

Toughen Up, *continued*

I spoke with fellow lawyer and local athlete, Mandy Miller, who holds a Ph.D. in psychology. She points out several important factors to developing the right mind-set to race well. She said that she doesn't have "natural ability" (which I've heard other ultra-runners say about themselves, but am not sure I agree) so she has to develop training techniques that allow her to compete to the best of her ability. In fact, her first ultra-race was a seven day run through the Sahara desert. She states that "people grossly underestimate the need for proper training" and further points out that most runners need to "get out of their comfort zone during training" so that they can acclimate to the conditions that they will be facing in their particular race. I've written past articles on this very subject and can't stress this enough. Most races do not occur in darkness or temperatures that are ideal. Run in the sunshine, heat, rain and wind when you are able. To me, nothing builds more mental toughness than completing a goal while dealing with unpleasant elements. That doesn't mean that every run has to be unpleasant, but you should schedule several race simulations ahead of whatever race you are doing to properly prepare. It will make you better prepared and tougher the day of the race.

Mandy stressed the need for "routine building" as it becomes your "default setting". Another ultra-runner I know and respect, Andrei Nana, who just recently won the Peanut Island 24 race (completing well over 100 miles), also describes himself as not being naturally gifted as a runner. His training is legendary and almost seems tougher than his actual races. For instance, Andrei will routinely pull a giant truck tire up and over the bridges of Key Biscayne for hours and hours at a time, sometimes during the middle of the night and sometimes during the heat of the day. Such extreme training techniques aren't necessary for most, but it obviously prepares Andrei well for his particular goals in ultra-running and his desire to keep improving in his sport.



Another step towards building the mental toughness needed to do well in races, is to break away from the follower mentality of training. I've preached the virtue of having training partners as a motivation tool to get out the door and train. That said, it's ultimately an individual sport and it's up to the individual to get out there and do what's necessary to improve. Be flexible, but stick to your training goals and develop a routine that will serve to motivate you to keep at it, even when you work late, are a little under the weather, or any of the other host of real-life interruptions.

Lastly, don't make running more complicated than it is. Bill Rodgers did just fine without fancy satellite watches, gels and protein drinks, expensive clothing and equipment and all of the other great items we are fortunate to have at our disposal and that do assist in training and racing. He got by on flat coke, a crappy pair of sneakers and a t-shirt. What he did have was mental toughness, and that was enough to get him through.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for future topics or local runners of interest, please contact me at spencerrunner@gmail.com or message me on Facebook.

Join us for a Group Run with your Friends!



So many fun workouts to choose from all across Broward county!

**Sunday Morning – Hollywood Beach Broadwalk
with the Hollywood Run Club, A-1-A & Garfield
Street at Charnow Park. 7:00AM start. All paces,
Runners & Walkers.**

Sunday Morning – Vista View Park, Davie
On Boy Scout Road (142nd Ave.) just North of Orange
Drive. 7:00AM start. All paces. Up to 13 miles or as
many as you'd like. Run the 1.25 mile trail loop with
hills. A great workout! Park by Shelter #1.

**Tuesday Evening – Hollywood Beach Broadwalk
with the Hollywood Run Club, A-1-A & Garfield
Street at Charnow Park. 7:00PM start. All paces,
Runners & Walkers.**

Wednesday Evenings – Robbins Park, Davie
Just North of Orange Drive on Hiatus Road
6:00 PM – Meet by the bathrooms
All paces, 4, 5, or 6 miles. Stay after for the stretch

Thursday Evenings - 17th Street Causeway
Runner's Depot Run Club – Ft Lauderdale
6:30 PM - Starts at Runner's Depot - Ft. Lauderdale
1489 SE 17 St. Causeway, Southport Center
All paces, 4-6 miles. Refreshments & raffles!

Thursday Evenings – Coral Springs-Parkland
Runner's Depot Run Club – Coral Springs
Starts at Runner's Depot-Coral Springs
5679 Coral Ridge Drive (954) 575-2090
All paces, 3-5 miles. Refreshments & raffles!

Thursday Evenings - Weston
Runner's Depot Run Club – Weston
6:30 PM - Starts at Runner's Depot – Weston
1378 Weston Road, Country Isles Plaza
All paces, 4 miles. Refreshments & raffles!

Saturday Mornings – Weston Town Center
6:00 AM. 5-10 Miles, All Paces, 2 Water Stops

Saturday Mornings – Holiday Park, Ft Lauderdale
6:30 AM. 6-10 Miles, All Paces. Park by the gym on
the south side of the park

Runners and walkers - All paces Welcome!