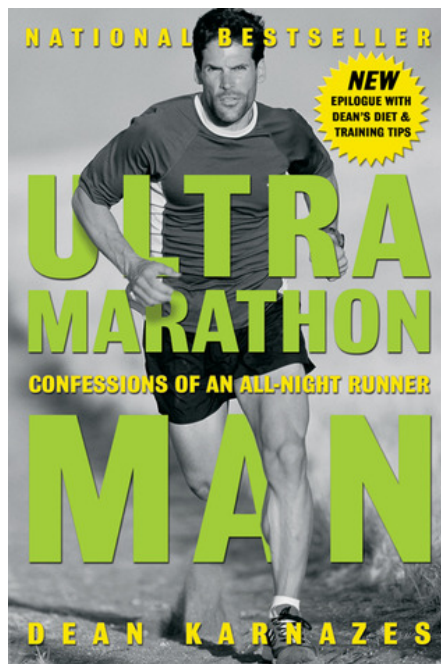




Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner

Dean Karnazes

Download now

Read Online ➔

Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner

Dean Karnazes

Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner Dean Karnazes

Rare book

Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner Details

Date : Published March 2nd 2006 by TarcherPerigee (first published 2005)

ISBN : 9781585424801

Author : Dean Karnazes

Format : Paperback 295 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Sports and Games, Sports, Biography, Autobiography, Memoir, Fitness



[Download Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner ...pdf](#)



[Read Online Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner Dean Karnazes

From Reader Review Ultramarathon Man: Confessions of an All-Night Runner for online ebook

Timothy Allen says

Ah, people hate Dean Karnazes... but ask yourself this: would you know who Scott Jurek was if you had never read Dean Karnazes? I wouldn't.

Dean's book sometimes sounds like he's spinning a yarn. It's pretty unbelievable at points. On the other hand, he does some unbelievable things. And he does most of what he does for charity.

In general, it's a very good read. It made me feel like going out running. And indirectly, I trained for and signed up for my first ultramarathon because I read this book. Love him or hate him, Dean Karnazes put ultramarathoning on the map.

Is Dean the best runner in the world? Maybe not. Is he the best ultramarathoner? Probably not, either. He did win Badwater in 2004, and you don't do that by being a mediocre athlete.

Sushmitha Kanukurthi says

I just finished reading this book about 15 mins ago and I am not sure of where to begin! Ever since I took up running (about two years ago), I have come across many a book that have left me inspired and driven about pursuing this passion. But this book has done far more. While Dean Karnazes's super human feats are unique; what makes this book so amazing is his ability to infuse that passion in the readers. He makes the book easy to read, profound, awe inspiring and a testament to what the human body is capable of achieving, if only you are willing to push yourself. For a while now, I had given up running because of the repeated migraine attacks that come with it. Maybe it is time for me to stop waiting to things to change and invest in bringing about the change. As Dean says in the book "Pain and suffering are often the catalysts for life's most profound lessons."

I could go on and on about this book but it will suffice to say that if I could give this book a 10 star rating, I would! Definitely a must read for all those who want to push themselves but don't know where to start!!

Liz says

I recently picked up running as a way to get in shape, and it's become a bit of a hobby. I thought I would enjoy Karnazes's book both because I appreciate people who push themselves to the limit and because, as a PhD student, I know what it's like to be entirely devoted to a dream. I was hoping to feel inspired and to meet a kindred spirit.

Not happening. Dean Karnazes is so into himself that it's difficult to get a glimpse of ultrarunning through him. His descriptions of his physical form are unappealing, in that he goes out of the way to inform you that he is "ripped like a prizefighter" and that "my body reached a level of fitness that defied all sensible limitations." He definitely gets a kick out of including his Sports Illustrated sexiest athlete photo, as well, but without the good humor I was hoping to see. Even though ultrarunners generally seem to be awesome

people, Karnazes does not appear to be friends with any of them. Even though he is racing with some of the best athletes in the world, he never mentions his fellow dream chasers by name or appears to develop strong relationships with his running colleagues. One of the most appealing traits of running books like *Born to Run* is the obvious affection and admiration the runners display for each other. Dean only seems to admire himself. He talks about participants in his sport as an elite and mysterious group of people who are just so wild and beyond normal people that there can be no comparison, but from reading the book you'd think he's the only member of this group. He prefers to talk about encounters with normal people who are impressed by his antics and think, "Oh Dean, you so crazy!"

His descriptions of his formative high school track experiences also ring false to me. First of all, I don't know very many groups of high schoolers who "hang out at late-night coffee shops and read Kafka and Kerouac." And the contrast between his beloved cross-country team and the prissy, time-obsessed track team seemed so overwrought that it's like he never grew out of the high school mentality he had while a member of them. Apparently the track coach wanted to time him and, when Dean informed him that "I run with my heart," laughed so derisively that Dean stormed off the field in a huff and didn't run again for fifteen years. That doesn't say "tough guy" to me.

Dean's attitude towards women is also highly unappealing. Ultrarunning is one of the few sports where men and women compete together and women frequently come out on top. However, Dean's idea of a good joke was to send a male friend who completed a "lesser" ultramarathon a tampon instead of a congratulatory cigar—a tampon the friend had to "live down" by completing several more ultramarathons.

This book did have moments that were enjoyable, especially Dean's description of actually running Western States. His writing is simple and makes for a super quick read. But I will not be reaching for any more work by this author. His focus on himself and on what a hardass he is because he works through the pain provides a stark contrast with my experience of running books to date, in which the athletes experience joy through running. Yes, ultrarunners get tired. Yes, you have to mentally force yourself to get through even short runs if you are an inexperienced runner like me. But I'm not digging Dean Karnazes the happy masochist.

Caitlin Constantine says

This was just a crazy fun book to read. Karnazes is seriously demented but I think he knows it, which is why it was so much fun. Also, as a distance runner - but not an insane one like Karnazes - I found it totally inspiring. It's too bad I'm currently nursing a running injury because it made me want to go and pound out a 10-miler the second I put it down.

I think what I liked best about the book was how self-deprecating Karnazes is about himself. He knows he's pretty much insane, he doesn't go for a lot of self-aggrandizement, and he doesn't shy away from the disgusting aspects that go along with running ultramarathons.

Oh, and the picture of him naked with the strategically placed South Pole is worth the price of the book alone.

This might be the highest praise I can give a book - by the end of it, I was thinking, gee, I might like to try to run an ultramarathon some day. Now THAT is crazy.

Aaron says

Ug. Ego-stroking pap. The description of the Western States race is awesome, but sadly you have to read about him describing himself (hint: the word "ripped" is used 3 times) to get there. And then deal with the last 100 pages, all about a self-indulgent trip to the South Pole (look at me! I'm rich!).

Mary says

It's unfortunate that what could have been a really inspirational story about pushing oneself to the ultimate limit of physical endurance is overshadowed by the douchiness of the author. I wanted to be in awe and instead I was just annoyed. The constant false modesty was tiring and incredibly transparent. And I get that anyone who writes a memoir would want to shine themselves in a flattering light, so I understand Karnazes' decision to focus on races that he finished. But I think it would have been a better book if he had included at least one honest account of one of the races where he made a conscious decision to stop and not finish.

He's a great runner and I am in awe of his skill and dedication. The fact that he raises money for sick children also raises his stock in my book. But sending a tampon to a friend after finishing a marathon (especially considering that ultra-marathoning is one of the arenas where women consistently out-perform men) is just a dick move.

I feel better now.

Chad Sayban says

More reviews at [The Story Within The Story](#)

It started with a single fateful decision one night to just go out and run...and run...and run. This is the story of Dean Karnazes and his life as it unfolded after that night. A non-stop adventure in the heat of Death Valley, the bone-chilling cold of the South Pole, over mountains, through forests – all while running. Through hard work and breathtaking perseverance he achieved amazing athletic acts while balancing a family and career.

“Most dreams die a slow death. They're conceived in a moment of passion, with the prospect of endless possibility, but often languish and are not pursued with the same heartfelt intensity as when first born. Slowly, subtly, a dream becomes elusive and ephemeral. People who've lost their own dreams become pessimists and cynics. They feel like the time and devotion spent on chasing their dreams were wasted. The emotional scars last forever.”

Ultrarunners are an odd lot. Not content with running a meager distance of a marathon – 26.2 miles for those of you counting – ultrarunners head out for jaunts of 50 miles, 100 miles and longer. A fringe subset of endurance athletes, ultrarunners take joy in pushing the limits of human endurance to the absolute breaking point...and beyond. In the world of these extreme athletes, Dean Karnazes is a rock star. He has won the 135-mile Badwater Ultramarathon, which is run through Death Valley...in July...in 130-degree heat. He has run a 199-mile relay event solo. He has run a marathon at the South Pole. Dean is hardcore.

However, *Ultramarathon Man* doesn't come across as a "look at me" egofest at all. Instead, Karnazes is a humorous tour guide who doesn't take himself seriously. He acknowledges the ridiculous nature of what he does and points out the foibles with candor. The result is Karnazes produces an athletic memoir which is grounded in humanity while describing inhuman accomplishments. Is what he is doing a form of addiction? Certainly, and he freely admits that. But Karnazes has turned these somewhat self-absorbed escapades not into bravado, but into something more universal and inspirational.

The magic of *Ultramarathon Man* is that it doesn't serve to aggrandize Dean Karnazes and he doesn't expect everyone to do the things he is doing. His hope is that by doing these larger-than-life challenges, he can inspire others to take set out on their own adventures to capture the hopes and dreams that many of us have set aside as impossible. *Ultramarathon Man* is really about finding the wherewithal to put one foot in front of the other and never quit until we cross the finish line – no matter what that finish line might look like. This is the best kind of memoir – a memoir of unabashed hope and optimism. I challenge anyone to read this book and not finish with a smile, a chuckle and a newfound glimpse at what just might be possible.

Jeffrey says

I first became aware of Dean Karnazes a few years ago shortly after moving back to New York. That was when he came into the spotlight for a lot of people, shortly after he won the Badwater Ultramarathon. In my small running circle, I spread word of his infamy, of the man who ordered pizza for delivery on his all night runs. How he would run a hundred miles just to get to the start of a marathon. How he ran a 200 mile relay race--by himself. Most of what I knew of him came from short articles in running magazines or interviews on NPR. In gearing up for this year's marathon season, I borrowed this book from a friend to find out more about the Ultramarathon Man--who in 2006 ran 50 marathons in 50 states in 50 days; who was the first person to run a marathon to the South Pole--in running shoes; who ran 350 miles without stopping. I wanted some inspiration to get me through the dark moments of my running, when the pain sets in and I feel like I just can't move any further. It helps me in those times to think of someone who went further, who did more, who ran faster or harder and dug deeper to keep going even under the most dire conditions.

Karnazes talks about his early life as a runner, his introduction to the sport by his first track coach, Coach McTavish. Coach's advice was simple: "Go out hard and finish harder." That would be a mantra that Karnazes would take with him throughout life. He seems to be a man full of energy and determination. An article in the New York Times before the 2010 New York Marathon talked about the determination of professional runners. "Mental Tenacity separates the mortals and the immortals in running," the article says. Karnazes must have more mental tenacity than anyone on earth. He pushes himself to extremes just to see if he can. When he feels himself unable to go on, he digs deeper inside himself and finds strength where mere mortals would falter. As a runner, he has pushed the limits of what a human can do. He's pushed the limit so far it seems unlikely that anyone will challenge his feats anytime soon.

What makes this book stand out, though, is the humility with which Karnazes tells his story. He writes with an unexaggerated, self-deprecating style that belies the feats he has accomplished. He's the first to admit that

he is only human, that he too falls sometimes. One of his most spectacular falls occurs when he runs his first 50 mile race to qualify for the grueling Western States 100. Karnazes describes the events immediately following that race with objective clarity, as though he were telling the story of what happened to a guy he knew. The pain he puts himself through would make most of us cringe in terror, but to him it is just another day. He's a normal man with a normal family and kids who want him to play with them. Immediately after running 200 miles, his kids drag him to an amusement park and he spends the next several hours riding roller coasters. I can't imagine that. After running that distance, I can imagine that all I'd want to do is collapse in a bed.

For all the humility with which he recounts his story, he is seemingly not a very humble man. In recent years he has made very public his aspirations, from running 50 states in 50 days to his very public declaration of wanting to be the first person to run 300 miles non-stop. (That feat was thwarted by Pam Reed, who for two years won the Badwater Ultramarathon and quietly and without much fanfare ran a 25 mile loop 12 times shortly after Dean attempted his record breaking run.) The ultrarunning community is small and rather protective of itself. Dean is an everyman who seems to believe that anyone can run these distances. He has opened ultrarunning to the wider world.

None of that changes the power of this book, though. While it may be ostensibly about running, it is more deeply about following your dreams. Karnazes wants each of us to realize the power of our dreams, to not just have them but to strive to attain them--no matter what they be. For Karnazes, the dream and the passion meet at running. He wants to push his body and his mind to the limit and he works hard every day to do that. It's not easy. I think he makes clear how hard it is to run the distances he runs. But that is the point, he says. "Dreams can come true," he tells his kids, "especially if you train hard enough."

That may be the best takeaway from any book I've read.

Rhiannon says

I'm a runner, and although I have not done and probably never will do an ultramarathon, I know quite a few ultramarathoners and thought this book would give me a better idea of the sport. But, wow, this book is a piece of crap.

Rarely have I read something by an author so completely self-absorbed, self-worshipping, self-indulgent, and egotistical. He feigns modesty throughout the book, but its insincerity is crystal clear. Yes, Dean, I know that you're an amazing runner (although there are other ultrarunners who are even better, and they get no mention in this book) but I really don't care that you have 5% body fat, that you are "cut like a prize fighter," that "over the course of the decade [you] managed to amass nine more Western States Silver Buckles...dozens of medals, plaques, and trophies" but that although "it's cool to have mementos like these, [you] didn't have them out on display in the living room."

Also, the writing is just plain bad. Dialogues with other people (all of whom, even his family, are portrayed as completely one-dimensional characters) are unrealistic.

And finally, he's sexist. No mention of the (many) incredible female ultrarunners, but he does send a tampon as a joke to a male friend who'd just finished his first Western States 100. Implying, I assume, that because the guy didn't run it particularly quickly, that he was no better than a woman. No matter that a woman, Pam Reed, beat Dean TWICE in the 130-mile Badwater race, and that she was the first person to run 300 miles continuously.

This book is not about the sport of ultra running. This book is about Dean Karnazes, and an ego the size of Canada.

Connie Kuntz says

I did not expect Ultramarathon Man to be a tearjerker, but it was. I did not expect to laugh out loud, but I did. If someone had told me I would read this book while sitting on the edge of my seat, I would have told them to Shut Up, but, guess what, I read most of this book whilst sitting on the edge of my seat. In short, this was the most entertaining book I read in 2010.

In case you are wondering, this book is about Dean Karnazes. I read about him a couple years ago in 50/50. He's the guy who ran fifty marathons in fifty states in fifty days. This book isn't about his marathon abilities, though. It's about his tender heart. I realize he would probably sick one of his blisters on me if he knew I called him "tender hearted" but it is true. It is his tender heart that led him to run not only marathons, but 100+ mile ultra-marathons in mountain air. (This book is bookended with a charity one-man race that is almost 200 miles long.) It is his tender heart that lead him to grieve for his sister, be influenced by good (and bad) coaches, gain an appreciation for running with the tide of the ocean, nurture a lifelong love with his wife (whom he met in high school), raise children, thrive in corporate America, enjoy a terrific relationship with his parents, understand his brother and sister-in-law better, run for organ donations and, here's what I find so inspired, not only face his demons, but run with them, too.

This is a fun, hilarious, inspired, uproarious, rowdy book that is also centered, inspired, down to earth, beautifully balanced with masculine and feminine energy and honest. I loved it.

I think I should mention that my running mileage increased from 3.1 miles to 4.1 miles somewhere in the course of reading this book. The reason I think I should mention this is because I think it is arguable that this book isn't just for ultra-athletes. It is for anyone who has a tender heart.

N. Pfeifer says

I didn't realize until after I'd read this book and given it a 4-star rating that people were dumping on it for his egotism. Honestly, having breezed right through this (it's not a difficult or lengthy read by any means) I kinda felt the opposite.

I've been reading a lot about running and marathons lately and Karnazes came up as an example of an extreme athlete. Reading up about him, he seemed to be some kind of invincible superman, but him spending most of the book explaining the hell-ish conditions of his extreme jaunts, I built up a sympathy for the guy.

Sure, he dives into self - flagellation when he describes his body as godly and he can run two marathons with ease as training, but it illuminates how high the bar is to even attempt to accomplish the feats he's done.

Sure, he talks about his growing pile of commendations, but what would you expect from a nearly career athlete? Medals and trophies are for athletes, not nerds like me, they just come with the territory.

The book is far more Disney Channel than instruction manual and reading about his struggles, the

centerpiece of the book, carries far more weight than his accomplishments. He may talk about his extreme physique, but he's having some humble pie with it.

Kitvaria Sarene says

3,5*

some parts were really interesting, but others I didn't care for so much. For me it felt like the author knows just *how* special and amazing he is. That undertone was a bit annoying to me (even though he might have every right to think so as he has achieved so very much). He likes to repeat his body fat percentage and that it'd be easier to run if he wasn't as "ripped" but he wouldn't stop his other sports and training "just so running is easier".

The parts about the running itself and the different runs he finished where really fascinating though, so I could ignore the parts that didn't really work for me as much, and still enjoyed the book overall.

Phrynnne says

This is definitely not a book I would have chosen for myself. I read it because my son, who is a marathon runner, gave it to me to read and I was very impressed. I am not usually a great fan of the autobiography, but Dean Karnazes writes with humour and diffidence about his incredible achievements. Anyone who can do the things he has done is a hero - slightly crazy admittedly, but a hero. Well worth reading.

Jacques Bezuidenhout says

It seems that the gripe that most people have with this book is that Dean comes across as very egotistic and arrogant.

Well my opinion is, give credit where credit is due.

This guy deserves every bit of his "well sculpted" / "chiselled" / "ripped", 4.5% body fat body.

Him mentioning occasionally that he was well built, is a drop in the bigger bucket of accomplishments / stories in the book.

Most of the book is about being with him in each of his races. And its awesome.

The Western States 100 mile was described in detail. And listening to the audiobook, whilst on a longer run myself, this was motivation to the core.

Some of the subsequent races didn't go into so much detail, and some of the things he did was probably just plain stupid (running in the South Pole).

But kudos for what this guy has attempted / achieved.

This book probably wont inspire you to do anything more, if you aren't already on a path to always do and accomplish more. If you are a person that pushes boundaries, you will respect what Dean has done and why he does it.

As far as autobiographies go, I really enjoyed the format of this book in terms of mostly focusing on the

races, and taking you through the journey in the heat of the race.

It is probably debatable whether all retelling of the story is 100% accurate, given that he was close to being comatose in a couple of cases in these races. Nonetheless you can feel the pain he went through, and found myself cringing occasionally when he described what went wrong next.

The book is really short. So easy to get through without too much fluff outside of the races.

Not recommended for just anyone. But if you are into endurance yourself, and would like to get a feeling of what it is like in some of the world's toughest races, you might enjoy some of this book.

Katerina Charisi says

Δεν ε?μαι και σ?γουρη αλλ? νομ?ζω ?τι καταλαβα?νω το γιατ? ο Καρν?ζης προκαλε? σε αρκετ? κ?σμο αντιπ?θεια: Ε?ναι τρελ?ς, πεισματ?ρης, ικαν?τατος, ωρα?ος, πετυχημ?νος, ?κανε το χ?μπι του επικερδ?στατη μπ?ζνα και τ?λος π?ντων αν?κει σε μια πολ? πολ? μικρ? ελ?τ ανθρ?πων που ελ?χιστοι μπορ?ν να φτ?σουν ? να ξεπερ?σουν.

Και το ξ?ρει.

Και το δε?χνει.

Και γιατ? ?χι; Αν κ?ποιος πρ?πει να καυχι?ται για τα κατορθ?ματα του Καρν?ζη, τ?τε αυτ?ς πρ?τος πρ?πει να ε?ναι.

Γιατ? ?ταν πας το τρ?ξιμο σε τ?τοια επ?πεδα, ε ε?σαι εξα?ρεση.

Μετ? απ? 4-5 δρομικ? βιβλ?α πιστε?ω ?τι απ?κτησα μια αρκετ? σφαιρικ? εικ?να και ?ποψη για το θ?μα «τρ?ξιμο» και ?ποιος ενδιαφ?ρεται για τη λ?ξα τα βιβλ?α αυτ? ε?ναι πολ? καλ? να τα διαβ?σει.

?λλωστε η απ?ντηση ε?ναι π?ντα η ?δια: Κανε?ς δεν ξ?ρει τελικ? γιατ? τρ?χει, αν και ?λοι κ?τι βρ?σκουνε στο τρ?ξιμο που τους τραβ?.

Κι ας μην ε?ναι ?λοι μαραθωνοδρ?μοι, δεν ε?ναι εκε? το θ?μα.

Τ?ρα, στα του βιβλ?ου. Ο Καρν?ζης δεν το ?χει και τ?σο το αφηγηματικ? στο συγκεκριμ?νο, αλλ? επειδ? διαβ?ζω κι ?λλο δικ? του και απ? ?σο κατ?λαβα ε?ναι τ?πος που με ?,τι καταπι?νεται θ?λει να το κ?νει καλ?, δε μας πειρ?ζει, βελτι?νεται (και σε αυτ?.)

?μως πρ?πει να πω ?τι αν ξεκινο?σα με πρ?το βιβλ?ο τον Υπερμαραθωνοδρ?μο, τ?τε μ?λλον δε θα ε?χα βγει ποτ? για τρ?ξιμο (και μη με ρωτ?σετε, δεν ξ?ρω ο?τε εγ? γιατ? ξεκ?νησα να τρ?χω.)

Για κ?ποιον που δεν ?χει τρ?ξει ποτ? του – κι ?σως να μην το σκοπε?ει καν – ε?ναι μ?λλον αποτρεπτικ?.

Οκ, και στα ?λλα βιβλ?α δι?βασα για τα κακοπαθ?ματα των δρομ?ων, τη ζ?στη, τη ζ?λη, τον πονοκ?φαλο, τους εμετο?ς, τις λιποθυμ?ες, τα ν?χια που π?φτουν, αλλ? μ?λλον ο Καρν?ζης εδ? ε?ναι ωμ?ς και αμε?λικτος. Λ?ει τα πρ?γματα ?πως ακριβ?ς ?χουν.

Και αν δεν ?χεις τρ?ξει ποτ?, ?σως και να μην το κ?νεις.
Δ?σκολα τα πρ?γματα γιατρ? μου.

Εδ? ?χουμε μια πολ? μεγ?λη αντ?θεση σε σχ?ση με το βιβλ?ο του Τζο?ρεκ (Eat & Run) ?που ο Τζο?ρεκ αντιμετωπ?ζει το τρ?ξιμο ως αυτοβελτ?ωση ? ?αση, με τρ?πο σχεδ?ν μυστικιστικ?, γλυκ?, τρυφερ?, εν? αντ?θετα ο Καρν?ζης μοι?ζει να αυτοτιμωρε?ται, ? να επιβ?λλει στον εαυτ? του το εξαντλητικ? τρ?ξιμο γιατ? δεν μπορε? διαφορετικ? να χαλιναγωγ?σει την ?δια του την ?παρξη, κ?τι που αρκετ? συχν? αναφ?ρει και ο ?διος.

?πως και να 'χει, χα?ρομαι που το δι?βασα και το ?χω στη συλλογ? μου, ?δη ?χω δημιουργ?σει μια μικρ? δρομικ? βιβλιοθ?κη, who knew? :D

Bronson says

An amazing story. I nice quick read that leaves you in awe of Dean's abilities.

Diane says

About halfway through it becomes an ego-fest. Karnazes may be an ultradistance runner, but he's not the best and should stop acting that way. He's marketed himself as the posterboy for ultraendurance running and it starts to get weary in the book.

Matt Frazier says

Inspiring at times ... but there are better books to inspire and inform ultrarunners.

Kim says

I really enjoyed this book. 36 weeks pregnant and I am ready to get up and run...maybe in two months or so, but I am inspired. I don't think I will ever become and ultramarathon runner, or even a marathon runner for that matter, but in a word with endless possibilities I am inspired to never be content with mediocrity. Like Robin William says in Dead Poets Society "Make your lives extraordinary."

Here are a few of my favorite quotes from the book:

"To call running 'fun' would be a misuse of the word. Running can be 'enjoyable.' Running can be 'rejuvenating.' But in a pure sense of the word, running is not fun."

From the Reviews "The perfect escapist fantasy for couch potatoes and weekend warriors alike."

"I couldn't recall a single time that I felt worse after a run than before."

"'Things' don't bring happiness. Some of my finest moments came while running down the open road, little more than a pair of shoes and shorts to my name. A runner doesn't need much. Thoreau one said that a man's riches are based on what he can do without. Perhaps in needing less, you're actually getting more."

"If we could just free ourselves from our perceived limitations and tap into our internal fire, the possibilities are endless."

"Running into Santa Cruz, I was wholly fulfilled. Most people never get there. They're afraid or unwilling to demand enough of themselves and take the easy road, the path of least resistance. But struggling and suffering, as I now saw it, were the essence of a life worth living. If you're not pushing yourself beyond the comfort zone, if you are not constantly demanding more from yourself--expanding and learning as you go--you're choosing a numb existence. You're denying yourself an extraordinary trip."

Sam says

The closest I will ever get to an ultramarathon is reading this book. To better simulate the all night running experience described in this book I thought I would try a sort of ultramarathon reading style. So in the tradition of Dean Karnazes here are the confessions of an all night reader.

After a night at the local pool learned flip-turns from Anne we returned home to put the girls to bed. Instead of Scrabble or episodes of the West Wing (which are our surefire date-defaults) we decided to read in bed. For me, that usually means about a half hour before I can't keep my eyes open anymore.

But tonight was different. I was going to try to read this baby cover to cover before I slept. Nevermind the 250 pages of textbooks I have to read by Monday for school. I started out strong through the first 100 pages, rarely breaking more than a few seconds between chapters.

By that time Anne was fast asleep but my night had just begun. My favorite part of the book was Dean's description of his first Western States 100 mile race. He provided great detail and I felt like I was right there with him. I was starting to feel the fatigue setting in from my own lofty pursuits. After all, Dean wrote that the actual activity you choose is unimportant as long as you are giving everything you've got.

By the time I reached page 200 the lines were starting to blur. I had to get up and swing my arms and jump around to keep the blood flowing. So this is how Dean felt!? 226 miles without stopping? Try that many pages without coming up for air.

5 hours and 6 rice-crispy treats later I finished reading the last acknowledgments and closed the book. It was a little after 3:00am. Dean and I connected on a level that only those who dare to push their most outer limits can.

The way I read this book last night is not for everyone. But this book is! A very fun read that will leave you thinking about your own ultra ambitions.
