Real cost behind running marathon

Training for final event takes more than just jogging every day

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**M**arathoners will spend months of training preparing their bodies to run for more than two hours nonstop. People more commonly run 5ks, which is only3.1 miles, while marathon runners push their bodies to the limit and run 26.2 miles.

“The Hanson Method” is a book that focuses on cumulative fatigue and relatively low mileage from 12 miles a day or more. The goal of cumulative fatigue is to provide a slow buildup of fatigue over the weeks of consistent training.

Created by Keith and Kevin Hanson, the Hanson method is used more for recreational runners than professionals. It’s effective for runners who don’t have the time or the ability to put in miles week after week.

The longest run in Hanson’s method is 16 miles. According to “Runnersworld,” it takes the body 10 days for the benefits of a workout to appear, and that’s why many people quit after the first week. The method stresses the last 16 miles of the marathon more than the first 10 miles. Halfway through the 18-week span, runners will start to have more consistent workouts, running speed workouts on Tuesdays and tempos on Thursdays. Other days, will either be long slow runs or cross training.

Cross Country Coach Casey Sumner has run two marathons and is training for her third. Her goal is to qualify for the Boston Marathon in April. Not only does Sumner run, but she also trains by swimming and attending spin classes. Sumner follows the Hanson Marathon Method discussed earlier.

“I run 50-60 miles a week. I train six days a week with running and two to three days of cross training,” Sumner said. “My motivation to run comes from wanting to do something you can improve on each race that you run.”

A runner not only trains their body, but must have a healthy diet to replace all the energy lost during each day of training. Carbohydrate loading is a good way to store carbs. “Runnersworld” editor Liz Applegate calls carbohydrates the “runners’ fuel.” Before carbohydrate loading the day before a race became popular, many athletes would go through a week-long process. They would carbo load one day then follow it with days of no carbohydrates, days of extreme carbohydrates and a depletion a week before the race. This practice is not necessary because high muscle glycogen levels can be achieved by eating more foods that have high amounts of carbohydrates like pasta, quinoa, bananas and sweet potato the night before.

Sophomore 5k runner Sophia Beyer has a special ritual before she runs her races.

“The night before I race, I will have my mom make pasta or rice for dinner, so I can load up on carbohydrates,” Beyer said. “A lot of people think that they need a lot of protein to run longer. That’s not the case when running long distances. You need protein, but you need a lot more carbohydrates to keep you going.”

Training for the marathon is half the battle. The most important part of running long distances, like a marathon, is being mentally prepared for what the body is going to face. Most people have a goal that they want to reach whether it is just finishing the race or qualifying for bigger races, like Casey Sumner. While running it’s harder to stay motivate and focused towards those goals.

Dr. Carla Meijen, lecturer in Sport Psychology at the University of Kent’s School of Sport and Exercise Sciences, recommends that people have multiple goals and break the race down by 6-8 miles.

“Consider splitting up the race into different parts, particularly for runners who have not completed a marathon before, those 26 miles can seem a long way away,” Meijen said. “Think about the marathon as having three different parts and have a goal for each part. These don’t all have to be time-based goals.”

Running any distance from 3 to 26 takes a lot of work. Runners should diversify their training, watch their diets, and prepare themselves mentally before they run a marathon to have the best results they could possibly achieve.