

## Huffines Sports Medicine Podcast

### Mark and Alana Hadley

- S1 00:10 Welcome to the Sports Medicine Podcast brought to you by the Sydney and J.L. Huffines Institute for Sports Medicine and Human Performance, and the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Texas A&M University. At the Huffines Institute, we're always working to facilitate, apply and bring you the most up-to-date coverage of the wide world that is sports medicine and human performance, all in the language you can understand and share with your friends. And now, here's our host, the Director of the Huffines Institute, Dr. Tim Lightfoot.
- S2 00:39 Hello and welcome to the weekly edition of the Huffines Institute for Sports Medicine and Human Performance podcast. I'm your host, Tim Lightfoot, and in conjunction with the Texas A&M Coaching Academy, today, I'm so pleased to bring you our podcast this week. Normally, we say we bring you an interesting individual in the world of sports medicine and human performance, but today, we have a bonus. We actually have two interesting people from the world of sports medicine and human performance. Joining us today by phone from Charlotte, North Carolina, is Coach Mark Hadley and Alana Hadley. Welcome to the podcast, Mark and Alana.
- S3 01:12 Thank you.
- S4 01:13 Thanks.
- S2 01:14 We're so pleased to have you both on. Let me tell the audience a little bit about both of you and why you're here, and then we'll just jump into the conversation. First of all, let's start with coach Mark Hadley. Coach Hadley is the head coach of Maximum Performance Running. He was a cross country and track athlete at the University of Mississippi. He is the owner and, as I mentioned, the head coach of Maximum Performance Running. He's got 30 years of competitive running behind him, about ten years of coaching. He's certified by the Road Runner Club of America and the US Track and Field Association. Then, we have Alana Hadley who is, listeners may have guessed, with the same last name, is related to coach Hadley. Alana is the youngest individual to qualify for the Olympic Trials and the marathon since 1984. She qualified last year when she was 16 years old with a time of 2 hours and 41 minutes and 55 seconds. She currently holds the US record for the half marathon at age 14 and 15 years old, running 1 hour 17 and 1 hour 16 respectively. She has a national high school record for freshman in the 10,000 meters running at 34 minutes and 59 seconds. Thank you both again for taking the time out of your busy day to join with us again. We're really excited to talk about running today.
- S3 02:28 Thank you for having us.
- S4 02:29 Yeah, thanks.
- S2 02:30 You're more than welcome. Mark, let me start with you. Why did you decide to quit the corporate world to pursue a career in running and health?
- S3 02:39 It was time for me to get doing what I was passionate about and that was helping people achieve their dreams and their goals in the sport of running. I've

been a runner ever since I was a kid. I was starting to [put?] when I was about eight years old, and I was always just as fascinated and passionate about the sport. So when I got-- later on in my running career, as I got into my late 30s and 40s, I got more and more into coaching and helping, using my experience to help people get the most out of the sport and sort of help them accomplish their goals.

S2 03:16 As you've made that transition, have you missed the running aspect? I'm sure you do still. You train with Alana sometimes and with other runners, but do you miss the competitive aspect of that?

S3 03:26 I do to some extent. I still think about getting back into the competitive side a little bit, on the side. But really, coaching people who are competitive-- and there is some competitiveness, in that that I sort of get to take part in and help them, and I think that takes the place of a lot of the competitive side that I used to do.

S2 03:51 Alana, I read some place or heard somebody say, you started running when you were about six? Is that correct?

S4 03:56 Yes. I started running races and actually training for races when I was six.

S2 04:04 Is that something that you decided you wanted to do, or why did you decide you wanted to do that? Or was that something your dad said, "Hey, let's go do this."

S4 04:12 Actually, I grew up watching my dad going out training for races, and I decided that it looked like fun. I've been to some of these races before and I liked the atmosphere. When I was little, I used to call them festivals because of all of the different-- the food and the different sponsors that would be around after the race, and I decided that it looked like a lot of fun and that I wanted to go and do it as well.

S2 04:43 What did you train-- and both of you can respond to this. At that age, what does training really consist of for someone that age group to start doing long distance running?

S3 04:53 When you're that age - six, seven years old - all it is, is you're going out and running a mile or two, two or three days a week. Not any hard running or any type of real significant training. It's just getting used to, just enjoying the sport and getting out there and running a few miles in a safe environment. It was a great opportunity for Alana because both my wife and I were running, and so she could tag along with one of us for the first mile or two of one of our runs. It was good environment for her to learn about the sport over the first few years.

S2 05:34 There was an interesting piece on 60 Minutes, I'm sure you both caught it, about a month ago. Shalane Flanagan, who's one of the women's marathoners here in the United States, and she talked about being raised by parents who were both marathoners. She said, "Well, it was just normal. On Sunday, we went to the Church of the Long Run."

[chuckles]

S3 05:51 Yeah, I saw that. That was great. I think that's one of the good things. Running always was a positive thing in our house that we did that was fun, that was healthy, and it was a good environment. It was interesting because when she got to middle school, gym teachers and different people would use running as a

punishment. It just was such a foreign concept to her. If you didn't pay attention in gym class, you had to run laps and she was like, 'Well, can I run them anyways?'

[chuckles]

S2 06:26 I can relate to that. That was one thing when I was trained as a PE teacher. They always said, 'Don't use running as a punishment because then people will stop running.' Sure enough, they do that, don't they?

S4 06:37 Yeah.

S2 06:40 Alana, how has your injury status been? Have you been fairly healthy as you have trained and ramped up your competition levels?

S4 06:48 I have. I'm 17 now, so it's about 10 to 11 years of running that I have under my belt. During that period of time, there's only been one time that I have injured myself to where I couldn't run the next day. I've been very lucky, and we've been very good in making sure that I'm staying well balanced in training and recovering to make sure that I don't get injuries that a lot of people do.

S2 07:23 Talk to me a little bit about what your typical training regimen consists of? I know that you're starting to think about doing a marathon in June. You just did a half marathon recently. What kind of training mileage are you doing per week, and do you just do the same thing every day, or do you switch it up? What do you do?

S4 07:42 I normally do about-- I just hit about 110 miles a week now. That'll be what I do before-- when I'm preparing for a marathon, it's about 110 miles a week. I normally run two times a day. One in the morning, one in the afternoon, except for days that I do long runs.

S2 08:05 I just want us to stop for a second, and I want people listening to think about that for just a second - 110 miles a week, so you are averaging what? 15, 16, 17 miles a day?

S4 08:16 Yeah, it's around there.

[laughter]

S3 08:19 I think it's probably good to note in there how she got there. She got there over the course of 10 or 11 years. So it basically was about an increase of 10 miles a week per year. First year, she may be running a total of 0 to 10 miles a week. Second year, 10 to 20 miles a week. So it's been a very gradual increase and that's the only way that she could get up to that level. I think it's just a little bit unusual that you have somebody who's 17, who is running for 10 years.

S2 08:48 Right, and I think it comes back to also-- when we asked about the injury question, is that, that gradual acclimatization probably has also prevented a lot of the injury issues that so many of these other marathoners have that are putting in that kind of mileage.

S3 09:01 That's exactly right. That's what I've seen as a coach. That the injuries primarily come from either adding quantity or quality too quickly.

S2 09:09 It is unfortunate that so few people in the country run or are moderately active now. They just hear these things and they think nothing of it. The mileage that

- some of the elite marathoners, including Alana, put in is just absolutely amazing.
- S3 09:27 There's a great quote I like from Hal Higdon where he said that, people spend 20 years of their life getting out of shape and then they want to be back in shape in six weeks.
- S2 09:36 That's right [chuckles]. That's right.
- S3 09:40 So it's always important to ramp up what you're doing slowly and give the body time to adapt well before switching. I think that's why Alana stayed injury-free, except for the one instance, and even then, it was-- she had a stress reaction in her inner foot and that was from more adding quality back too quickly after a race, as opposed to any type of quantity issue.
- S2 10:09 I think most folks listening can understand the quantity issue. What do you mean when you talk about the quality?
- S3 10:16 A good example would be if you had a runner who was running, let's say, 40 miles a week on a regular basis. But all of it was just easy miles where they were going out and running six miles a day, seven days a week, and running 42 miles a week. All of that at a relatively same pace. Then, they started adding in speed work. They've added speed work or hill repeats or some type of quality element to their training. They've added that too often or too quickly and didn't allow their body to sort of adjust to it and then they could-- You see that a lot in high school runners and even sometimes in the collegiate runners, where they are out of season and they're not doing much quality elements. And then they jump into a season and they add in a bunch of quality [?] add in a bunch of track workouts and stuff too quickly into their schedule, and they end up with an injury that way.
- S2 11:12 It's like they want to get it all back right now.
- S3 11:15 Yeah [chuckles]. That's probably the underlying theme. It's sort of impatience, is what ends up getting people into trouble.
- S2 11:24 Alana, is that how you vary your workout, so it's not the same thing every day? You add different quality elements to it?
- S4 11:31 Yes. I try to make sure we have a good balance of the quality workout, so I'm working different sections of speed and endurance and stamina to make sure that I'm staying well balanced in what I'm doing.
- S2 11:48 I think earlier, one of you said something about recovery and rest. What role does rest play in this? Do you run every day of the week, or do you take some time off or...?
- S4 11:59 I do. I run every single day of the week. Normally, after a major race like a marathon, twice a year, I will take a downtime where I won't run for a period of about three to four days. Then, I'll just kind of slowly add mileage back. Once my mileage gets back up, then I add quality back in there. Especially in high school, it's a lot of making sure I'm getting the proper amount of sleep, I'm eating the right amount, I'm taking care of my body properly, making sure it recovers after hard workouts.
- S2 12:40 It's interesting you bring up sleep because when we bring on sports medicine people here, especially that work with collegiate athletes, that's the one thing they say over and over and over again. That they can't get their athletes to do,

and that's to get enough sleep.

- S3 12:52 That's [chuckles] one of the things I think Alana's done so well, is she can sleep. She can go to bed and sleep for 11-12 hours sometimes, especially on the weekend. I think that's really served her well, the fact that she's such a good sleeper, just allowing her body to adapt and do what it does on a training basis.
- S2 13:18 Coach, when you work with other runners - and we're going to talk about some of the other runners that you work with in a little bit - is that an element of the training that you talk to them about? Is making sure they get enough rest?
- S3 13:30 Absolutely. Usually, the first conversation I have with an athlete is talking about that running is just like any other physical activity. The way you get better at it is through stress and recover. The recover piece of that is just as important as the stress piece. If you stress the body and don't allow it to properly recover before you stress again, you're not going to get the benefit of that original stress. So that's one of the first conversations I have with them, and I start talking to them what does that mean? That means we can't be pushing the pace on our easy days. We're in shape enough where we can still run on our easy days and [?] recovery, but that means we can't push the pace on that. We have to make sure we get proper recovery. And with a lot of them, it's a couple of days of easy running in between those quality workouts, those stress workouts.
- S2 14:25 Now, Alana just mentioned something a few minutes ago that I want to come back and revisit, and that's the intake of food. Because as you have rest, you have recovery, but you also have to refuel as well. And I kind of made the joke earlier about running that much, you can eat anything you want. But, you don't want to eat anything at all. So what kind of guidelines do you have, Alana, for what you eat?
- S4 14:48 I try to keep a well-balanced diet. Make sure that I'm getting every food group properly covered. I'm eating enough vegetables and fruits and meats and grains and all of that. While I still like-- I know everyone does, I have a major sweet tooth, so I enjoy eating a whole bunch of sweets. But I do try to make sure that I'm keeping it balanced. Sometimes instead of grabbing the cookies, maybe you grab some sunflower seeds to get healthier fats in your diet rather than all the sugary--
- S2 15:25 Speaking of that, now when you're racing, do you take in anything during the race, other than water of course? We see so much now that people are talking about taking gels during the race or other kinds of nutrients. Do you do that, or is that a trade secret that you don't want to give away at this point?
- S4 15:42 [chuckles] In the shorter races, I don't. In the marathons, however, I do. I would normally try to get in a sports drink, either a Powerade or Gatorade, depending on what the race has. I keep a GU or a gel with me in the race to take either once or twice depending on how your body feels that you need. But I try to at least take one gel during a marathon.
- S2 16:16 That's a question that we get all the time, is if people are exercising, when they should drink sports drinks and when they should just drink water. And certainly when they're running marathons, they certainly need to think about the electrolytes and carbohydrates to get that in.
- S3 16:29 Yeah, that's what I advise my runners, that if they're running marathons, they

need to make sure that they're replacing some of their electrolytes as well as their fluids along the way. That can be done in a couple of different ways. You might just take water. You might have a gel or something that has some electrolytes in it, or you can take one of the sports drinks and try to get people to take in the right amount. They don't need something every few minutes, but they need to pace it out appropriately. That's something I always go to with all my runners before they run a marathon. It depends on how long you are going to be out there too. With Alana, she is out there for 2 hours and 40 minutes in a marathon. It's different than someone who's going to be out there 4 or 5 hours, [so we have?] to approach it a little bit different.

S2 17:15 Representing those people that are out there for the 4-hour mark, I can tell you I need more than just one electrolyte [chuckles].

S3 17:23 Yeah, it depends. The weather plays a big role in that too. Whether or not, it's going to be 40 degrees for the marathon or 70.

S2 17:30 You folks live in Charlotte, North Carolina, which is the home of huge humidity in the summer. So that really starts to change how you train in the summer as opposed to in the winter, in the spring, I would guess?

S3 17:46 Yeah, that's right. We like to call it poor man's altitude.  
[chuckles]

S3 17:50 The heat and humidity, just because of all the water in the air, making less oxygen available. But yeah, you have to back off your training paces some during the summertime. You have to think more about properly replacing your fluids and your electrolytes while you're out there and then afterwards. It just becomes a little-- you have to be a little bit more diligent about things and a little bit smarter about what kind of paces you plan to do in a race. Let's say, if we do a temple run at 6 minutes a mile during the winter when weather's pretty nice and cool, if we're going to do that during the summertime and it's a dew point of 75 degrees, we have to back off 5 or 10 seconds a mile on that pace expectation.

S2 18:42 It's amazing. Here, our humidity's been-- temperature's been fluctuating quite a bit here. If our humidity is 30%, I'm good to go. But if it goes up to 50%, it's amazing how that just knocks 20 seconds per mile off my time no matter how hard you try to run at it.

S4 18:59 Yeah, you have to get adjusted to running in the heat and humidity, which is one of the things we also have to take into account during the summers. Is we have to try to slowly let your body adjust to being in that humidity. You can't just expect yourself to automatically be able to run in there.

S3 19:21 Running a warm-weather race in May is a lot different than running a warm-weather race in September when you've had a whole summer to [crosstalk] to the warmer weather.

S2 19:29 Right, I prefer the one in September.  
[laughter]

S3 19:33 Myself too.

S2 19:34 Mark, tell us a little bit about the Marathon Trials Project that you're heading

up.

S3 19:38

Sure. I started the Marathon Trials Project back in December of 2012 right when the USATF and the USOC announced what the trial standards were going to be. Times that people had to hit in order to qualify for the 2016 trials. Having been a runner for a long time and having that-- I talked to a lot of people whose goal-- a lot of the better runners whose goal is to qualify for the trials and do well. I decided to-- that fit my coaching very well. I sort of specialize in the marathon and half marathon distances. I have some good experience coaching some elite level runners, so I wanted to be able to use that to help people qualify for the Olympic Trials. And the more people we have out there, running at a high level and training at a high level, the more people that they're inspiring, the more people that they're touching, and the better it is for our sport. I want to see the sport of marathon running become as strong as possible in the country. So it was a good opportunity for me to help people and then help that segment of the sport in our country. Right now, I currently have 15 people that are in the project. Alana has qualified. I have several right on the doorstep of qualifying. Should hopefully get the majority of our people we have in the project there to the trials, but it's something that I'm going to do for each trials as well. We're doing it for 2016 now, but then after 2016, we'll do it again for the 2020 project. I have people all over the country. I have some minimal time requirements to make sure that the people are in the ballpark that they-- that that is a real goal that they might be able to do over the next couple of years. And then, we get them on the right path to make that goal a reality.

S2 21:48

That's cool and what we will do is we're going to-- for those folks listening, if you want to read more about this, we'll put up the website for that. It's [mprunning.com](http://mprunning.com), and you can find a description of that and you find a description of the other coaching services that Coach Hadley represents. A lot of good information on there about running, if you're just interested in general running. Again, we'll put that website up on the show notes for everyone. It sounds like you're rolling along pretty well with the Trials Project. You've got 15, and you said you-- how many of those are already qualified?

S3 22:24

Currently, we just have one that's qualified. Several that are looking at-- probably in their next marathon, they will get to qualifying standards.

S2 22:31

You've got another year and a half anyway, don't you?

S3 22:33

Yeah, exactly. You have till-- the trial standard-- the cutoff is a month before the trials. The trials is in February of 2016, so they have all the way through January of 2016. So we got almost another 17-18 months to get people there. So really, this first year has been in getting people on the right path, letting them start and make progress in their training, get closer. And we've had a lot of people that have moved really-- made significant strides in this past year and are really sort of on the doorstep now. Several that ran very well at the Boston Marathon most recently that are really excited about, now, running their fall marathon because they think they can probably get the standard then.

S2 23:18

That's super, and we'll keep an eye on what's going on with that, so we can get updates on how the Trials Project is going on. We're going to finish up here with a couple of things. Alana, tell us about your favorite marathon that you've run so far?

S4 23:30 My favorite marathon was definitely Indianapolis. That was a great course, and I just had a really good experience with the people who ended up being around the time that I was in - all the spectators on the course, the race production crew, all the people who put the race on. It was just a really great overall experience and, of course, it helps that I got the trials qualifying on that time, so it kind of puts a special place with me.

S2 24:02 That's super, and the next one you're training for is-- is it the Grandmother Marathon?

S4 24:06 Yeah, it's Grandma's Marathon in Duluth, Minnesota.

S2 24:10 That should be nice for you. Also to tell the audience, we're going to put up the link for Alana's blog. She's got a nice blog out there. It's called [alana-growingupfast.blogspot.com](http://alana-growingupfast.blogspot.com) and just kind of the journal of all your training, and how it's going, right?

S4 24:26 Yes.

S2 24:27 So check that out. That's pretty cool. We're running out of time here, and as we do all of our guests, we're going to give both of you an opportunity to give us your take-home message. What do you want the audience to remember from this podcast? Alana, we'll start with you first.

S4 24:43 This message [will be?] important to me as I want everyone to remember that you should always live towards your dreams and what matters to you, no matter what other people say to you. I feel it's very important to live life to the fullest and to live it the way that you feel and are most passionate about.

S2 25:08 Great take-home message. Coach Hadley, you get to try to top that.

[laughter]

S3 25:13 She's a hard act to follow. I think the big message from me would be that running is such a great sport, and it's a great sport, especially, for our young people. That they can do that, it is safe for them as long as they go about it in a safe manner, and that's following that stress and recover principle that we talked about. As long as it's done in a safe manner, there's all sorts of benefits from this sport for young people. I can see just a self-confidence that it has brought to my daughter. I think it's helped her academically as well because it's taught her discipline. I've always tried to teach her that running is a microcosm of life. And that the lessons that you learn through running are applicable in life - setting goals, working hard towards them and achieving them. And what better lesson to teach our young people than goals-- than things like that. I would encourage people to consider running as a sport that they can get their children or their nephews and nieces or other young people involved in, that can really help mold their life.

S2 26:27 Super take-home message. I thank you both for taking the time to be with us today. I've enjoyed the conversation.

S4 26:33 No problem. It was fun.

S3 26:35 We appreciate you having us on.

S2 26:37 You're more than welcome. I want to take the time to thank everyone that's listening today for taking the time to download us and continuing to listen.



Regular listeners to this podcast will know that it's at this time that we have the weekly podcast question of the week, and here with the podcast question is our producer, Ayland.

S5 26:55

How many miles a week does Alana run?

S2 26:58

Thanks, Ayland, for that question. Remember, be the first one to send us the correct answer to that question and you'll win one of those nifty podcast T-shirts that we have. Make sure you send your answer to Huffines Podcast at [hlkn.tamu.edu](mailto:hlkn.tamu.edu). Again, thank you all for taking the time to join us. Alana and Mark, thanks again for being with us.

S3 27:21

Thank you.

S4 27:21

Thank you.

S2 27:22

You're welcome, and we hope that you all take the time to listen next week, when we'll have another interesting person from the world of sports medicine and human performance with us. Until then, we ask that you stay active and healthy.

S1 27:36

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