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Emily Abbate: The energy in here is hype.

00:00:02

Andy Downing: This is a full marathon distance. We have 24 teams. There's over 600 runners.

00:00:08

Lauren Hunnewell: This track is fast. It flies.

00:00:10

Ali Feller: Spent the whole time out there being like, "Professional runners choose to do this for a living? This is awful."

00:00:21

Rob: Hey everybody, and welcome to Set the Pace, the official podcast of New York Road Runners presented by Peloton. It's a special edition of Set the Pace. We're here in Boston at the track at New Balance where an incredible event's going on right now, an indoor marathon relay happening at this track just outside of Boston. We've got teams of kids and adults running one-mile legs to complete a marathon together. And one of the teams that's running is a team that is founded by my original partner on Set the Pace, and of course, 2014 Boston Marathon Champion, New York City Marathon champion, silver medalist in the Olympics, Meb Keflezighi, the OG co-host of Set the Pace. What's up, Meb?

00:01:06

Meb Keflezighi: (inaudible) Rob. Good to be with you again.

00:01:08

Rob: It's great to have you. You've got a team of youngsters out there competing in this event for the MEB Foundation. Telling me how that's going. How are the kids doing out there?

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Meb Keflezighi: Good. Shout out to Chris Heisler, who lives in Boston, decided, you know what? We brainstormed and said, "Let's pick 26 kids who can run 1 mile age to introduce them to the sport that we love and be able to just work hard and discipline." And I had a Zoom call with them, introductory. But there are 26 kids who want to be able to just represent the MEB Foundation, (inaudible) through health, education and fitness. They've been doing a lot of testing. So this is a good way to segue to just have the good weekend.

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Rob: It's great. And that's kind of what the MEB Foundation is all about. It's about giving these kids an opportunity to run. Tell folks who don't know what that foundation does.

00:01:54

Meb Keflezighi: So the MEB Foundation is giving back to young kids through health, education, and fitness because I was not able to offer shoes. I was introduced in poverty and be able not to have the shoes that I wanted, but look what I have been made. I don't expect them to be an Olympian, but I expect them to be a good contributor to society, better communicators. And for them is to be able to work with small details, discipline, dedication, time management, to be good students, and then eventually a positive contributor to society.

00:02:22

Rob: Awesome. Meb, I saw you yesterday at the Boston Marathon Expo. You had just been on a panel and I hadn't seen you yet, so I wanted to go say hi, but there was a line about 20 deep of people wanting to shake your hand or get an autograph. How is it for you still? We're now 12 years removed from your legendary win at the Boston Marathon, but how do you feel when you come back to Boston?

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Meb Keflezighi: Rob, I've been very blessed with my running to win the silver medal in '04, to win the biggest marathon the war, New York City in '09. In 2014, after the horrific moment of the bombing, I was able to win for all of us with the victims on my bib, (inaudible). So people are still resigned to that because I guess I kind of helped heal the city a little bit, both part of enforcement and that victory just means so much, not only to me, but for the community of running.

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Rob: Does it still feel like home to you in that way? I mean, the reaction you get from folks is still so palatable.

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Meb Keflezighi: It is because I love to do meet and greet with people and they still want to tell me whether they tell me before or not where they were that day, whether they were at work or they were on a flight or they were just screaming at work and saying, "You got to watch this," and you have 10 people cheering for you. So it never gets old and I still get goosebumps on my arms.

00:03:44

Rob: All right. Meb's going to hang out and do some interviews. We're going to interview a bunch of folks who have just come off the track from all kinds of walks of life, former pro athletes, people in the New York Road Runners team and community as well. So Meb, stick around. Let's talk some folks.

00:03:58

Meb Keflezighi: Sounds great. Thanks so much.

00:04:00

Rob: Maybelline New York is proud to return as the official title partner of the Maybelline Women's Half Marathon on April 26th in Central Park. In partnership with New York Roadrunners, this sold out race brings together 5,000 women for 13.1 miles of empowerment, strength, and community, and represents Maybelline's continued commitment to supporting women and mental health through movement, connection, and their global Brave Together Initiative, which provides long-term support for those facing anxiety and depression.

This year, Maybelline is once again partnering with NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness to raise awareness and funds during this powerful event. Don't forget, race day starts with Maybelline. Wear your SuperStay matte ink at the start line, and then celebrate at the Finishers Village with custom product engraving and free products from Maybelline and Garnier.

And here with us from New Balance is Andy Downing. And Andy, it's great to have you on the show. Where we are right now is an amazing event that for the second straight year you guys have put on at this track, Boston Marathon Weekend, a New Balance marathon relay. You got a bunch of teams running one-mile legs around this gorgeous track you have here and it's a terrific event. So first of all, congratulations. This is a great idea.

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Andy Downing: No, first off, thanks for having me on. I mean, what a pleasure and what a weekend. I mean, maybe the best, maybe the second-best weekend of the year, New York, pretty good too. So yeah, I mean, we built this track in 2022, opened it up. We opened it up with a world record in the DMR. And since then, we've tried to set for five years, try to just host really, really premium events here at the track at New Balance.

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Meb Keflezighi: So Matt, what do you think, Andy, is he able to be here to see what's going on for the people that are at

home? What does this facility mean? So New Balance and the people that are running?

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Andy Downing: Yeah, for sure. So this is a full marathon distance. We have 24 teams. There's over 600 runners. We estimate about 1,500, 2000 spectators. It's completely free. Everything you see here is free.

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Meb Keflezighi: That's awesome.

00:06:14

Andy Downing: Yeah. So you run 1 mile leg, so it's teams of 26 runners. They run one mile each. And we truly do believe in Run Your Way, which is our brand motto. So run, walk, crawl. No matter what, get into running. The positive effects of running are so clear. So we don't care. We just want to bring out as many people as we can to have an amazing time and have a great experience.

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Meb Keflezighi: Talk about the experience, Run Your Way. How do you feel like having Olympians, World Championship people, and then running first timers here? The interaction, how do you think that is?

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Andy Downing: I mean, to us, it's been, even before we had the slogan Run Your Way, running should be an inclusive sport. That's what's great about running. So we feel like this brings together 90 year olds who are walking. I mean, my daughter just ran. She's 14. She's in high school. So my wife just ran. She's 52. So all walks of life out here. The coolest thing is the smiles on people's face. You just scan the crowd. Everybody's having an amazing time. So it brings together all walks of life to have a great time.

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Rob: So all day long, we're going to have people who are running come and visit us here on Set the Pace. So you're the first of probably 25 guests we're going to have today. I don't even know how many, but we're going to be cycling through folks from New York Road Runners, other runners, run clubs, celebrities, all kinds of folks who are out here running. And that's what's great about an event like this is you can include so many people. The commitment is not so great. Come out, run a mile. Maybe they're running the marathon on Monday. Maybe they're just hanging out here for the weekend as a part of the event, but anyone can come

out and be a part of this.

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Andy Downing: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, what we saw a couple of years ago was, which it's amazing, but there's so many shakeout runs in downtown Boston, and we have this special facility, the track at New Balance, and we wanted to have as many people as possibly be able to experience it, you know what I mean? On a high energy weekend and give them something really unique and different than just your average shakeout run. So that was the idea.

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Rob: Now let's talk about this facility and what's happening here the rest of the year. So it's gorgeous. This is a true indoor track. You guys are hosting major events here, national collegiate championships, high school championships. How did that play into what you guys do at New Balance to have a facility like this right across the street from your headquarters here in Boston?

00:08:39

Andy Downing: Yeah. I mean, it's everything that we've ever been about, for 120 years we've been around and it's athlete first and it's all athletes to service all types of athletes. So we built this. This is 450,000 square feet, the whole facility, it's a multipurpose. So it has a fully retractable ... This track can go completely flat and a retractable turf can come across the entire thing. So you can play soccer. I don't know, maybe you're a soccer guy, can play lacrosse. It also has a full basketball court that can roll out. There's a 25,000 square foot warmup facility, which is a rubberized track up on, and then obviously you can see up here, four major suites. So for the last five years, we've hosted the high school national championships, the NCA Championships, world records, national records, and about 80 other track meets throughout the season.

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Rob: Well, it's incredible. Congratulations to you, to the whole team at New Balance. We love that you guys have an event like this over Boston Marathon weekend, because as much as we love our friends at the Boston Marathon and their partners, we like to be in our partner's house here in Boston for Boston Marathon weekend. So it's great you guys have this.

00:09:53

Andy Downing: Again, thank you for having me. I mean, what a pleasure to have Meb here. The MEB Foundation is crushing

today, Meb. Why don't you tell us, tell us about the team that's running today for the MEB Foundation.

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Meb Keflezighi: This is such a great facility. Last year we had all the foundation runners that running the marathon running, but this year we decided to go to have 26 local runners, high school chosen by their teacher or by their PE coach to have and then to be able to just have them. That's why the MEB Foundation is youth program and to have them here represent the MEB Foundation, I couldn't be any prouder.

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Andy Downing: It's incredible.

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Rob: All right. Andy Downing, the Senior Manager of Events and Partnerships for New Balance. Thanks so much for joining us.

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Andy Downing: Incredible. Thank you guys. Thanks for having me.

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Rob: Yeah, appreciate it-

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Meb Keflezighi: Thank you.

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Rob: Thank you. And we are joined now by a woman who does not need an introduction in this space, the one and only Ali Feller from Ali on the Run. And Ali, you were like the first person I saw when I got off the train, like out of the Uber at my hotel to get here to Boston. I look up and there's Ali Feller walking into the Fairmont Hotel at Copley Square. And it was so great to see that because I feel like you're such a big part of this marathon, this Boston marathon. Everyone is so happy to see you here in Boston, to see you healthy. I know you weren't feeling well last week, but you're feeling better now it looks like because you went out there and you ran a mile?

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Ali Feller: I ran a mile. I mean, I did something. Yeah, I made it through. I spent the whole time out there being like, "Professional runners choose to do this for a living. This is awful." Great vibes, but running, racing a mile on a track is so hard. Keeping count of the last ... Yeah, I survived it.

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Rob: She did it.

00:11:35

Ali Feller: And of course now I'm like, it was so fun. But at the time I was like, " This sucks. This is awful. I'm dying."

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Meb Keflezighi: It's a short pain, but it's exhilarating because a mile is just something that everybody can relate and to start where you are. But how have you ranked the energy here at the New Balance, the track versus Boston versus New York?

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Ali Feller: That's not fair.

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Meb Keflezighi: It is fair because we have Ali on the show.

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Ali Feller: Pick your favorite children and rank them.

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Meb Keflezighi: Ooh. You got me there.

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Ali Feller: I mean, this energy is amazing. Having everyone on the infield is so fun. Last year I was at this event as a spectator and I watched it and then this year agreed to join a team and I was honored to be on the (inaudible) team with Olympians and me. But I mean, this energy's great. Everyone's choosing to be here. Everyone's happy to be here. And I think that is something that you see in Boston, in New York at the track is that this is something everyone wants to do. I mean, I'm sure there are a few people that got tricked into running a marathon with a dare or a late night agreement, but for the most part, this is something we all want to do. And I think that's such a big difference between having to run the mile in gym class in fifth grade, whereas we're paying to be here and we love it. So the energy's very different in all of those places and very unique. People always want you to say New York or Boston. And I'm like, " I'm not doing it. "

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Rob: You don't have to do it.

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Ali Feller: I can't.

00:13:04

Rob: You don't have to choose. It's fine.

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Ali Feller: They're each incredible and it's amazing how different they are too, that yes, they're both majors, they're both in the Northeast, but they're so different.

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Meb Keflezighi: We're talking about energy. I love your energy.

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Ali Feller: I love you-

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Meb Keflezighi: ... You give back, so matter to the community, how has that now? Perspective's always good to run something and then when your injury come back and your sickness that you have, we love you, but how does that now change your life and perspective?

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Ali Feller: Oh God, it's changed everything. I am genuinely excited every time I get to run. One of my biggest pet peeves is when people say they have to go for a run. I don't care if you're training for a marathon, you don't have to go for a run. You get to. And aren't we lucky to get to do that? And I think anyone, whether you've dealt with a sickness or an injury or a setback or whatever, we've all had things. No one's training ever goes perfectly. We've all had our things that take us away from the thing we love to do. And so I think it's so important to have that gratitude that like, yeah, a couple of years ago I ran a mile much faster than I did today and I don't care.

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Rob: Why would you?

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Ali Feller: I know that because I know, but I'm so happy to be here.

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Rob: You're here running a mile and making so many people smile, including yourself.

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Ali Feller: People were screaming the whole time. People are so nice and people were cheering for me the whole way around. And on lap one, it was fun. And on lap two, I was like, all right, this will be helpful. By lap three, I was like, "Don't look at me. Don't know my name." I was in the pain cave so early. I very much wanted to be anonymous in those last six laps.

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Rob: I get it. I get it. It's hard for you or you, by the way, to be anonymous in Boston on Marathon weekend. No doubt about it.

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Meb Keflezighi: It is, but you see the thrill, the smile in people's, whether you're Olympian, world-class or high schoolers and things like that. It's just delighted to be at the track just to get the energy.

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Ali Feller: Oh, it's the best. There's nothing like this.

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Rob: Ali, what has the reaction been like from people to you this weekend? I can only imagine you, for those who don't know, Ali's on the cover of the Boston Marathon kind of official program for this weekend. The story of what you've been through the last couple of years, not one but two battles with breast cancer. We are so happy to have you here with us sitting here next to us and a part of this weekend you'll be announcing again at the finish line this weekend on Monday. What's it been like just to feel the love from people here in Boston?

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Ali Feller: I think that if everyone in this world could feel a fraction of the love that I've gotten this weekend and over the past few years, we would have world peace. Everything would be ... We would solve everything because I've been so inundated with love. There is a part of me that is like, "Oh, everyone's going to get really sick of me really soon." I'm at my peak and everyone's nice and I'm on the cover of the program. Surely the other shoe's about to drop. And I do have that part of my brain that unfortunately thinks that way, but it's really overwhelming.

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Rob: And how did it help you get through all of this? Because I can only imagine how many points you must have had over the last couple of years where maybe you felt like

giving up or just not fighting anymore. To get that support, all those messages to tell you to keep going. What has it meant to you? How did it help you through this?

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Ali Feller: I mean, it's everything. I have the most amazing support system. I have the best friends and family, and so I'm so lucky. But there are those days where you just want to withdraw and you don't want to talk to anyone. And yeah, there were some really dark days. And the running community, I left the running community for a bit, not by choice, but I couldn't go to races during chemo. I've had surgeries. I was removed from it for a bit, but running and the community never left me. And as soon as I was ready to come back, they were there in the most celebratory way. And it's just no one prepares you for what that feels like. It's overwhelming in the best way possible, but I hope I give that gratitude back. I hope people know how much it means to me.

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Rob: You give it back. You really do.

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Ali Feller: I hope so.

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Rob: Everybody knows.

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Ali Feller: Okay, great. Okay, thank God.

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Rob: Absolutely. Thank you for spending a couple of minutes with us.

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Ali Feller: Thank you guys so much.

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Rob: We love you. Have a great weekend, have a great time on Monday and we'll see you around soon.

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Ali Feller: We'll see you in New York.

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Rob: Ali Feller.

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Ali Feller: Thank you guys.

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Rob: Ali on the Run. Next up, we've got two very fast guests, both of whom host a podcast for CITIUS Magazine. Eric Jenkins, a retired pro distance runner, two time NCAA champions at Oregon. He ran the 3,000 and the 5,000, competed for Nike out there in Oregon. Welcome to the show.

00:18:00

Eric Jenkins: Thank you.

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Rob: And Aisha Praught-Leer, also with Cities Magazine, a two-time Olympian for Jamaica in the steeplechase and the 1,500 as well. Welcome to the podcast.

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Aisha Praught-Leer: Thanks for having us.

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Rob: Yeah, thank you. So how was your mile out there? Did you guys both run?

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Aisha Praught-Leer: Oh, we ran. It burned. It doesn't feel the same as it once did, but we had a blast.

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Eric Jenkins: Yeah. It never gets easier. It's really fun. Such a fun event here today, but yeah, we put in the work, put in our miles and I think we're done for the day.

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Meb Keflezighi: Eric, the biggest difference between running fast as a pro versus running fast as a team-

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Eric Jenkins: I mean, when you're running fast as a pro, there's a bit more at stake. When it's just you and your (inaudible). When it's just you and your friends, it's a bit more fun. So it's kind of like a mental state kind of difference. Yeah.

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Rob: Tell me about the podcast. For those who don't know it, what do you guys talk about? Running, I know, but what's the theme?

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Aisha Praught-Leer: So our podcast is called Off the Rails. And we do talk about running, but we also talk about pop culture, current events. I will say there are times where you won't want to play it at work or around your young kids. It's off the rails. We sometimes get out there on topics that people don't usually talk about in the running space. So it's very fun. The episodes drop Monday and they're about two hours long, so that's for a specific audience, but we have a lot of fun.

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Rob: I think running needs that kind of thing, to be honest because we love talking about running, but you kind of want to change it up once in a while. Talk about what else is happening in life.

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Eric Jenkins: Exactly. That's what we're trying to deliver.

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Rob: That's very good. Tell me about your career. So are you originally from Jamaica?

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Aisha Praught-Leer: I'm a dual citizen, so my dad is Jamaican and my mom's American. And I have 10 half siblings that are all Jamaican, so big family, but I grew up in Illinois.

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Rob: And how did you come to dominate in the steeplechase, the 1,500? What was your path to all that?

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Aisha Praught-Leer: Yeah, I kind of fell into the steeplechase in college. We needed another steeple chaser because we had a senior that was graduating and my college coach made everybody on the team run over a hurdle and it was very obvious some people were not meant to be steeplechasers and I guess meant to be one. So it was very fun to be a trailblazer for Jamaica in the event and win the first global medals over 1,500 in steeplechase. So it was great to carry that torch.

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Rob: And Eric, what about you and your collegiate career? What was the best thing for you about competing at that level?

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Eric Jenkins: Oh, man. I think one of the best things was just being with my teammates, being around people who had the

same kind of like-minded goals as you do. I think that brings you to a new level, pushes you a bit more. Of course, you're competing at a really high level, but I look back at college and about my time at Oregon and just think about how much fun I had with my teammates.

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Meb Keflezighi: Actually, I know running is ... Most people are participating here. You participate as a pro. What is that thing that you changed to corporate America? What is that thing that you miss about (inaudible) ?

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Aisha Praught-Leer: Yes. I miss the time to train full-time. Oh my goodness. All the people that have full-time jobs and are working 40, 50, 60 hours a week and still find the time to train and race at a high level. I have so much respect now when you're sitting at a desk all day. I don't know how people do it. I don't know how they get out and train and do hard workouts because it's so challenging when you're trying to be good at more than one thing. So a lot of respect to the people still out there grinding.

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Rob: What do you guys do, Meb, to keep that competitive fire going? And it's hard for a lot of people who compete at the levels you did to find a way to keep that edge. What do you guys do to kind of keep that fire burning?

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Eric Jenkins: I mean, I think it's tough to keep that same level of intensity from when you're a pro athlete, then you retire. But I think it's really just about finding ... It might not be running. It might be a whole different thing. Finding a new path and trying to figure out what keeps you motivated, whether it's running, whether it's something different, but just kind of figuring out your why. Yeah.

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Aisha Praught-Leer: Yeah, same. I found a different thing to be competitive in. I retired from running and I have a corporate job in tech. I do something totally different and that's where I now ... I used to be physically challenged. Now I'm intellectually challenged on a daily basis and I find that challenge fun.

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Meb Keflezighi: And what lessons did the sport teach you that you are you using in your corporate world?

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Aisha Praught-Leer: Discipline. It's really, you can tell the difference between people in the office that have been athletes and people that haven't. If I'm having a bad day, it doesn't matter how I feel. I still have to show up and be my best. And that is such an edge that running especially has given me.

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Meb Keflezighi: How about you Eric?

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Eric Jenkins: Well, I mean, running teaches you, instills so many positive life lessons in you. Showing up every single day, even when you don't want to. Thinking about long-term goals and every single day counts towards that goal. I think those are the life lessons that it teaches you the most and you can apply so many things from running to your day-to-day life.

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Rob: Absolutely. Eric, Aisha, great to have you guys with us. Congrats on your mile and good luck with the rest of your podcast episode. We'll definitely check it out.

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Eric Jenkins: Thank you very much.

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Aisha Praught-Leer: Thank you. Thank you.

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Eric Jenkins: Thank you, Meb.

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Rob: Our next guest here at the track at New Balance is another New Balance executive, the lead of our partnership with New York Road Runners, Lauren Hunnewell. Great to have you, Lauren.

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Lauren Hunnewell: Thanks for having me, Rob, and thanks for being here at the track at New Balance. We're so excited to host you guys this weekend.

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Rob: It's amazing. So you ran a leg for New York Road Runner's team up there on the board. We're hanging in there right now. How was your run out there?

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Lauren Hunnewell: It was awesome. I mean, a mile, this truck is fast. It flies. I mean, getting on it, it does ... Its stories tell for itself, but it was so wonderful to be out there with so many people of the community, so many runners, team New York Road Runners, employees, associates, all of the runners from all the different teams. So we had a blast out there.

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Meb Keflezighi: Lauren, you've done so many marathons. I know this is very motivating. Motivates me to come back for running, but what keeps you going to the starting line every time for you?

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Lauren Hunnewell: I would say the people, the community. A marathon isn't just about the runners. It's about the volunteers. It's about the spectators. So it takes not just one person to show up, it takes a team. So I would say it's just wonderful to interact with so many different people on so many different levels and bring it to the finish line together.

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Rob: You've run 40 marathons?

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Lauren Hunnewell: I think 40 something plus. This year will be my 10th New York City Marathon. I am so excited.

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Rob: It's incredible. I'm always amazed by people who have lost track of how many marathons they've actually run. What keeps you coming back to the starting line over and over again?

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Lauren Hunnewell: I think it's honestly, it's the good vibes. It's like the people. It's like being able to meet new people and kind of carry on stories and just kind of be one with the community. I think every marathon is a story in itself, and I think there's just so many wonderful memories and accomplishments when you finish. It's like your own book at the end of each time.

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Meb Keflezighi: The Boston Marathon is two days away. Why do you think makes you come back and what's your favorite part of the weekend?

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Lauren Hunnewell: I would say, again, kind of going through, the Boston Marathon is so iconic in Boston and you see a lot of fast runners, but you see a lot of charity runners though as well. There's so many wonderful charities running this race, raising money for such a great cause. Meb, your charity as well. We love to see it. So just having everyone out there at the start together and finish on so many different levels and have the city. This is a holiday for us in Boston. All the schools have off. My kids are at home. They're excited. Running across the line throughout all the cities and having the kids cheer, the parents cheer. It's a full on Boston experience. So it's just wonderful to see the community wrapped up in this event.

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Rob: One of the things I love about having a podcast like this and having people like you on is I see you fairly often. She is our main point of contact at New Balance for a lot of things. So I see you. But when I have someone like you on the podcast, I get notes about you like this and the notes tell me things I did not know about you. And what I did not know about you is that you run with shelter dogs every single week.

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Lauren Hunnewell: Yeah, every single week.

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Rob: Tell me about this.

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Lauren Hunnewell: Yeah. Every Monday and Friday, we work from home. So instead of like commuting and taking that hour, I go to our local shelter and I run high energy shelter dogs. So I walk in, you never know who you're going to get. Some dogs you run for weeks, some dogs you run once, but like all the dogs are so amazing and so motivational. And I've never met a dog who hasn't loved to run. So it's really fun.

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Rob: It's such a great idea when you think about it because these dogs are, they're cooped up in these shelters. They don't have a lot of room and you can sometimes go and see how much pent-up energy they have. So someone like you comes along and helps them release some of that energy, which must really help them get through their period in the shelter.

00:27:23

Lauren Hunnewell: Yeah. It's definitely accountability buddy. Rain or shine, they're there and I'm there for them. And it helps with my miles too.

00:27:31

Rob: 100%.

00:27:31

Lauren Hunnewell: Get those (inaudible) miles in.

00:27:31

Rob: I love it. I love it. Lauren Hunnewell, great to have you.

00:27:34

Lauren Hunnewell: Thank you guys.

00:27:35

Rob: Congratulations on this awesome event.

00:27:37

Lauren Hunnewell: Awesome. Thank you, Rob. Thank you, Meb.

00:27:43

Rob: Up next year at the track at New Balance is two-time Olympian, Kim Conley joining us here. And Kim, it's great to see you. The last time I saw you was at the finish of the Brooklyn Half, the RBC Brooklyn Half, where you had an incredible day, finished second there. So how was your mile today in the relay?

00:28:01

Kim Conley: Yeah, it was fun. I absolutely love this event. It's just the atmosphere is electric, and so it's fun to come out here and just try to run fast.

00:28:08

Rob: How was your time? Did you have a time goal and how did it go?

00:28:10

Kim Conley: So I turned 40 in March. I had a time goal of breaking 4.40 at 40. I did not do it. I ran 4.49, but I also have another goal going where I've been breaking 5 every year since 2003, so I notched it for this year.

00:28:26

Rob: That's pretty good to keep that streak going. Incredible.

00:28:29

Meb Keflezighi: That's impressive, Kim. You're still active. You still look healthy and really fit. How does the post-running careers treat you now? How is it different now?

00:28:37

Kim Conley: Yeah. I mean, I love running so much. I still love the way it makes me feel. I'm getting used to paces being a little bit slower than they were. And I found that I missed that sense of improvement that I got from running. So I actually started, I joined a beginner tennis group a year ago and I started playing tennis so that I can still enjoy running, the way it makes me feel, but then I have something else now that gives me that sense of like I'm getting better at something also.

00:29:03

Meb Keflezighi: You were very competitive at the Olympic level. How do you see the women's running in the U. S. today?

00:29:09

Kim Conley: It's at a completely different level now. Yeah. I am grateful that I competed in the era that I competed in because I was able to make teams.

00:29:17

Meb Keflezighi: Me too.

00:29:20

Rob: Kim, you were just telling me that your next big challenge that you're taking on is Hyrox when it comes to New York. You're doing the mixed doubles. I'm actually planning on doing Hyrox for the first time as well. What attracted you to Hyrox?

00:29:34

Kim Conley: I'm terrified of Hyrox, to be honest, but ...

00:29:37

Rob: So am I, by the way, completely terrified. Is this going to be your first time?

00:29:41

Kim Conley: It's going to be my first time. Honestly, it was the Ali on the Run show. I got called out publicly. I need to try to do this. And then people on Instagram egged me on and I put out a poll and the votes went towards doing it, so I'm doing it.

00:29:55

Rob: Who's your partner?

00:29:56

Kim Conley: Connor Nichol. So I'm the women's LDR Chair for USATF He's the Men's LDR Chair and so we're doing it together.

00:30:01

Rob: I love it. I love it.

00:30:04

Meb Keflezighi: You are also a coach now that I hear. What is the thing you tell someone to squeeze something out of them to get the best out of them? What mentality do you play?

00:30:14

Kim Conley: I really believe in being process-oriented. So it's kind of like wherever you're coming from, whether that's you're new to running or you're coming back from an injury, it's kind of like taking you where you are now or where you are at the beginning of a buildup and seeing what can we do next that makes you feel like you've successfully climbed that next rung on the ladder to get somewhere you want to go eventually.

00:30:34

Rob: Kim, I know you're planning on running the TCS New York City Marathon this fall, but what's your Boston Marathon history? I have no idea.

00:30:42

Kim Conley: I never did it as a professional runner. It's one of my regrets. But I did notch a BQ last year in Chicago, so I'm planning to run next year, 2027 Boston Marathon.

00:30:51

Rob: Oh, nice. That's awesome. Congrats on the BQ. And what are you looking forward to for New York this year? You got a goal in mind or just go out and have a good time?

00:31:00

Kim Conley: Mostly to have a good time. The last time I did it was 10 years ago. That was my debut marathon in 2016. It was hard and humbling. What I really want out of this is to go soak in the atmosphere. So I'm planning to listen to some music and turn it off when I'm on First Avenue and get to hear the crowds and just really, really enjoy the entire experience.

00:31:21

Meb Keflezighi: What would be your message? Now you are, I'm 40 years old, (inaudible) the sport, Olympics. What would you say to someone who's a 12-year-old girl? What would be your message to her?

00:31:31

Kim Conley: Oh, wow. That you have a long career ahead of you. And then it's not good to try to rush to success. So just take it year by year, that really your foundation and what you're doing has to be rooted in love. Because if you love what you're doing, then you're going to be committed and disciplined. All that's going to be incidental because you're so happy to be doing what you're doing. So don't put pressure on yourself. Don't kind of force yourself to be disciplined. Just find the aspects of the sport that you love about it and lean into those.

00:32:00

Meb Keflezighi: Sounds great.

00:32:00

Rob: All right, Kim Conley. Congratulations on that 4.49 mile. That is really impressive. I'm impressed even if you want it a little bit faster than that. Thanks for joining us. Great to see you.

Our next guest here at the track at New Balance is Emily Abbate. She ran with the Believe in the Run team just now. She's the host of the podcast Hurdle. Emily, welcome to the show.

00:32:26

Emily Abbate: Thanks, Rob. Appreciate you.

00:32:27

Rob: How was your run out there?

00:32:28

Emily Abbate: Oh, man. I think we're all dealing with the track hack, as they call it.

00:32:33

Rob: The track hack.

00:32:33

Emily Abbate: So if I have to excuse myself from coughing, no judgment. No judgment.

00:32:37

Rob: It's dry. It's fine. But this is a fast track. It's fun

to run on something like this.

00:32:40

Emily Abbate: It is a fast track. I felt completely different this year than I did last year, but the vibes are just as high and the energy in here is really great.

00:32:49

Meb Keflezighi: Emily, the track is fast, but your podcast Hurdle. What's the biggest hurdle that you overcame as a runner?

00:32:55

Emily Abbate: Wow. I mean, getting into running at the start, challenging for anyone. I never thought that I would be someone who could qualify for the Boston Marathon. I've since run Boston and I'm so grateful to be here this weekend as a spectator. Again, that energy in Boston is outrageous.

00:33:16

Rob: For those who've never heard the podcast, what's it about?

00:33:17

Emily Abbate: Hurdle is a podcast where I talk to everyone from elite athletes to industry experts and the wellness scope of things about their highest, highs and toughest moments. So honored to be a part of the iHeart Women's Sports Network and really just humbled at the opportunity to talk to so many people that I admire on a regular basis.

00:33:37

Meb Keflezighi: No, Hurdle's about getting the best out of yourself, you might fall back, but energy is also important. How does that relay energy here compared to the marathon?

00:33:47

Emily Abbate: The energy in here is hype. And as you know, at the different points of the marathon, Wellesley, the tunnels, you hear the crowds and everyone, whether you're here or there on Marathon Monday, you have the opportunity to reap the benefit of the crowds, reap the benefit of the energy, and that's just so contagious.

00:34:09

Rob: So you ran on the Belief in the Run team. How'd that all happen? How'd you get hooked up with them?

00:34:13

Emily Abbate: I felt like I got called up to the majors today. I'm healing a part of my inner child who may have

gotten picked close to last in middle school. Last year when we were at this relay, I expressed my interest in being part of the group and I got the call and I said, " Lucky me. "

00:34:32

Rob: That's pretty awesome.

00:34:33

Emily Abbate: Honored to be here with them today.

00:34:35

Meb Keflezighi: Community is important. What is the one thing that you wish people knew about it?

00:34:39

Emily Abbate: Yeah. I mean, community is important regardless of where you go, but here in the running community, whether we're talking about Boston, whether we're talking about back where I come from in New York City, I know that it is the thing that can really help you elevate to the next level. And I'm not just talking about performance. I'm talking about the opportunity to believe in yourself, to go further, to conquer your hurdles, and that's really where community comes in the clutch.

00:35:06

Meb Keflezighi: Well, you're talking about belief. Who surprised you from the believe (inaudible) today? Who surprised you the most?

00:35:11

Emily Abbate: Who surprised me? Oh, man. I mean, we're all having this track hack right now. I saw the Megs as we call them. The Megs really crushed it out there today.

00:35:21

Rob: I love it. Emily, thanks for coming in and joining us. Good luck getting ready for New York.

00:35:26

Emily Abbate: Appreciate that.

00:35:27

Rob: You got a goal?

00:35:27

Emily Abbate: I mean, we'll find out. Time will tell.

00:35:30

Rob: I Like it. Very cool. Very smart. Emily Abbate.

00:35:32

Meb Keflezighi: Have fun.

00:35:33

Emily Abbate: Thanks, Rob. Thanks guys. Thanks for having me.

00:35:35

Speaker 11: Peloton's most advanced tread yet is here. The new Peloton cross-training series, Tread+, powered by Peloton IQ. Designed for runners who want top tier performance, it features premium hardware that makes every run and workout more efficient, effective, and motivating. And it accelerates your personal growth mile after mile. The rubberized slap belt cushions every single step and creates an energizing running space for each stride. And with strength workouts, you can stack right into your routine. You'll build lower body muscle to support stronger runs. With auto incline adjusting automatically to match instructor queues, your intensity stays exactly where it needs to be, so you can stay in the zone and focus on your workout. Experience our most advanced tread yet at onepeloton.com. Peloton, the official digital fitness partner of New York Road Runners.

00:36:33

Rob: Our next guest is Matt Prichard, who's a reporter for a local NBC station here in Boston, covers politics, but today he's out there tearing up this track at New Balance. How was your run out there?

00:36:45

Matt Prichard: It was great. I mean, normally I do more distance runs, so having to do sort of a sprint style race is a little bit different, but thought I put up a good time. Hopefully I helped my team out.

00:36:55

Rob: You ran Boston last year. Was that your first time running it?

00:36:57

Matt Prichard: First time. Did it for charity for Boston Medical Center, \$11,000 raised. So meaningful, and of course the race itself, just the opportunity to do it, just incredible.

00:37:07

Rob: Yeah. Can you talk as someone who's involved here in the Boston community, a reporter for a local station, talk about

what this race means to Boston. We know how much the TCS New York City Marathon means to New York, but in Boston, it's not just a race. It's not just a day. It's a holiday.

00:37:24

Matt Prichard: It is. And it is a state holiday too. It's Patriots Day. It's Marathon Monday. It's the Red Sox game coming out into the streets to cheer on all the runners going by. This is literally woven into the fabric of Boston. People love the race here. They take the day off to take part in it. And of course, we all know we're marking 13 years since the Boston Marathon bombing that took place. Boston Strong grew out of that. This city sort of gained a whole new identity in that moment. It was already a strong city to begin with, strong personalities. It got even more so. So when you talk about the Boston Marathon around here, if you run it's iconic and everybody wants to do it.

00:38:01

Rob: No one will ever forget that terrible incident in 2013, the days that followed that, the police action, the apprehension of the perpetrators, it's just a period that no one will ever forget. And when we come around to the Boston Marathon every year, how does that still play a role in making this an important event for Boston?

00:38:26

Matt Prichard: What's so interesting is we have one Boston day, which happens a few days usually prior to the race, where we see all of our city leaders, family members that were impacted by it, the victim's family members, all coming out on Boylston Street, walking by the memorial where all this happens. So it's truly something that we mark every single year, and then it's time to celebrate when Marathon Monday comes around and everyone just gets gassed up for the marathon itself.

00:38:52

Rob: What do you think is a story this year about the marathon that you think people are getting rallied around? Every year there are different interesting stories about people running about the city. Maybe it's the weather some years. What do you think is going to make this year's marathon special?

00:39:09

Matt Prichard: Yeah, it's a great question. I mean, I think every year I'm stunned at how much money comes across that finish line in charitable donations. I saw it happen last year. I know a lot of minimums went up this year, so I

imagine the total will go up as well.

00:39:22

Rob: And it's really interesting, Matt, because I feel like that's become such a focus of this event. Maybe it wasn't in years past. The Boston Marathon had a history of being for fast runners. You had to qualify to get in, and most runners still do qualify. But I feel like the focus and the emphasis on charity is getting bigger and bigger every year.

00:39:43

Matt Prichard: It absolutely is. And a lot of people, I think, like to say charitable runners, maybe they didn't quite earn their way in because they didn't qualify with time. But I'm just saying, raising thousands and thousands of dollars while simultaneously training for a marathon, when many of these folks, maybe this is their first time attempting to run a marathon. They just wanted to raise for Boston Children's or Boston Medical Center or whatever it might be. That is a huge challenge. And if they can make it to the starting line on Marathon Monday, they've earned it in their own way. Of course, we all know if you got there with time, you're freaking your own right and we respect the heck out of it.

00:40:19

Rob: Yeah. Jack Fleming, the head of the Boston Marathon just told us last night, they've already crossed over \$ 50 million raised for charity this year.

00:40:28

Matt Prichard: Wow. Yeah. I mean, it's just, like I said, every single year it's amazing what people can accomplish and what this race has become nationally, internationally. And yes, to the Boston community, it matters. Every dollar really matters.

00:40:41

Rob: Well, I'm sure it was nice for you to get a break from covering politics.

00:40:45

Matt Prichard: That's why I run. I just need to let it all out on the track. Exactly-

00:40:48

Rob: ... From the political talks to come out and run. So great to meet you. Thanks for joining us.

00:40:52

Matt Prichard: Good to meet you too. Thanks for having me.

00:40:54

Rob: Matt Prichard.

Well, look who's here. It's Tyler Swartz, the CEO and founder of the Endorphins Running Club, one of the biggest run clubs in New York, really in the world. How is it, Tyler? How you doing?

00:41:12

Tyler Swartz: I'm doing so great. How are you doing?

00:41:13

Rob: I'm doing great. I didn't just have to run a mile around this track. I think you did.

00:41:18

Tyler Swartz: I didn't run. I'm saving my legs for (inaudible)
-

00:41:21

Rob: ... For Monday.

00:41:21

Tyler Swartz: Monday. Let's go.

00:41:22

Rob: Your first ever Boston marathon.

00:41:24

Tyler Swartz: Correct.

00:41:25

Rob: Coming up on Monday. How are you feeling?

00:41:27

Tyler Swartz: I'm so freaking excited. I'm from Boston. I grew up in the suburbs of Massachusetts. I've gone to the Boston Marathon since as a little kid, as youngest, since the earliest days of my memory. I've watched it. I would go to the Red Sox game. It's always a day game.

00:41:43

Rob: Yep.

00:41:44

Tyler Swartz: And then it leaks out into the last couple miles and I would watch every single year. And then my senior year of high school, it was 2013 and the Boston bombings obviously happened, which is a tragic event and I got locked down and I said, "I'm going to run this race

one day," and that catapulted my running journey.

00:41:59

Rob: That's incredible. It must be so huge for you to have this moment. And before that moment, all that you've done for the running community, all these runners you've created and nurtured through your running club, what do you think your emotions are going to be out there in Hopkinton at the start of the Boston Marathon?

00:42:18

Tyler Swartz: I've been thinking about what that feeling could be like and I don't think I'll understand until I go through it. I'm emotional now sitting here talking to you. I'm emotional seeing everyone running. I'm emotional watching people do the 5K this morning. I'm getting emotional. I did kind of break down tearing up thinking this is something ... I had back surgery three years ago I was supposed to run. Two years ago, I had Lyme disease, couldn't run. The year before, two weeks before the Boston Marathon, I tore my Achilles and ruptured it, full surgery, couldn't run. And I still came and showed up and gave everything that I could and supported runners. Boston Marathon, as much as it is about the Miles, it's more about showing up when it's hard to. It's about that grit. This is a gritty race and I'm so excited.

00:43:00

Rob: I'm excited for you.

00:43:03

Tyler Swartz: I'm so pumped.

00:43:03

Rob: Make sure you follow this guy because this is going to be a great story-

00:43:06

Tyler Swartz: ... 29, 995. I think I might be one of the last bibs. I'm so excited. If you see me and if you cheer for me, I will cheer back. I'm going to be taking it all in. It's going to be awesome.

00:43:18

Rob: I love it. You got a team that's out here running this marathon relay.

00:43:22

Tyler Swartz: Correct.

00:43:22

Rob: Who's on the team? How'd you put it together?

00:43:24

Tyler Swartz: One thing that's really special about Endorphins, we're one of the largest running communities in the world. We have just about 100,000 members now, which is insane.

00:43:31

Rob: Amazing.

00:43:31

Tyler Swartz: If we roll back the tape to when we first did the podcast together, it's probably close to 25,000.

00:43:35

Rob: Yes. You're brand new.

00:43:37

Tyler Swartz: And we're still just getting started. We have something really cool. We have a global impact. So we have a group here in Boston that meets 150 times a year, but then we have groups everywhere across the country that meet. So we have 13 runners from Boston, and then we chose 13 runners that represent the rest of our communities from across the country, and they flew in for this event.

00:43:56

Rob: Wow.

00:43:56

Tyler Swartz: Yeah. So we have 26 runners from all across the country.

00:43:58

Rob: That is fantastic. You guys have a relationship with New Balance as well?

00:44:02

Tyler Swartz: Correct.

00:44:03

Rob: So that's a part of your being here too.

00:44:05

Tyler Swartz: New Balance has empowered so many relationships and friendships and fostered so many connections through our partnership. When we sat down in this very building or the building across the street and we talked about what the future of running and social running could look like, we

didn't actually talk about moving your feet or miles. We talked about making friends through the sport and New Balance has empowered so many different friendships through our partnership and we're going to be doing it for many more years to come.

00:44:32

Rob: I look at you and people like you who made this decision at some point to quit a corporate job, which I know you did. You felt like you wanted to do something in this running space. You created this incredible community at Endorphins and now look at it. I mean, when you look back at that decision you made, which I'm sure a lot of people, maybe had some parents or others who thought you were nuts, how has this all happened for you?

00:44:59

Tyler Swartz: I like to say when you align your energy with your heart, you feel endorphins. And I was working a corporate job and I was putting all of my energy into it, but my heart wasn't in it. And the second that I aligned my energy with my heart, I felt like I found purpose in life. And they always tell you to do what you love. I'm living that out and it's the coolest thing. Every single day I wake up and I say, "I can't wait for what's going to come today." And I think I approach every relationship with that energy, every conversation with that energy. And I'm just so pumped. I'm pumped up.

00:45:29

Rob: I am so pumped for you. I cannot wait to see you how it goes for you on Monday.

00:45:34

Tyler Swartz: Thank you.

00:45:34

Rob: Best of luck at the Boston Marathon.

00:45:36

Tyler Swartz: Thank you, bro. That's awesome.

00:45:37

Rob: Congratulations. Great to see you.

00:45:38

Tyler Swartz: Great to see you too.

00:45:50

Rob: Next up, a couple of my colleagues from New York Road

Runners to my right. You know this guy, Ted Metellus. He's the chief event production officer and the race director of the TCS New York City Marathon. And to my left, Ben Delaney, our head of coaching. Gentlemen, you both just ran legs out there for New York Road Runners. Ted, I'll start with you. How was it?

00:46:11

Ted Metellus: It was a good time. It was a good time. You know why it was a good time?

00:46:16

Rob: (inaudible) a good time.

00:46:16

Ted Metellus: It was both. It was fun time and good time. Nice. Because you know why, Rob? It wasn't a fast time.

00:46:23

Rob: I love it. Ben, how about your leg? How was it?

00:46:26

Ben Delaney: It was amazing. We did this run last year. They do a great job here at the track at New Balance. The energy here is infectious. You give it everything you've got. It's a mile. It's hard, but man, it's so fun and it's so great to be here.

00:46:38

Rob: Yeah. I think what's so great about this, Ted, is it just brings people together. It's so much fun to be on a team. You don't always get to do that in running. Have teammates be out there supporting each other and just supporting everybody out there. It's an intimate setting and it's just a big, fat, giant party.

00:46:55

Ted Metellus: Oh, 100%. And the New Balance team does a great job here of integrating food, drinks, music, and entertainment across the board. And obviously nonstop action. The leaderboard is still up there. People are still cheering on their runners. So they're doing an amazing event here.

00:47:11

Rob: Ben, let's talk about Monday, the Boston Marathon. We got a lot of New York folks running. We've got members, we've got staff members at New York Road Runners. Of course, we've got Team for Kids runners running as well. Tell me about some of the folks that you have been interacting with and talking to as they get ready to take on Boston.

00:47:31

Ben Delaney: I've got over 40 people in my tracker on Monday. People doing Boston for the first time, doing Boston for the second or third time, getting their sixth star. And again, it's just the infectious (inaudible) of running, and what we do is that they get to come out, they're going to be there. And to know that we're going to be there and we're cheering them on means everything to them. And so, I mean, why would not want to be BB there? I talked to a guy, he's got three six star medals and he's going to get his fourth in London next week. And I was like, "Why do you keep coming back?" He's like, "Because I get to do this. I'm able to do it." And I'm like, "Oh, come on. How can we not get excited about that?" And just be like, "I will see you on Monday. I want to give you a high five, get a picture."

And to hear their stories, everything from, "I do it for myself, I do it for my mom, my dad, I do it for a charity." All of our Team for Kids runners are raising money for our youth and community events. It's really a special moment to be there and to see their smile and let them have their moment and hear their story.

00:48:32

Rob: Yeah. And Ted, you always do such a great job at the finish line in Boston and the other majors. People love seeing you at that finish line, especially New Yorkers. What does it mean for you to be there supporting folks from our community in New York when they cross finish lines like the one in Boston?

00:48:49

Ted Metellus: Well, I mean, it's first and foremost, it's going to be 1,700 runners getting their sixth star in Boston, 1,700. And many of them have ... Well, all of them have run the TCS New York City Marathon.

00:48:59

Rob: That's right.

00:49:00

Ted Metellus: That's one, but many of them are part of our New York Road Runners community. So when I have the opportunity to run other races in other places, to see people out there cheering me on and supporting me, seeing a familiar face means so much. So we get to do the same thing for them. Seeing them on the course, welcome them at the finish line, being there to celebrate that moment, whether it is a six star finisher for the (inaudible) World

Marathon majors or accomplishing the 100th and 30th running of the Boston Marathon.

00:49:27

Rob: It's incredible. Ted, you just had a run of your own in Berlin. You ran the half-marathon there not long ago. How are those likes feeling out there today?

00:49:35

Ted Metellus: Well, you're talking about me running my 50th half-marathon, which was like-

00:49:39

Rob: Pretty impressive.

00:49:40

Ted Metellus: Two and a half, three weeks ago versus me running today's BA 5K this morning, which you ran as well.

00:49:46

Rob: Yes.

00:49:46

Ted Metellus: And so did you coach. So we're running on weaker legs after running that, but it was awesome. Today's run was so great, such great energy, connecting with partners, friends, and colleagues. And again, tons of folks that are out there cheering us on. So it is, as you said, we get to do this. It's really beautiful to be able to say we are a part of a community that is so infectious, but so inspiring.

00:50:07

Rob: And Ben, you are training people all year long for events like this with our group training program. We got a lot of folks in that program or TFK out here and you've run Boston yourself. Talk about the challenge of the Boston Marathon. And a lot of folks I know say it's either New York or Boston is the hardest one to take on. Which do you think is harder?

00:50:30

Ben Delaney: Yeah, they're both equally challenging. Boston kind of baits you early because you have that 10K start, which is a rolling downhill and you're like, "I'm feeling good." You look at your watch, you're like, "Hey, I'm under race pace. I can go today." And then Wellesley College, the students are out there, they're cheering you on and that's just like an amazing energy push. And then later in that race, kind of like at our race, we have some challenges here in Boston that really will test you. But if you can

get yourself over Heartbreak in one piece, unfortunately, I did not in 2024, but hey, that's running, man. That's just how it is. It's my day. It wasn't my day. But man, BU carries you through. You run by Fenway. You go by the Boston Strong Bridge, right at Hereford, left on Boylston. Outside of Inner Central Park, Outer Central Park, coming to Central Park, it's some of the most iconic moments in running, and there's nothing like it.

And I tell people, "No matter what your day is like, don't let the moment slide by. Soak it in, look up, take it all in. I don't care if it's a good day or a bad day, you got to do it and you got to a finish line." And if you can do that, there's nothing like it.

00:51:33

Rob: That's their theme in Boston. Meet the moment. Meet the moment. So we're going to see 30, 000 folks try to meet the moment on Monday. It'd be a lot of fun. Ben, Ted, great to have you guys. Thanks for joining me.

Next up is my boss, the chair of the New York Road Runners Board of Directors, and someone who knows a little bit about running on indoor tracks at All American at Villanova, indoors as well as outdoors and cross country. It's Nnenna Lynch. Nnenna, how are you?

00:51:59

Nnenna Lynch: I'm doing great, especially now that my mile is over.

00:52:02

Rob: Yes. You were out there crushing it for team NYRR. How was it out there? How'd it feel?

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Nnenna Lynch: It was actually quite a bit of fun. I haven't run on an indoor track for, I want to say over 30 years. So I have to say I was a little bit nervous, but no, it was a ton of fun.

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Rob: Wow. That's amazing actually that you ... So basically not since college.

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Nnenna Lynch: Yes, not since college.

00:52:22

Rob: That's incredible.

00:52:23

Nnenna Lynch: Yeah.

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Rob: I had never done it before when I ran this last year. And I have to say, there's something really unique about it. I was talking about this before, which feels longer to you. Running a mile outdoors, four laps, or running indoors eight laps?

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Nnenna Lynch: I have to say, I thought it was going to feel really long today, but it felt really short. So I'm going to go with indoor.

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Rob: That's so interesting.

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Nnenna Lynch: Something about, you clip off these 200 meters and it just keeps you ticking off.

00:52:54

Rob: Yeah, they fly by. I think it's the energy that's so special about this. You're not just out there running in a quiet gym. The music, the energy, the spectators, you don't get a chance to do that very often.

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Nnenna Lynch: No, that's true. I mean, the energy here is really phenomenal.

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Rob: So you're back in Boston. This is obviously one of the great events on the running calendar every year. What does it mean for you to come up here and just be a part of the Boston Marathon?

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Nnenna Lynch: Well, Boston is one of the majors and we have a great relationship with the BAA and obviously New Balance, one of our partners. So it's just great to see the Boston Marathon, the team, and then New Balance in action. I mean, they've done such a phenomenal job with this event, activation with friends, family, because Boston tracks, what is it? 30, 000 runners.

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Rob: That's right.

00:53:45

Nnenna Lynch: But you have all their friends and family and teammates. It's such a great idea to do an event like this.

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Rob: People ask me when I tell them I'm coming to Boston for the Boston Marathon, a lot of New Yorkers ask me, why? Why are you going to Boston? That's not your marathon. And I get the New York Boston rivalry as much as anyone, but there is something special about this event because it's got an intimacy to it. Boston is a smaller town. Everybody's kind of concentrated in the same area around the hotels and the convention center. And you kind of see everybody. It feels like a homecoming.

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Nnenna Lynch: No, it totally does. Yeah. I love the way that the whole setup is, you get to bump into old friends and that sort of thing. But you know what I love most about it this year?

00:54:28

Rob: What's that?

00:54:28

Nnenna Lynch: That I'm not running.

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Rob: I wasn't going to ask about that, but let's talk about that. You took this race on last year.

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Nnenna Lynch: Oh, man.

00:54:39

Rob: And we had just run Tokyo.

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Nnenna Lynch: That's right.

00:54:41

Rob: And I remember when you told me you were running Boston after running Tokyo, I was like, God bless you and good luck. And I mean, we were just talking with Ben Delaney and Ted about how hard the Boston Marathon is.

00:54:55

Nnenna Lynch: It was very hard. Yeah. No, I don't know what I was thinking, honestly, but I was like, "Okay, well, I'm going to do all that marathon training for Tokyo. I might as well just tick off Boston."

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Rob: Which makes sense. And you did and you got it done. I know it was a little painful. Heartbreak Hill broke your heart a little bit as it does. It's got that name for a reason.

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Nnenna Lynch: Yeah, no, it was not a little painful, Rob. It was a lot painful. But you know what? I did it. No, and it was a great experience because that's the thing is in our business, there is nothing like doing the event to really appreciate what it's all about. So I'm glad I did it.

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Rob: What do you think is next for you on the running side of things? Any goals?

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Nnenna Lynch: Oh my gosh, putting me on the spot. Come on, Rob. Actually, no, I don't have any goals. I'm not signed ... You know what I'll probably do? The MasterCard Mini.

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Rob: Oh, nice.

00:55:47

Nnenna Lynch: I'd like to try and do that. Our oldest women's race in the U.S. and probably in the world actually, started in 1972.

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Rob: Yes.

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Nnenna Lynch: Great 10K. I run five days a week, but what I do, I would not consider training. So we'll see.

00:56:06

Rob: And we've got so many New Yorkers here running this race. We've got New York Road Runners members. A bunch of them were over at the Red Sox game. We had a little member routing for folks this afternoon. We've got all these Team for Kids runners here as well. So it's special for us at Road Runners to see all the New Yorkers who are up here. Pilgrims in an unholy land, as I call New Yorkers in Boston. But what is it like for you? What does it mean to see all the Road Runners folks up here taking on Boston?

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Nnenna Lynch: Well, it's just a great ... We have an amazing running community in New York. We know that is so rich, so vibrant, and folks like to get out and do their things. So it's fantastic. And the team, I have to say, does a great job of really creating some special events. We have our TFK brunch tomorrow for the runners. So it's really phenomenal to see.

00:57:02

Rob: It's awesome. Great to have you here. Thanks for representing NYR out there. You did a great job. Nnenna Lynch, our board chair.

Next up, we've got two Meaghans with us. I've never interviewed two Meaghans at one time before. Meaghan Murray from Believe in the Run and Meghann Featherstun, who's a sports dietician and the founder of Featherstun Nutrition. Great to have you guys out here.

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Meaghan Murray: Thanks for having us.

00:57:29

Rob: How was the mile run? What was that like? You guys are both very, very fast runners, both sub three PRs in the marathon. So you're no joke. What was it like out there trying to throw it down for a mile?

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Meaghan Murray: Well, the funny thing about that is that I only have one speed. So whether I'm running the marathon or the mile, they're not that different. But no, this event is so fun. And we talked about it. The inaugural event last year was like the highlight of Boston Marathon weekend. And again, this year, it's just so much fun. The entire time you're doing laps, you're getting cheered for. So yeah, I mean, it's just the most fun.

00:58:04

Meghann Featherstun: And I grew up playing sports that required a ball. I was never a runner. So that was the first time I ever stepped foot on a track was here last year.

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Rob: Wow.

00:58:10

Meghann Featherstun: I never run just a mile. Much like the other Meg, I don't really have many very fast paces, so it's really fun to get out there.

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Rob: How did you go from playing sports that involved a ball to running a sub three marathon?

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Meghann Featherstun: Once you get older, it's like, I need a challenge. I need something to look forward to, something to challenge in my body. And I was like, "I guess we run now."

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Rob: And that's what you do. And you do it pretty well. Tell me about the Believe in the Run team that you had out here.

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Meaghan Murray: Yeah. So Believe in the Run is basically a media company. We love running shoes. We nerd out on them, write reviews about them. So we assembled an amazing team, a bunch of local runners from Baltimore, and then also just some of our friends in the industry. Yeah, so it was an epic crew. I think we're about to finish actually. Our last person's out right now.

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Rob: I love it. I love it. Meghann Featherstun, you're a nutritionist. Do you have some folks out there who you had helped get ready for the Boston Marathon?

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Meghann Featherstun: I have, and it was so exciting because I'm a big fan of carb loading before you run a marathon. Improves our performance like 4% for us peons. And I'm looking around and the girl next to me has a thing of graham crackers, the girl next to her is eating a just plain old bagel and they are carb loading, getting ready for Monday. It was wonderful to see.

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Rob: I love it. They're following the advice.

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Meghann Featherstun: Yep.

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Rob: Is there anything special about the Boston Marathon that you train people to be ready for from a nutrition point of view?

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Meghann Featherstun: Yeah, there's two big things with nutrition for the Boston Marathon. One is that it's a late start. So

I encourage people to eat twice beforehand so we're not starting at lunchtime and our stomach is like, "It's lunchtime. I need fuel."

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Rob: Yeah.

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Meghann Featherstun: And then also strategically taking our nutrition on course so that we're well fueled for the hills.

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Rob: Yeah, it makes sense. That late start is something you don't think about unless you run it. And you got people starting at 11:00 noon.

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Meghann Featherstun: Right. And our body's like, it's lunchtime and we're about to go run a marathon.

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Rob: 100%. I'm hungry just thinking about it.

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Meghann Featherstun: Yeah.

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Rob: And I'm not even running. It's crazy. Meaghan, but what about you from all the shoes that you review, is there a hot shoe that you feel, especially a New Balance shoe maybe since we're in their house, that people are running? What is it?

01:00:08

Meaghan Murray: This is the New Balance Elipse. The whole team got a pair. We all wore them for today's event and yeah, it looks good. It feels good.

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Rob: We got to get a shot of the shoe. Do we have the shoe in the shot? I want to make sure people see this shoe. It's a great looking shoe.

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Meaghan Murray: I think that's the thing is when they look good, they also feel good. So 10 out of 10.

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Rob: So a lot of people taking that shoe out there on Monday?

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Meaghan Murray: So this is more of a daily trainer, less of a race day shoe.

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Rob: What's the hottest New Balance racing shoe that people are going to be running in on Monday?

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Meaghan Murray: So the SC Elite V5.

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Rob: Yes. I think I heard Emily Sisson say she was running in that as well.

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Meghann Featherstun: Oh, love that.

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Rob: Or something like that.

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Meaghan Murray: Yeah. It's one of my favorites. The newest iteration, got way lighter than the last one, so it's fast. It's snappy. It's great.

01:00:56

Rob: Meghann Featherstun, we talked about pre-race nutrition. What is your favorite post-race meal?

01:01:03

Meghann Featherstun: Post-race meal, always with the Meg. And it's fries and a burger. And I drink a bourbon or martini and she always gets a martini.

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Rob: I love it. I mean, if you're going to do it, that's the time we do it.

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Meghann Featherstun: We're doing it.

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Rob: You earned it.

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Meghann Featherstun: Right, exactly.

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Rob: When you've done that.

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Meghann Featherstun: Exactly.

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Rob: We have a competition, a debate in our office about best post-race meals. Burger and fries is always top three. Pizza is always one. I oftentimes will go with a big, I don't know, an omelet or something-

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Meghann Featherstun: Something salty.

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Rob: Salt is peak.

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Meghann Featherstun: Yeah. Salty protein.

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Rob: Yeah. So where are you guys going to be on Monday?

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Meaghan Murray: Well, we're racing. We're both racing.

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Rob: We'll be out there. And what are your goals? You guys have big goals for the race?

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Meghann Featherstun: Have the most fun possible.

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Rob: Yes.

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Meaghan Murray: And use the tailwind to our advantage.

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Rob: And that's what they're talking about is a big tailwind. What about you? PR in mind or just a good time?

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Meaghan Murray: No PR. I want to run to the top of my fitness level, whatever that is on Monday.

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Rob: I love it. I love it. I wish you guys luck on Monday. Thanks for being with us. Hope you didn't leave too much

out there on the track today. I'm sure you didn't.

01:02:03

Meghann Featherstun: Thank you.

01:02:04

Rob: All right. Meghann and Meaghan, thanks for joining us. All right. That does it for a super fun episode of Set the Pace here from the track at New Balance in Boston 2 days before the 130th running of the Boston Marathon. I want to wish everybody out there who's running on Monday all the best of luck. We're all rooting for you, whether you're a New York Road Runners member, a Team for Kids runner, whoever you are, have a great day. The weather looks awesome. So hope you have a great, great race. We'll see you all with our next episode. Enjoy the miles. We'll see you next time.