



Hi, <<First Name>>!

This week, I spoke with Mathew Laye, PhD. He is a member of all three categories covered on Science Of Ultra: athlete, coach, scientist. He's been running for more than 20 years and won his first and only 100 miler in 2014, Rocky Raccoon. I interviewed him primarily as an athlete and coach, but it will also be exciting to see what research he develops as he begins his career as a new faculty member at College of Idaho.

Science Of Ultra is my way of giving back to the wonderful community we share. If it is worth \$1 to you, help sustain Science Of Ultra [HERE](#). *The topics of the next three episodes will be: 1) altitude, 2) heat acclimation, and 3) high intensity interval training.*

You can connect with Matt:

Twitter [@mjlaye](#)

Blog <https://layeingitdown.wordpress.com>

Matt brought out many important ideas and approaches to training. Some of the key points are:

Training demands are different depending on the distance of your race. You can link together multiple days in a week to build the training load. Combine back-to-back runs, Saturday and Sunday for example, of 20-30% of the race distance on each run. Consistency is the primary key to success. Stay healthy, enjoy the training, and stay consistent.

Sufficient recovery is critical for progress. Matt uses a three-week cycle with two weeks of a high training load weeks followed by one easier week. And, he incorporates hard interval work with longer,

slower distance runs each week.

Matt suffered a hamstring injury that caused him to “did not start” (DNS) the Western States 100. He attempted to push through the discomfort by continuing his training because he wanted to run the race. This only prolonged his recovery and resulted in the DNS. In retrospect, he realizes that this injury crept up slowly. He knew it was developing over as much as two months but did not give it the attention he should have, and it progressed into a true injury. Lesson learned - pay attention to small discomforts; don't push through niggles that hint at underlying injury. Work on your skills of patience, and rest.

As a coach, Matt emphasizes the importance of training specificity. This means training on terrain and elevation changes as well as the same paces that mimic your race. For example, you may be able to run some hills on short training runs, but if you are training for a 100-mile race, you may expect to speed hike similar hills in the race. So, you should speed hike those hills in training in some workouts.

80/20. Run your easy days easy (roughly 80% of your training) and your hard days hard (about 20%). Too many people run their easy days too hard and their hard days not hard enough.

It's great to have other ultra marathon runners engaged in research. I'll keep an eye on Matt's research progress as he settles into his new faculty position at the College of Idaho and have him back on the show as his research program develops. Remember to sustain Science Of Ultra [HERE](#).

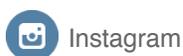
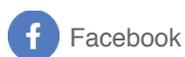
***Two take-home recommendations from Matt for your training:***

- Use a heart rate monitor to help you stay true to the intended intensities, especially if you are not very experienced with judging your effort levels, when you are getting back into your training, or when you are starting a new running season. Strava is another tool Matt likes for finding and tracking routes that match race demands.
- Incorporate long and fast downhill running. There is substantial neuromuscular adaptation that will benefit your running on all grades (this is something that [Michael Joyner, MD also recommended in episode 18](#)).

All the Best,

Shawn

Chief Running Officer, [Science Of Ultra](#)



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