Cy, 25, Ryan 22, Trey 14
Height: 5'11"
Weight: 190
Shoe Size: 11.5
Religion: Christian
Educational Background: Aviation/Restaurant Management
Personal Strength(s): Mechanical, Pilot, Restaurant Management
Make Of Car You Drive: Various
Make Of Car You Would Like To Drive: Don't care as long as it gets me there and back.
Pets: Chihuahua, Zoey

Favorites

Favorite Author: Dean Karnazes
Favorite Book: Ultra Marathon Man
Favorite Non-running Magazine: AOPA (Pilots' Magazine)
Favorite Movie: Revenge of the Sith
Favorite TV Show: Game of Thrones
Favorite Actor/Actress: Billy Bob Thornton
Favorite Music: Rock
Favorite Musical Performer: Vince Neil
Favorite Artist: Alice in Chains
Favorite Spectator Sport: Football
Favorite Subject in School: Geography
Favorite Game: Football
Favorite Vacation Destination: Anywhere different.
Favorite Time Of Day: Running time!
Favorite Item Of Clothing: Shoes
Favorite Non-Running Leisure Activity: Flying
Favorite Running Shoe: Salomon Trail Shoe Sense Line
Food/Drink During An Ultra: Beer
Favorite Food/Drink Before An Ultra: Coffee
Food/Drink After An Ultra: Beer and beer.
Favorite Crew Person(s): Carrie Sprouse(wife)
Favorite Pacer: Darin Schneidewind and Sherrie Klover
Favorite Place To Run: Colorado
Favorite Type Of Running Surface: Technical trails
Favorite Famous Quote: "I never try anything, I just do it"

Dislikes / Fears

Least Liked Subject: Politics
Least Liked Household Chore: Anything that has to do with a sewer line.
Pet Peeve: Theft
Greatest Fear: Deep water

Ultra Stuff

Years Running Ultras: 4
Ultras Finished: 42
Best Ultra Performance(s): 2014 Honey Badger 100 Mile
Most Memorable Ultra: 2013 Prairie Spirit Trail 100 Mile
Typical Training Week(s) Before A Major Race: Year round.
Injuries: Many-soleus right now-achilles, hamstring, stress fractures.
Ultrarunning Idol: Killian Jornet
Why Do You Run Ultras: To keep in memory and honor my late dad and others who have cancer.
Advice For Other Ultrarunners: Don't give up.

Achievements / Goals / Memories

Personal Hero: Many-Dean Karnazes
Personal Philosophy: Be ready for anything.
Short-Term Goal: To learn the 100 mile race.
Long-Term Goal: To run ultras as long as I can.
Most Prized Possession: My airplane.
Most Proud Achievement: 2014 Kansas Grand Slam
Happiest Memory: Many, but mainly time with my family.
Secret Ambition/Fantasy: To win a 100 mile race.
Greatest Adventure: Running Pikes Peak in a blizzard.

Spare Time

Hobbies: Flying and belt buckle collecting.
Collections: Belt buckles



Crewing Basics: Not All Fun and Games!

By Epic Ultras Blogger Zach Adams

If you are not a runner yourself but have ever crewed for a runner you probably have no trouble remembering your first time. It is pretty unforgettable. You probably felt like a fish out of water. At the very least, you probably wish you had been told that “cheering someone to the finish and re-filling a water bottle” would likely turn into “rubbing a sore buttcheek, stuffing nasty-ass, bloody socks into your pocket, and cleaning up what looks like the remnants of a grizzly bear attack every few hours” – all while potentially being treated “gruffly”. You probably wish you had a manual. I gotcha’ back, Jack!

Here are my 5 tips to crewing for an ultra 50 miles or longer. Enjoy!

- 1.** Make a plan. Have yourself a little “parlay” with your runner and find out what they want, like, and need. From food to gear choices, know in advance how they race. Ask about weaknesses and strengths and help them maximize and mitigate both accordingly. Don’t go in blind and try to figure it out as you go! You could end up being more of a hindrance than a helper.
- 2.** Have as much fun before the race with your runner as possible. When it comes time to get ready to run, shit gets real. Most ultrarunners I know take it fairly seriously and are pretty intense – as early as the night before. Ask what you can do to help, but for the most part, allow them to do their own thing. Make yourself available to help out with whatever asked – but let them run the show.
- 3.** Move fast, think fast, act fast. Do not make your runner wait on YOU. Know exactly where their gear is, where their favorite drinks are, and what food choices are readily available at a seconds notice. Anticipate what they might need and get it ready even if they may not end up needing it. Make suggestions until something sounds good. You might have tons of potentially helpful stuff available that your runner more than likely has forgotten about. Remind her. Always grab more than you need. Ask them on the way out what they might need NEXT time.
- 4.** Be positive! Your runner has likely has been waiting a while to see you and needs a good pick me up. Yell! Scream! Holler! Smile! Hug! Be obnoxiously loud to the point that other crews are annoyed by you. I am speaking from experience when I tell you, this boost is better than any can of Red Bull when you are at a low point. You can rest later... bust your ass to show your runner how excited and proud you are of them.
- 5.** Have an ace-in-the hole. Call a loved one at the lowest point. Break out a surprise gift. Get homemade cards from the family saying “Stay Strong Daddy!” Have something ready for that spot where continuing is almost impossible. Piss them off. Tell them they have worked too hard to quit. Be creative – what your “ace” is will vary dependant on the runner, but find something!

I am not going to include this as a tip – but I think it is important to mention – cut your runner some slack! Don’t get all butt-hurt if they snap at you. Don’t quit on them or stop being positive and supportive because they cussed about the water being too hot or the soup too cold. They are doing something VERY DIFFICULT and don’t mean to take it out on you. Be there as a punching bag or a shoulder to cry on if that is what they need. Ultimately the BEST way to learn how to be a good crewmember is to get FIRST HAND EXPERIENCE – so get out there and help someone earn that finish!

Got Something to Say?

Got a way with words? If you write or blog about topics related to ultrarunning; training, racing, philosophy, and /or humor AND you would like to share them with a group who can most definitely relate to your perspective– send it to us! Obviously we don’t have the space to publish every submission in the Epic Ultras Newsletter, but we would love to get our hands on a few good articles and put them out for the benefit and entertainment of all of our readers. If your submission is selected to be published in our new forthcoming section “Ultra Wordslingers” you will receive a \$25 coupon good toward the registration of your choice of a non-sold out Epic Ultras event. Submit your original, mostly grammatically correct and entertaining articles, blogs, and funny ultrarunning related stories (including a 1-3 sentence bio) to:

zach@epicultras.com

2014 Prairie Spirit Trail 100 & 50 Mile Ultra Races - RD Report

...continued from page 4

The 50 mile race shook out much in the same way as the 100 did. The top runners raced to some ridiculously fast times, including a winning time of 6:12:36 (and a spring 50 Mile course record) by Ben Bartley from Indiana, with the female victory going to Kristen Weigand from Missouri, in a time of 8:12:28. Other runners, many attempting and completing a 50-miler for the first time, kept grinding along and getting to the finish all the way through nearly 24 hours! The effort and exertion levels were impressive to witness as runners dug deep to find the "heavy mettle" they were made of and get across the finish line. All said and done, 74 runners earned or reaffirmed the coveted title of "ultrarunner" and were awarded a Prairie Spirit Trail 50 Mile buckle.

All runners (50 and 100 milers) were expertly cared for, FAR above the call of duty, at EACH of the staffed aid stations throughout the day and night. An EPIC THANK YOU to all runners, pacers, crew, family and friends who came through and did their part in helping us co-create this "ultrarunning experience of a lifetime" for ALL involved...it certainly was another very memorable and "mostepic" adventure! Every finisher from first to last showed that they had what it takes to BE EPIC! I also want to, once again, express my DEEPEST GRATITUDE to the Epic Ultras Brigade & PST Staff, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, and, of course, our old friend, David Horton. Thanks to EVERYONE who helped make this event so memorable!

In closing, I have been sincerely humbled by the absolutely OVERWHELMING amount of feedback I/Epic Ultras have received since our event just a little less than two weeks ago! It's been truly remarkable and very touching to have a "small glimpse" into many of your collective journey(s) through your FB posts, personal messages/thank you's, blogs/race reports and photos. I will be attempting to respond to each personal post and message I have received, however, this will be an ongoing effort for the next several weeks and I just wanted to let you know if I miss a few, it's certainly not on purpose, as I am VERY GRATEFUL for all of the positive feedback and kudos I have received from many of you in the past 10 days. Again, thank you SO much to ALL (competitors, staff, friends & family) who participated in our Epic Ultras Event, I sincerely look forward to watching each of your personal ultrarunning journeys continue to unfold and hope to see many of you at future Epic Ultras Events!

The All New Epic Ultras Mobile App



Be sure to check out the ALL NEW Epic Ultras mobile app on the iTunes Store and Google Play store! You can easily access race information, Epic Ultras social media sites, as well as special discounts and a TRULY UNIQUE Customer Loyalty Program. For each Epic Ultras event you run, you will get your virtual card "digitally punched" eventually earning yourself a totally FREE entry into ANY Epic Ultras event. Learn more today by downloading the app to your IOS or Android smartphone or tablet!

When downloading our app PLEASE REMEMBER to ALLOW "push notifications" along with "geo-locating" if you want to receive ALL of our special offers and important messages we send to you. Download our new mobile app now to take full advantage of substantial current and future savings into our events!

EPIC ULTRAS