

The Pacesetter

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A new season, a timeless tradition Brookings Marathon moves to fall for 56th running

By Matt Bien
Special to the Pacesetter

The Brookings Marathon celebrates its 56th running on Oct. 18. There are a variety of reasons for the change to fall, including volunteer availability, weather, training and competing events. But for many who have spent a few decades in the community, the move may feel like déjà vu. Here's a recap of the annual footrace and its many seasons and reasons for seeking a new date.

Born as the Longest Day Marathon in 1970 and choosing that date for the inaugural run, the first marathon in Brookings was a warm one. With a 5 p.m. start, the race turned into a war of attrition. Despite the heat, 18 of the 22 starters finished. Organizers shifted to a 7 a.m. start the following year, but June weather ultimately proved too hot and humid, so the race moved to mid-November in 1974.



Legendary Strider Bob Bartling leads a group of runners in the inaugural Longest Day Marathon on June 21, 1970

See Marathon
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S.D., W.Va. 15-mile races join forces

The Jack 15 road race and the Charleston Distance Run, the only 15-mile road races in America, are joining arms to honor runners who complete both events. The 15-15 promotion has been created at the instigation of the only one to have run both events—Dennis Brady.

Brady, who grew up in Mitchell, first ran the Jack 15 in 1979 at age 30 when living in Charleston, W. Va., where he currently lives. In 2023, he convinced two grandnephews to join him on his second Jack 15 journey. In 2024, Brady was joined by his daughter and he stirred up quite a bit of interest in Charleston.

Charleston Distance Run promotes itself as America's 15-miler, but Brady told race organizers and running buddies that there is another 15-miler halfway across the country.

A pied piper of running, Brady generated interest among his Charleston buddies in coming out to South Dakota for the Sept. 20 Jack 15. Organizers of the two races discussed a way to recognize those who complete both 15-milers. The answer is a two-sided coin with the Jack 15 logo on one side and the Charleston Distance Run logo on the other side.

Credit for that goes to Todd Quigley, a member of the Charleston Distance Run committee who crafted several coin prototypes and located the coin supplier.

Carol Phipps Haid, director of the Charleston Distance Run, and Dave



Both sides of the commemorative coin to be given runners who complete both of America's lone 15-mile runs—the Jack 15 and the Charleston Distance Run.

Graves, director of the Jack 15, are thankful for Brady's role in bringing together these historic races. Aug. 30 will be the 52nd running of the Charleston Distance Run while Sept. 20 will be the 63rd running of the Jack 15.

With this being the first year of the partnership, the initial commemorative coins will be awarded in Brookings. However, participants don't have to run the races in the same year; they just need to complete both 15-milers.

Graves said, "Many runners use races as a good excuse to travel. This is a great opportunity for Midwest runners to capture the beautiful hills, scenic Kanawha River and the sights of West Virginia's Capitol. In turn, our friends from the East can soak in the idyllic pasturelands and farm fields in the 15.2 miles from White to the South Dakota State University campus."

To date, the Jack 15 already has eight

West Virginia runners entered. Brady said, "I am excited to have that many folks ready to check out what I have been telling them about the Jack 15. Hopefully, a few more will sign on in the months to come."

Haid said, "It's rare to see a South Dakotan in the Charleston Distance Run, but we hope that changes in 2025 and the years to follow."

The Charleston Distance Run is always on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend. The Jack 15 is the third or fourth Saturday of September. Both events also have a relay division. The Charleston Distance Run also has a 5K.

For more information on the Charleston Distance Run, go to: charlestdistancerun.com

For more information on the Jack 15, go to: www.prairiestriders.net/jack-15.html

Marathon

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Fall, then back to spring

A November marathon remained the new normal from 1974 through 1981. For the most part, temps were more favorable with the exception of 1975, when runners were greeted with a balmy 75-degree day. But after a couple of cold and windy races in the early '80s, the marathon again flipped seasons, this time moving to April in 1982.

April would become the standard for most of the next 20 years, with a brief stint in July from 1987 to 1989. Scotty Roberts, the race director at the time, cited dwindling participation and increased competition from regional races as the main reasons for moving the date back to summer. Hoping to tap into interest from visitors, the July date coincided with a popular community event, the Brookings Arts Festival.

After three years, the numbers didn't increase and July weather proved no better than June. The race returned to April.

Then with a name change to the Brookings Marathon, and with a new course showcasing the community, the marathon moved again in 2004, this time to May. Most years, the weather was more favorable, and the race grew significantly over the next two decades. During that span, two notable exceptions pushed the race unintentionally into the fall.

Recent exceptions to spring marathon date

The first coincided with a global event that touched every aspect of our lives, road racing included. With the COVID-19 pandemic, and its many unknowns in early 2020, running events canceled, some for the subsequent two years. Fortunately, with guidance from national running organizations and with many precautions in place, the 2020 Brookings Marathon took place in September.

The second exception transpired in a much more abrupt though equally disruptive manner as a derecho hit the Brookings community less than 48 hours prior to the race start in May 2022.

With electricity still out and trees down everywhere, the May event was canceled. A resourceful race committee and resurgent community hosted the marathon a few months later in October 2022, which was the only time prior to this year that the marathon was held in October.

Reasons for the move

It has been said that a race is only as good as its volunteers. Current Brookings Marathon race director Dani Bohn couldn't agree more. "With classes in session, we are hoping for more SDSU student availability," says Bohn. Well over 300 volunteers are needed to make the race happen each year. SDSU students would bolster the many dedicated volunteer groups that already assist on race day.

Bohn also lists runner requests for an autumn race as another leading consideration. Winter training for a marathon is never easy in the Midwest. The October date offers marathoners additional time to build up mileage and peak for race day.

But the move to fall isn't without potential conflicts and



And they're off...runners take to the streets for the Brookings Marathon on May 11, 2013.

careful consideration. To minimize congestion on the SDSU campus, the race date had to coincide with an away football game. Then came the challenge of finding a sweet spot among the many regional fall marathons already scheduled.

Last but not least – shorter days. The sun rises considerably later in October compared to May, and Bohn notes that "we will likely need to adjust the start time accordingly."

New for 2025

The race committee has some exciting changes in store beyond the autumn date. Runners will receive a newly designed, custom medal to celebrate their accomplishment. This year, that celebration can continue right after the finish without even leaving the park. "We plan to bring the post-race party back to Pioneer Park with vendors, food, and a DJ," says Bohn.

Whether you're gearing up to run, ready to cheer, or helping make it all happen behind the scenes, mark your calendar for Oct. 18th as the Brookings Marathon strides into a new season for its 56th year.

Opportunities to volunteer, register, and celebrate the day can all be found at the race website brookingsmarathon.com or by contacting run@brookingsmarathon.com.

Editor's note: Matt Bien served as director of the Brookings Marathon director from 2007 through 2023.

Prairie Striders Fall Challenge launched

By Dave Graves
Newsletter editor

Runners who tackle all three Prairie Striders races this fall are in line to receive the Prairie Striders Fall Challenge patch at no additional cost.

Prairie Striders Running Club opted to create the patch to encourage runners to participate in all three of the club's premier races—the Jack 15 on Sept. 20,



the Bob Bartling Hobo Day 5K Oct. 11 and the Brookings Marathon and Half Marathon Oct. 18. Runners who compete

in the Jack 15 or marathon relays as well as the Scotty Roberts 5K Oct. 17 are also eligible.

The patch was still being designed as this issue of the Pacesetter was being prepared. There is no sign-up required apart from race registration.

The club hopes to be able to hand out the patch during marathon packet pickup. Some patches may be mailed out later.

The Jack 15 and the Hobo Day 5K are traditional fall races. When the marathon moved to fall this year, Prairie Striders leaders decided it was an opportune time to establish a unique incentive to run all three races.

Bisson on Boston 'Boston doesn't just test our limits, it transforms them'

Editor's note: *The following message was posted April 25 by Alex Bisson, of Brookings, on her Facebook page after completing her first Boston Marathon April 21. There is no question that Boston is in class of its own when it comes to marathons. However, much of what Bisson shares can be shared by anyone who has taken a 26.2-mile challenge.*

Someone once told me that running the Boston Marathon will change you forever. I didn't understand exactly what that meant until now.

We study every mile of the course, we formulate a game plan of how to pace different sections of the course, and we stuff our pockets full of fuel to sustain us along the way. We board yellow school buses that carry us to the starting line, and stand elbow to elbow with 30,000 runners from all over the world.

We each have our own unique story of how we got to the starting line, but we all hope for the same ending — to cross the finish line 26.2 miles away. And when the starting gun goes off, there is absolutely nothing that could prepare us for what is to come both physically and emotionally.

We take off with tears in our eyes and a shared dream on the horizon. The crowds are electric — bigger than we could have ever imagined. Hundreds of thousands of people line the course cheering for complete strangers. Children stand with outstretched hands hoping for a high five. Speakers blast music so loud you can feel it in your chest. Everything we worked so hard for is finally happening. The dream of running the Boston Marathon is coming true with every step we take.

We put one foot in front of the other and tackle one mile at a time. We smile at strangers cheering when we need it most. We thank the volunteers handing us cups of water to keep us going. We cheer on the runners who pass us by and encourage the ones who pull off to the side.



"In the end, it's not about the miles we run, it is about the person we become along the way."

— Boston Marathon finisher
Alex Bisson

The early miles are effortless, but we know what is to come. Soon enough, every voice in our head will be screaming at us to stop. Our feet will hurt, our legs will ache, and our clothing will become soaked in sweat. We aren't sure how we are going to keep going and maybe, just for a moment, we worry we might not have what it takes.

'We think about everything we sacrificed'

Then we think about everything we sacrificed to get here. We think about the early mornings running hundreds of miles in the freezing cold. We think about all of these people lining the course encouraging us along the way. We think about our family and friends who have supported us for so long. We think about the younger version of ourselves who might never have believed that one day we would be here running the Boston Marathon. And every single one of these thoughts pushes us just a little bit further.

Just when we don't think we can take another step, we see the infamous Citgo sign near Fenway Park indicating one mile to go.

Slowly but surely, the sign gets bigger as we continue to approach. We pass by the sign, take that infamous right turn on Hereford (where the photo of me was taken) and then a left on Boylston. Just when the finish line comes into view, we realize it's almost over.

'An overwhelming sense of gratitude'

After praying to make it here, all of a sudden we don't want it to end. We look up and take in every last moment of this

incredible journey. We close our eyes and just feel. With tears streaming down our face and an overwhelming sense of gratitude, we cross the finish line.

We thank God for giving us the strength to do this. The medal is placed around our neck and all of a sudden that dream we have been chasing becomes reality. We did it. We finally did it.

Boston doesn't just test our limits, it transforms them. I began this journey two years ago drowning in darkness, saw a glimmer of light in the distance, and never stopped running towards it. For me, the Boston Marathon was just the victory lap of that journey. I found MYSELF along the way, someone who I thought I had lost forever.

Running taught me that no matter how hard this life gets, we are so much stronger than we think we are. For in the end, it's not about the miles we run, it is about the person we become along the way.

Thank you, Boston. I will carry you with me forever.



'A day I will cherish for the rest of my life'

Posted on Facebook April 22, 2025

Boston Marathon, you were a dream come true! 💙💛 From the starting line in Hopkinton to that final left turn on Boylston Street, I had the time of my life.

THANK YOU for the messages of support from so many of you! It means the world to me and my heart is overflowing with gratitude. To my husband, John, my family, friends, Coach Benson Langet and the Brookings running crew, I would not be where I am today without each of you. Thank you for inspiring me and encouraging me every single day.

I worked for years to get to the starting line and never wanted the day to end. It's hard to put into words what it felt like to cross the finish line and have that medal placed around my neck as I heard, "You just ran the Boston Marathon." This is a day I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Beef and Eggs runners clock all-time top 10 times

Four runners pushed into the top 10 list at Saturday's Beef and Eggs 5K, sponsored by Prairie Striders Running Club.

Winning the 3.1-mile race in a time 14:48 was Dale Johnson, 19, of Sterling, Illinois, who just finished his freshman season on the South Dakota State University track and cross country team. His time ranks fifth best in the 21-year history of the historically fast race.

Johnson, the most prolific runner in Sterling High School history, was sitting in fourth place after the first mile. He was about 10 meters behind Jackson Dutcher, Will Lohr and Jackson Harrison, who were running shoulder to shoulder. Dutcher and Lohr are making their mark with the South Dakota State program while Harrison was a standout at Northern State University.

Johnson, donning a stars and stripes singlet for the post-Fourth of July event, saved up energy for the final two miles, edging Dutcher and Harrison, both finishing in 14:50 with Dutcher a fraction

of a second ahead. Lohr finished fourth in 15:01.

Dutcher and Harrison now hold spots six and seven on the all-time list. The final spot on the top 10 list is now held by Tom Breuckman (2023), Trent Lusignan (2019) and Kyle Burdick (2020), all at 14:56. Andrew Carlson set the race mark of 14:37 in 2014. That is a 4:42 per mile pace.

Moving into the top 10 on the women's list was April Lund, 43, of Bismarck, N.D., whose time of 17:25 now stands sixth. She placed ninth overall in her first Beef and Eggs 5K and also received a medal for being the first-place finisher in the USA Track and Field Dakotas 5K championship, which was held in conjunction with the Beef and Eggs 5K.

The other females in the top four were all under age 20.

Runner-up was Faith Wiese, 17, of Flandreau, with a time of 18:53 to finish 15th overall. Finishing 26th and 27th, respectively, were Maxine Ordway, 13, of Harrisburg, in 20:19 and Addison Smetana, 19, of Brookings, in 20:26.

The event had 147 entries with 141 finishers, the second highest turnout since 2015. It was a diverse field. In addition to the elites, there were three runners in the age 70+ category and four 9-year-olds. First place in the age 70+ category went to Kevin Neal, 71, of Bradley, who three weeks ago ran a hot and humid Grandma's Marathon in



Need proof that all of today's kids aren't phone-addictive couch potatoes who only play video games? Four 9-year-olds finished Saturday's Beef and Eggs 5K, including Anniston Lowery, of Harrisburg, who able to nudge her mom, Jennifer, 43, by a fraction of a second, finishing in 30:41.

Duluth, Minn. On Saturday, Neal clocked a 5K time of 24:04.

The race was directed by Kevin Bjerke, of Billings, Montana, who started the race as a senior at SDSU and has continuously lead the event.

Jackrabbit alum wins Grandma's Marathon

Joel Reichow, a 2017 SDSU graduate, won Grandma's Marathon June 21. Reichow ran 2:11:58, becoming the first American and Minnesotan to win since 2009. Reichow, 31, of St. Paul, Minn., also became the first person to win both the full marathon and the Gary Bjorklund Half Marathon, which he won in 2023.

Ben Olson, a 2023 SDSU grad, finished seventh in 2:15:46.

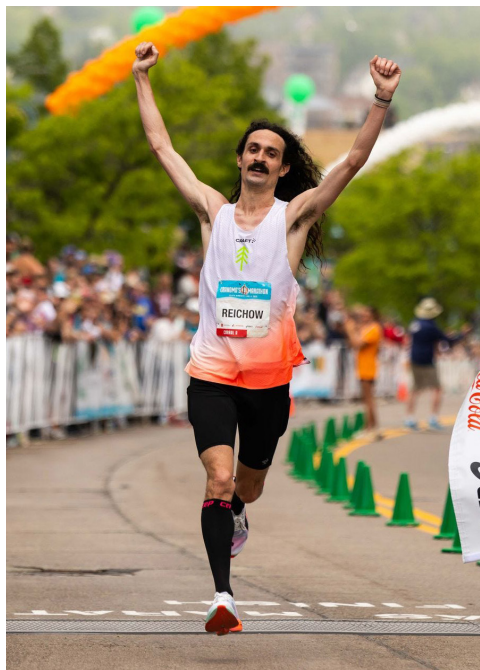
"Thank you to everybody who cheered, watched on TV, or reached out! I'm blown away by all the love and support!" Reichow said.

When he graduated, he held the school record in the outdoor 5 and 10K and the indoor 5K —13:53.05, 28:55.84 and 14:07.19, respectively. Those marks now are fourth and second on the Jackrabbit list.

Two other Jackrabbit alums qualified for the USA Track and Field Championships in Eugene, Oregon.

Cailee Peterson '22 qualified and competed in the women's 1500 meters, finishing ninth in the second heat of the opening round July 31. Peterson, who competes for Minnesota Distance Elite, has a personal and season best of 4:10.81 in the 1500 meters. At SDSU, she ran a school record mile of 4:46.

Coby Hilton '21 also qualified for USAs but did not compete due to an injury suffered while competing in Europe this summer. Hilton was selected for the 2025 World Athletics Indoor Championships in China earlier this year.



Discount code offered for Monument Marathon

Monument Marathon, which offers a full marathon, half marathon, 5k and a half marathon relay, is offering a discount code for Prairie Striders members.

The code **SD25MM** is valid through the last day for registration, Sept. 26. Races are Sept. 27. All races are run through the beautiful scenery of Scottsbluff and Gering, Neb., as runners traverse through parts of the Oregon Trail and around the Scotts Bluff National Monument as well as viewing the North Platte River valley.

This event helps to fund the Western Nebraska Community College Foundation that supports students, programs and facilities of the college.

For more information, go to: monumentmarathon.com

Bobcats race at historic Franklin Field

By Addison DeHaven
For the Pacesetter

Planes, trains and automobiles — those were the methods of transportation for a group of Brookings Bobcats on their way to historic Philadelphia.

After one of the better seasons in school history, the Bobcats — Jon Kahler, Ernest Ting, Trevin Lounsbury, Shane Harming, Charlie Bisgard and Cole Hockett — earned a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to race at Franklin Field, host of this year's New Balance High School Nationals Track and Field meet.

The journey to “the City of Brotherly Love” was not simple. On Wednesday, June 18, the boys and myself (Coach Addison DeHaven) loaded into a Suburban and waved to the group of Bobcat fanatics who had lined the streets for the sendoff. A quick four-hour trip to Minneapolis represented the first leg of the trip.

The next morning, the boys and I, and now Coach Jason Sebern, navigated the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport before boarding our 7 a.m. flight to Philly. Sun Country Airlines provided a first-class experience and after a good, not great, landing, the Bobcats had made it. For everyone on the trip, it was their first time stepping foot in Philadelphia.

Immediately off the plane, the Bobcats were greeted with two things: Oppressive humidity and thick Philly accents. Considered “one of the world's most studied dialects,” the Philly accent is difficult to imitate and mock (so I won't even try to do it here) but it was quite interesting trying to understand the different stops on Philly's public transportation system.

An untimely rainstorm

Eventually, we made it to the downtown Sheraton Hotel, which would be our home base for the next few days. Because this was the day before our first



Sporting “Fast Lane to Philly” T-shirts, the Brookings Bobcats 4x800-meter relay poses at the New Balance Outdoor Nationals in Philadelphia June 20. Pictured, from left, are Ernest Ting, Jon Kahler, Shane Harming and Trevin Lounsbury.

day of racing, we attempted to do our pre-meet workout at Temple University's track. Unfortunately, a rainstorm forced us back to the hotel, but we were able to get a glimpse of one of Philly's defining features: dirt bike and ATV gangs taking over the streets.

We were able to still get a solid pre-meet workout in at the hotel, thanks to treadmills and a large ballroom. After a nice dinner at a local Italian restaurant, everyone hit the hay early after a long day of travel.

The meet itself was unspectacular. Franklin Field was built in the late 1800s and while it has the charm of other historic facilities, namely Fenway Park and Wrigley Field, its age is evident. The track is also quite unique. It's not quite 400 meters all the way around. In fact, lane four is where most of the actual racing happens. This made our first race of the weekend, the sprint medley relay, quite interesting. Our 400 meter leg, Ting, had actually had to cut up — rather than the usual down — into lane four. Despite the circumstances, Ting still was able to run his fastest 400 split of the season, 50.0.

The Bobcats finished 46th in the SMR, running 3:35.17.

4x8 team couldn't match state mark

Later that evening, we had our 4 x 800-meter relay team set to race. Coming off a state record and state championship, there were high expectations for the Bobcats. Unfortunately, the preparation leading up to the race wasn't ideal, mainly due to nagging injuries. Still, the Bobcats ran hard and finished with their second-best time of the year, 7:52.68.

The next two days, Lounsbury and Kahler, competed in their individual events. Both competed hard and fought to the line in each of their races. Lounsbury ran the mile in 4:40.27, while Kahler ran 1:54.73 in the 800 meters.

Imitating Rocky

But it wasn't just track and field for the Bobcats. We also got the opportunity to visit the Museum of the American Revolution, where Coach Sebern — a history teacher at Brookings High School — walked us through the history of our country. We also got a look at the Liberty Bell and had a fantastic lunch at the Reading Terminal Market.

After the final day of racing, we ventured to the Philadelphia Museum of Modern Art, where the boys each took turns completing the “Rocky Run” up the steps. The museum itself was extremely impressive and the boys had a chance to see the work of some of the world's greatest artists.

All-in-all, this was a great trip that I don't think the boys will soon forget. I want to thank all the parents for their support all season. I also want to thank all the members of the community for donating to the cause. It was humbling to see the support Brookings has for its high school student-athletes. I can't thank everyone enough for making this trip happen.

Editor's note: *Prairie Striders Running Club was among the donors that helped make this trip possible.*



Coach Addison DeHaven takes a group selfie in the Philadelphia train station June 18. Pictured, from left, are Coach Jason Sebern, Cole Hockett, Charlie Bisgard, Ernest Ting, Trevin Lounsbury, Jon Kahler and Shane Harming.

Health & Running

Rest and running



By Chuck McCullough

These two very opposite words have an extremely strong connection.

Much in the way potato chips and chocolate are very different flavors but taste great together, rest and running are better together. Using and obtaining proper rest can help lead you to success as a runner and assist with injury prevention.

If the goal is to keep running injury free for your lifetime, you need to have rest as part of your training life.

I have been a physical therapist and have treated runners for over 33 years. In my opinion, the No. 1 cause of injury is overtraining.

Overtraining is simply this: the training load exceeds the body's capacity to recover, thus leading to injury or decline in performance. Injuries from overtraining can include tendonitis or bursitis or even worse, stress fractures to your bones. Overtraining can also lead to a decline in performance and subsequently a lot of frustration.

Don't think rest is nonproductive

If rest is the answer to overtraining, what is rest?

The simplest definition is taking a break so your body and mind can rebuild and recover. It is not being lazy or nonproductive. You can view it as yet another component of your training just like needing proper nutrition or quality running shoes.

Muscles need time to repair and reload. Running can cause micro damage to muscles, so we need rest to allow rebuilding of those running muscles.

If we don't allow that time to rest and we keep causing micro damage, it can lead to macro damage like muscle tears or strains that will significantly limit your training. Tendons attach muscle to bone and if the micro damage to the tendon is not allowed to repair, tendonitis is possible and again, limits your overall training.

Rest doesn't have to mean inactivity

Rest from the activity of running can be many different things—as simple as choosing to swim over going for a run or doing yoga or cross training. Rest can also be just sitting out of a training run or bumping a long run to the next weekend.

Rarely do we do engage with complete rest unless we have a serious injury like a stress fracture or serious overtraining syndrome. With a broken bone like a stress fracture, we can do alternative exercises like upper body weight lifting or stretching the other side.

True overtraining syndrome is a serious condition for a runner and includes physical and mental damage that needs to be addressed. Often with this type of problem, treatment includes complete rest, counseling with a sports psychologist and extensive treatment with a health care professional.

Rest includes adequate sleep

Sleep is an extremely important part of your rest protocol. When a runner gets good quality sleep, muscle damage is

healing and we have reloading of the energy stores in the body. It is also a time for reduction of inflammation within the muscles as part of that repair and reloading. Sleep supports the immune system and if you can avoid getting sick, you can continue with consistent training.

The big part of sleep is that it helps us is better brain function. If we are not sluggish or tired, we can have quicker reaction times or just make better decisions about our training.

The amount of sleep you need is often dependent on the training volume you have. It can range from 7 to 8 hours or up to 10 hours per day. As a general rule of thumb, the higher the training intensity the greater amount of sleep needed.

Youthfulness doesn't replace sleep

I do want to comment about age. I know we see young teenagers with limitless energy but they may need more sleep in their young running careers than older runners. Not only do they need proper rest just because they are growing and developing as a person, but if they are an athlete, they may need additional recovery and rest time.

Remember, it is not just "going to bed early" but you need to try to have a consistent sleep schedule and create a good bedtime routine.

Electronic devices and screen time (smart phones and TV time for example) can block you from having a good night's sleep. I would argue that runners need more sleep than nonrunners so make sure your prioritize sleep as a part of your rest routine.

Listen to your body

We are all unique individuals so our rest requirements may not be all the same but here are some basic recommendations. Find a good sleep routine around at 8 hours daily and be as constant with that as you are with your running routine.

If you do have an injury, early intervention is best. Start with the basics like ice, take needed breaks from running and rest as you examine the training schedule/routine. If after two or three weeks your body is not responding, alarm bells should be ringing.

Visiting with a health care professional should be your next steps. Do not feel guilty or ashamed if you need to take a break. Just view it as part of your overall training.

Editor's note: *Chuck is a physical therapist at the Avera Medical Group Brookings clinic. He graduated with his bachelor's degree in physical therapy from the University of North Dakota in 1992.*

His education continued through the years with various degrees and certifications leading to his terminal degree of Doctor of Physical Therapy from the University of North Dakota in 2007.

At his practice in the Brookings clinic, he assists runners to get back on the road, treadmill or trails. His love of running is not just in the clinic as he keeps moving with his best running partners, his daughter and his dog.

McCullough was the longtime director of the Scotty Roberts 5K, assisted with the Brookings Marathon and is the 2023 Harvey Mills Friend of Running presented by Prairie Striders.

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