

# CasePerformance

“For Sport, For Life”

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## Community Member of the Month...



This month's CasePerformance Community member of the month is Aaron Hohn who hails from Kansas City, Kansas (USA). Aaron runs as part of the Kansas City Smoke club with CasePerformance Endurance Coach [Justin Andrews](#). As impressive of a resume that Justin carries on his belt (2:38 marathon, see website for more accomplishments), Aaron's achievements have reached even higher; This includes a 25th place finish at the prestigious Boston Marathon with a time of a 2:31:09 ... A time which is even more impressive when you consider that the temperatures at this past April's race were some of the hottest ever recorded (>80°F/27°C). Without further delay, let's get to the interview....

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**First off, I want to thank you for taking the time out of both your running, social & academic scheduled (Editor's note – Aaron is currently in Medical School) to join us here today. It is a great honor to have you join us at CasePerformance.**

No problem, I always appreciate the opportunity to talk about running.

## **Curious, how did you get involved with endurance training?**

Like most distance runners I started out playing other sports—soccer and basketball mostly—and kept running on the side but eventually gravitated to it later. In 3rd grade I joined our school’s running club. We met three mornings per week to run for 20 minutes before school. That year I ran my first 10k road race but didn’t get back into running seriously again until high school. I focused on basketball but eventually gave it up to run exclusively. Since then I’ve progressively increased my knowledge of the sport, training consistency, and lengthened my preferred race distance—the marathon is as far as I plan to take it though, ultra-marathoners are a special kind of crazy.

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

My training is built around a 12-week cycle that I’ve repeated for each marathon. The plan has high-mileage and recovery weeks built in. As I improve from race to race I slide my training paces a little further down the scale. Before each cycle I pick a ‘maximum weekly mileage’ and then run a percentage of that each week based on the plan. The chart below shows my Boston prep cycle. The “weeks out”, “% of max”, and “mileage” was based on a pre-determined weekly maximum of 110 miles/week. When coming into this final 12 week cycle, being fit and capable of running close to the maximum is crucial! Therefore, I’ll use the 1-2 months preceding those final 12 weeks to build up my strength and fitness. Below is my training cycle in prep of Boston.

Weeks Out	% of max.	Mileage	Weeks out	% of max.	Mileage
12	100	110	6	100	110
11	90	99	5	80	88
10	80	88	4	70	77
9	100	110	3	70	877
8	90	99	2	60	66
7	70	77	1	40	44



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**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 you daily nutrition needs?**

My nutrition plan is always evolving. You learn what works best for body in terms of pre- and post-workout fueling. To be honest, when putting in high mileage I've found I can eat just about anything I want but I tend to stick to a fairly carbohydrate- and protein-rich diet, especially after big workouts. I go pretty light beforehand and focus more on hydration than anything else. I don't take much during my runs except on the occasional long-run workout; then I might bring a gel or two or set out a couple water bottles.

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

I have a strong dependency on my foam roller and massage stick. I use them frequently as well as getting semi-regular massages. One of the perks to dating a physical therapy student is they know the right things to keep you strong and healthy and they can usually be paid with a home-cooked meal or other baked good!

**Does strength training play in your overall training cycle?**

Strength training can vary widely among runners and I'd put my own level of emphasis at the lower end of the spectrum, though it's something I'd like to improve on. I do core work but the consistency isn't what it should be—partly due to a lack of time and partly because I have a history of staying pretty healthy so I may be deprioritizing it a little.

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

It's hard to point to a single race or accomplishment and say I'd like to hang my hat on that. Recently, Boston was more fun than I've ever had in a marathon and probably the best I'll ever feel about missing a PR by only seconds. I take pride in my history of consistency, fitness, and the improvements I've made since college. After graduating I wasn't sure if I'd ever run another PR or if it'd be something I'd continue with outside of the occasional weekend type runs.

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Looking back over the 4+ years since college at the places I've been and things I've seen as a runner is pretty fun. I'm part of a great running community here in the Midwest as a member of the Kansas City Smoke Elite Development Club and I've been fortunate enough to be supported by Brooks® as an 'Inspire Daily member' for several years. They're both critical to the success and accomplishments I've enjoyed and most importantly why I've had so much fun in this sport.

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

My short-term goals have shifted a little since starting medical school. Following the New York City Marathon, I plan to take a step back from running and reel in the intensity and time commitment. There's no doubt I'll continue to train and race but 22-mile weekly long-runs will take a backseat to other priorities. I'd like to race the Heartland 39.3 Series in the spring—a series of three separate half marathon races over 4 weeks where your total combined time over the three races is used to compete against other runners.

Long-term I'd like to complete the goal I set out on in 2011, to run in all 5 world major marathons—I've run Chicago (2011), Boston (2012), and with NYC coming up (2012) that leaves London and Berlin.

*Editor's note - this interview was completed prior to Superstorm Sandy canceling the marathon*

## **Do you have any thoughts or advice that you can share with us here at CasePerformance?**

The two best pieces of advice I could give a runner looking to improve (at any level) is to be consistent and commit to a plan. Consistency in your training prevents injury, improves strength, and generally gives you a better feeling of confidence than sporadic workouts here or there. Committing to a plan means doing the right things every day—run the workouts only as fast as indicated and discipline yourself to hold back on the recovery days. Having a good win-loss record for training workouts means nothing when you toe the line at a race.

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**That is some great advice there. I couldn't have said it better and some great take away messages for those in the CasePerformance community. On behalf of the CasePerformance community, I would like to thank you for joining us here today. I realize it takes time to answer these questions. Keep up the great work!**

Thanks Sean. Take care.

