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April Newsletter Part I



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Here is the news that we'll cover in Part I of this month's newsletter....

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Hello,

I hope that the month of April has treated everyone well and that you find yourself a step or two closer towards achieving one of your short/long term goals. Things are active here for the CasePerformance team members.

Our [strength](#), [running](#) and [nutrition](#) consultations are going well. If you're interested in finding out about our group discounts please send us an [email](#).

I. Community Member Interview Archives

In December 2012, I switched over to using a multipart CasePerformance Newsletter. For those newer to the CasePerformance community, prior to then, I had a single newsletter each month that was much more basic and not in PDF form. Although "basic" in style, we had some excellent interviews. Thus, in order to preserve some of the great interviews from our old newsletters for your enjoyment, I have re-uploaded the interviews in PDF format; they are labeled simply as "Community Member of the Month Interview" in the [newsletter section](#) of our website. Since they are older, you'll have to scroll through a page or so to find the community member interviews. Hope you enjoy them!

Respectfully,

Sean Casey

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II. Community Member of the Month...



This month's CasePerformance Community member of the month is Justin Andrews, who comes to us from Kansas City, Kansas, USA. Justin Andrews has been competing in distance running since he was in junior high (7th-8th grade). If his name sounds familiar to you, it should; Justin has long assisted me with our [endurance running consultations](#). From humble beginnings, he has since carved out a successful running career. A top-ten finish at Wisconsin's state high school meet in the 3200-meter run gave way to a solid collegiate campaign. Since graduating, Justin has lived and trained in Kansas City, Missouri, USA, where he runs with the top running club in the city, the Kansas City Smoke.

Running daily with other top regional runners has pushed Justin to new levels. He has won numerous road races from 5k to the half-marathon distance, and placed in the top-

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ten in the ING Atlanta (GA) marathon in 2009 with a personal best time of 2:37:48 (hr:min:sec) and has a personal best half-marathon of 1:12:19.

This past April, Justin trained for and ran in the Boston Marathon, a race in which the runners' efforts and accomplishments for that day were sadly overshadowed by terrorist bombings. In this interview, Justin shares with us his background and training experiences as well as his reflection on the events that unfolded in Boston on April 15th, 2013.

With that being said, let's get to our interview...

(For reference while reading this interview, 1 mile = 1.6 km; 1 km = 0.62 miles)

First off, I want to thank you for taking the time out of both your busy schedule to join us here today. It is a great honor to have you join us at CasePerformance.

Curious, how did you get involved with endurance training? How did it progress to the point where it's at today, competing in marathons?

Back in junior high school, it became apparent that the sports that involved a ball were not going to be my strength and so I started running a few cross-country meets then as I watched my older sister race in the high school meets. They went well and I had the thought that if I trained as hard as anyone else, I'd be able to at least compete at each meet and the coach wouldn't bench me! Thus, my interest in distance running was born, which I pursued through high school and at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. After college, I debuted in the half-marathon right before I moved to Kansas City and joined a post-collegiate USA Track & Field Elite Development Club, the Kansas City Smoke. It's been a club where I am pushed in every workout; I debuted in my first marathon in 2007 at Chicago.

How did your first marathon go for you?

It was quite the learning experience; I went out way too fast in the first mile, didn't adjust my race goals to a realistic time given the 80^o+ heat that year, and cramped up at mile 19 onward. Walk-jogging the last 10km, IV's to replace fluids and a two-man "massage" to stop muscle spasms was my treat that day.

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As a runner, what achievement/experience are you most proud of to date?

I'd say that my 2:37:48 8th place showing in what is my best marathon to date (ING Georgia Marathon in 2009, Atlanta, GA) and my half-marathon best of 1:12:19 in Houston, TX in January, 2012 are my highlights.

What are your short and long term goals with respect to endurance running?

My recent short-term goal was setting a new best at the 2013 Boston Marathon! I narrowly missed it, running a 2:40:25. I don't have any immediate goals, but as I turn an eye toward the future, I'd like to PR in the mile (currently from my high school days!), and I look forward to staying healthy and really enjoying decades more of being able to get out the door and cover 10 or 20 miles on a whim!

Slightly switching gears here, let's shift our focus towards your training for the Boston marathon as well as the events the tragic events which unfolded that day...

Speaking in terms of generalities, can you briefly describe what your training loads/volume looked like 12, 6, 3, & 1 week out from Boston?

12 weeks out (from the marathon)

I complete my initial base phase of building up volume—it's a lot of slower, increasingly longer runs that get me to a point where at...

6 weeks out

... I'm able to then incorporate the intense workout phase of marathon (or half) specific speed work, race-specific long runs, and intervals that increasingly stress my aerobic fitness. Throughout the training cycle, I'll end a few runs each week with 100-300m strides to maintain what (little) leg speed I have!

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3 weeks out

At this point, the ‘hay is in the barn’ as it’s said, and I start reducing my weekly mileage and tapering my long run off from 22 or so to about 18 then to 12 or 10 a week or two out from race day.

1 week out (from race day)

I’ll really focus on getting good rest, visualizing how the race may play out, cut my mileage to perhaps 1/3 of peak mileage and hope for ideal weather!

Breaking your training down a little bit further, what does a typical training week look like for you while preparing for Boston?

Here’s a breakdown of my typical training week, let’s say 4 weeks before race day where I’m still at peak mileage.

Sunday

I like to choose a half-marathon to race at full intensity and incorporate a longer warm-up or cool down to total about 20 miles for the day.

Monday

Long, easy days of about 10-14 miles if my body is feeling okay.

[Editor’s note – I don’t know about you and maybe this is my anaerobic nature talking, but since when has a 14 mile run EVER been considered easy!?!?]

Tuesday

Same as Monday

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Wednesday

I run a hard workout like 6-7 x 1 mile repeats with 60-90 seconds rest at a pace comparable to half-marathon pace or a more aerobic-based workout like 10 continuous miles at goal marathon pace.

Thursday

Following Wednesday's workout, there will be another recovery day similar to Monday & Tuesday

Friday

If my body is recovered I'll run another workout that may be 8 or 10 x 1000m repeats at VO₂ Max pace with 3-4 minutes rest between each.

Saturday

My last run of the training week will be a short, real easy run of 5-8 miles.

With that training load, how do you go about fueling yourself for success? Do you have any particular pre-, intra-, post workout nutrition/hydration strategies? Likewise to meet your daily nutrition needs?

Carbs! I'm known to non-running friends to subsist on bread, and while I have taken steps to be more intentional in consuming enough vegetables, CHO likely make up 70% of my caloric intake. Before big races I'll steer clear of vegetables and fibrous foods to ensure I don't have to stop at a port-a-jon! Before workouts, I'll make it a point to be extra diligent to hydrate, and after workouts/races I'm sure to get a smoothie or shake in my body within an hour that contains a mix of 3 CHO: 1 PRO. Then, especially in training during hot months, I'll be sure to set up my long runs and workouts where I can practice drinking fluids to prepare for race day.

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Outside of nutrition, is there anything else you do to help your body recover?

Before I start a hard workout (anything faster than my normal, conversation pace), I'll do a 2-4 mile warm-up, strides, form drills and light stretching. Then after the workout or race, a slow-paced cool-down of 20-30 minutes which I've found to be ideal to help flush out the legs and jump-start recovery.

I also employ ice baths or in a pinch, I use a Winn-Dixie ice cup to massage any areas of concern. Getting 8-9 hours of sleep each night (in an ideal world!) definitely is key to helping my body compensate for the heavy training load. I also use a foam roller and tennis ball among other tools to massage and stretch any problem areas and for preventative maintenance, too.

Now that the race is over, what factors do you think led to you missing your PR at Boston? Anything you would change in your preparation if you could do it over again or in prep for future marathons?

I registered for Boston and began my training with high hopes for a breakthrough PR. However, it became apparent that the “season of life” that I'm in wasn't conducive to the heavy training load required to get me in 2:32-2:34 shape, and so I had to put more realistic expectations in place. I still thought I could snag a 2:37 clocking for a new PR, but the weekend before the race I had flu-like symptoms and never took much action to remedy it other than sleeping a ton. So I missed a couple last workouts and my last long session, so that didn't provide any help. The weather was great, the crowd support amazing, the course wasn't as challenging as I'd expected, so all in all, it just comes down to not putting in the work necessary to prepare myself for sub-6:00/mile pace that was needed to PR.

It's impossible to discuss the 2013 Boston Marathon without mentioning the terrorist attack that occurred at the finish line. Would you willing to share your 1st hand thoughts and experiences from being present there that day?

Despite having heard about THE Boston Marathon about 15 years ago, this year was the first year I partook in the race. There's a certain excitement and buzz surrounding Marathon Monday (who else celebrates Patriots Day except Bostonians?!) that's hard to capture and relate. It captures the imagination of the whole city and its residents turn out in mass to support this storied race's competitors. A 60-something year old Italian man, gray hair in a tussle, his dog at his side, asked if I had my race bib yet while I jogged past him 2 days prior to the race. That doesn't happen outside Boston! And,

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thus, the hype and anticipation leading up to the race is well-deserved; the elite field of men and women was superb, the weather was a near-ideal high 40's° F (8-9°C), light wind, and it was the 117th running of the race— Needless to say, they've got the organization “down to a T”!

The race unfolded much as any Boston Marathon ever has—the crowds from Hopkinton to Boylston St. in downtown Boston erupted in cheers and support of 27,000 runners they'd mostly never met nor will ever see again. At noon EST, the elite women were done and by 12:10pm EST, the men were sprinting to the line. By 12:40 I'd finished and was zigzagging my way through the finish chute, in search of warm clothing and a place to lie down to ease my nausea. A massage helped ease that and my weary legs, and then I met up with my parents. My nausea returned, and I lied down on the sidewalk until my stomach ultimately rejected the fluids therein and the decision was then to get an IV in the medical tent or return to the hotel to rest up. I chose the latter, and this decision proved to be the one that had me exit the finish line area at 2:30 EST, 20 minutes before the two explosions that rocked Boylston St., taking the lives of 3 and injuring hundreds. My parents and I made it back to our hotel, which was 5 miles from downtown. It wasn't until we stepped off the shuttle that a man came straight up to us, asked if we'd been to the race finish area. We said we'd just come from there, and he asked us if we'd heard about the bombings that left people with missing limbs.

We were, needless to say, in shock and disbelief, struggling to reconcile the news seeing reported on the TV with what we were just a part of—the joyful scene of exhausted competitors, elated friends and family, throngs of spectators cheering heartily, and the electric aura of the day. Emotions and thoughts within me ran the gamut. Questions were certainly more numerous than answers, and suddenly whether one had a PR or a terrible race faded into insignificance. The outpouring of support from Boston and across America was amazing and it took me several hours to respond to my friends' messages and emails to assure them I was alive and well. And, while Boston is now operationally “alive and well,” the wounds suffered from this travesty will be slow to heal. Families on 3 continents lost sons or daughters from that Monday's bombing and the ensuing gun battle on Friday after the race, answers are still slow in coming, several people lost lower extremities spectating at an event that celebrates the endurance and speed of those limbs, and the future of the Boston Marathon will forever have this scar.

I talked to a few runners who were in the vicinity at the time of the explosions and heard the two blasts. It's hard to put myself there in the midst of it as I was several miles away when it occurred, and so in one sense my experiences are as far removed from it as yours. But, on the other hand, as I passed by a fellow Boston Marathoner the other day here in Kansas City gas station, there is now a connection to those who were a part of that day that will endure for as long as we have days on this earth.

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As I'm easing back into running after recovering from Boston, I'll go out and watch friends race a 4-miler tomorrow morning. And while a bolstered security force may be on high alert for suspicious activity amidst the fallout from Boston, I'll enjoy watching long-time friends clipping off 5:00 miles, flashing by me in an instant, their eyes set on the prize for which they've trained. The race will end, the awards will be doled out, and we'll set our sights on the next one. I'll look forward to any future miles that sweep by underfoot, and I'll retell my Boston experience when people inquire about that infamous day when the world's most famous marathon suffered tragic loss. And while a tragedy like this reinforces that there are certainly more valuable pursuits in life than running, it is at the same time an activity that unites nations, bridges the gap between elite and beginner runners, and can be for you, too, a place where camaraderie, memories, joy and pain meet.

Extremely powerful words there Justin. Thanks for sharing them... Do you have any thoughts or advice that you can share with us here at CasePerformance?

I just turned 29 this month and I really believe that my best endurance performances are ahead of me if I continue to put in the consistent hard work that's needed and can stay healthy. I look around at some friends of mine who are nearing the "Masters" category (40+ years old) and a friend who turns 52 this year but is running faster times than me for 5k and the mile right now and I'm encouraged to know that the possibility exists for me to have many more years of both 'running for fun' and competitive racing left! For those of you out there who are dabbling in distance running or have been in it for some time, let me say that until you have 30,000 miles in your legs, you've not reached your potential in the marathon! I'm getting quite close to that mark nowadays, and really believe that if one can stay healthy and utilize a steady upward progression of training volume, intensity, periodization, and well-planned rest phases, then your goals will be reached.

Distance running has no shortcuts; I've never dropped out of a race before, but I've had some awful ones...passing out and vomiting several times after suffering heat exhaustion in a 10,000m track race (got 2L of IV fluids after that); cramps so bad I had to lie down in a park at mile 19 of a marathon (a mere 4 blocks from my house and can I say the temptation to walk home and go to bed was quite strong?!); having to walk backward in a marathon because that was the fastest mode of transit; stumbling head over heels due to a slight nudge which was really meant as an encouraging pat on the back from a teammate in the last 100m of an 8000m cross country race, and many more unforgettable races.

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I can say that the life lessons therein are remarkable. The virtues of perseverance, endurance, and a wholehearted commitment to the race at hand will certainly put runners through mountain heights and valley depths in a year’s course of planning, training, racing and recovery. This journey parallels life’s joyful peaks and sorrowful lows in a way that not many other physical pursuits can mirror. I find it common for me to look back at such races and training cycles with gratefulness for the ability to not only run, but to find joy in doing so. The simplicity of placing one foot in front of the other in rapid succession belies running’s deeper lessons that its participants can learn if they are patient enough to endure the lessons taught at mile 20 of a marathon, after the 15th 400m interval of a workout, or its many other teaching venues.

On behalf of the CasePerformance community, I would like to thank you for joining us here today; On a personal level, you’ve been a great resource for me as well as those who you’ve assisted in [training](#). Furthermore, your extremely powerful words you’ve shared with us recollecting the events that took place at the 2013 Boston Marathon, as well as your final thoughts/advice that you share really impacted me while reading them. I’m sure the same impact will be felt by others reading your message as well.

Thanks Sean. Take care.

If you're a competitive or recreational athlete and have a performance you'd like to share with us, please send us an [email](#) or drop us a note on [Facebook](#).

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III. Community Member Performance Tip

This month's Performance tip comes to us from everyone's favorite bodybuilder, Adelfo Cerame Jr. who we had the privilege of interviewing in May 2012 for being the CP Community Member of the Month ([CLICK HERE](#)). Although I can't speak for others, from time to time, I've seen some pretty impressive looking food dishes show up on his [facebook page](#). Thus I twisted his arm and got him to share the below recipe with us:

Adelfo Cerame Jr's Papaya Chicken Salad



- 1 chicken breast diced in cubes (10 oz)
- 1 large cucumber diced in circles
- 1 cup of fresh-diced papayas
- 1/4 cup of coconut milk (I prefer the ones with no additives or preservatives)
- 1 packet of truvia

Macros: 60g protein/ 15g carbs/ 15g fat

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Great recipe there Adelfo; Thanks! A very appropriate one now that it is officially the season of spring (at least for those living north of the equator); with the nice weather, my desire to eat dishes like this definitely increases!

Switching gears here, I **strongly encourage** other community members to contact me via [facebook](#) or [email](#) and share your training, nutrition, supplement or healthy cooking tips and recipes. Intimidated about the writing aspect of things but still have a good thing to share? No problem, I'll help you on the writing aspect of things. We look forward to sharing your knowledge and experiences!

- Sean Casey

IV. Meets/Events

Here are a couple events that have been shared to me by members of the CasePerformance community.

1. Strength Guild, Strength Camp, featuring Jason Pegg, Paul Carter, Phil Stevens and Sarah Stevens.

Where: Topeka, Kansas

When: June 21st-23rd

For more information [CLICK HERE](#)

2. Endurance Events

There has been no specific event that has been brought to my attention. However, for a general listing of running events going on in your area, [CLICK HERE!](#)

*** Please know that CasePerformance does NOT receive any financial or other incentives if you choose to participate in any of the above events.

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That wraps up this CasePerformance newsletter. Thanks for being a part of the team!

And as always... Train smart, train hard and leave the excuses to someone else!

Sincerely,

[The CasePerformance Team](#)