

# Everything that I am doing is with the goal of being the best marathoner I can be in Tokyo

## Interview with Galen Rupp

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“It took 10 years to get my American husband to help me to bring top U.S. runners to the Czech Republic,” says smiling Jana Moberly, the elite athletes manager at the RunCzech, just a few hours before the start of the Sportisimo Prague Half-Marathon. A quick look at the start list and you realize why she keeps smiling – Jordan Hasay and Galen Rupp in what is already one of the strongest fields in the history of the race. I sat down with the latter to talk not just about the Prague’s race but Boston and beyond.

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*Galen, what did you know about the Czech Republic prior to your arrival?*

Well obviously, I know about the Pilsner so that’s probably the first thing that comes to my mind. *(laughter)* But I heard so many good things about Prague from various friends of mine and they all just raved about it. I am happy to say that Prague has lived up to everything I’ve heard about it. Everybody has been really nice to me and the hospitality has been awesome here. I also got to see some really cool buildings on my runs. We won’t be leaving Prague until Sunday so I hope to get to explore the city a bit more after the race. Unfortunately, I wouldn’t be able to try the beer as I am getting ready for the Boston marathon. *(laughter)*

*What did you do in terms of preparation for the Prague’s course?*

I did some research, looked up the times and the athletes that ran here and from that it was obvious that the course is very fast. Lots of guys under sixty minutes too. So

that was definitely something that we took into consideration when choosing Prague as my next race.

*You arrived on Monday. How difficult was it for you to get adjusted to a different time zone and a to a relatively warm weather (the temperatures in the Czech Republic were as high as 24 degrees Celsius this week)?*

It hasn't been too bad. There were a few nights where I would wake up for an hour or two but I was always able to catch up on sleep later during the day. I make sure I wake up in the morning and that I am running between 9 and 10. I always run at the times of the upcoming race (the Prague half starts at 10) so I think I will be all right. Back in Portland it was just pouring day after day. As a matter of fact, I think that March was one of the wettest months in the history for us so I am just really enjoying the sunny weather here.

*Which Prague's training locations did you use?*

I did my Tuesday track workout at the Strahov stadium which I thought was pretty nice. I also ran a few times in Ladronka park near the Prague Castle and on the bike path along the river near our hotel.

*You had to withdraw from the Houston half-marathon in January due to plantar fasciitis. How's your leg now?*

It took a while to heal. I had to take about two weeks off when I was just cross-training (mainly biking and AlterG). It was a for the first time in a while that I had to do that but we caught the injury early and I never really lost any conditioning. Things have been going well since then. I've been feeling really good and haven't had any pain so I am just thankful for that.

*Will the American half marathon record of 59:43 set by Ryan Hall in 2007 be in danger tomorrow?*

Let's say I definitely want a PB. We've been training mainly for the marathon. The two marathons I ran before I was still doing so much track work but now we've been

doing primarily endurance work; lots of long runs and tempo runs so I am sure that will pay off.

*American half-marathon record or top 3 at the Boston Marathon. What would mean more for you?*

Well, I'd like to win Boston. Top 3 would be great but my goal is definitely to win. Frankly, Boston is my main focus. That's what I've been building up towards for a long time. But I don't see any reason why not to try to get both.

*What are your plans after the Boston marathon?*

First and foremost, I will take some time off because the marathon really takes the best out of you and it would be a big mistake to just keep training. Then I'd like to come back on the track and get World Championships one more shot before I move to the roads fulltime. I still want that 10K medal. Then in 2018, there is no major championship so I think I'd be just running marathons and build up towards the 2020 Olympics. Everything that we are doing, even right now, is with that goal of being the best marathoner I can be in Tokyo.

*You seem to be better suited for the marathon than Mo Farah. He beat you many times on the track. Do you feel like you can "get back at him" on the roads?*

*(laughter)* That's a good question. Hopefully, but he's my training partner and maybe I wouldn't be as good as I am now if I wasn't been able to train with him and vice versa. The speed stuff is much easier for him. I had to work much harder when we were doing sprint work but when we start doing longer runs I think I might have a little bit of an advantage. So we are coming from different ends but he's obviously going to be tough even in the marathon if he decides to make that transition.

For me personally, I think that the marathon is ultimately going to be my best event. I ran some good 10Ks over the years and had some success there. We tried over and over to work on my finishing speed and kicks but it's been tough and sometimes I've kicked well but most of the time it hasn't been quite where I wanted it to be. When I made that transition to the marathon I found out I enjoyed it a lot more than I thought

I would. I thought it was going to feel like forever but there is really something special about the marathon. The marathon is about efficiency and endurance and these were always my strengths.

*I assume that your coach Alberto Salazar knows just about everything there is to know about the marathon...*

I've been fortunate to learn a lot over the years from Alberto. He made a lot of mistakes during his racing career and now he makes sure that I won't repeat them. "You have to take breaks" – that's been the biggest thing he's always preached to me since I started running. It's simply not possible to run through everything and to stay in top shape all the time. You have to take easy days and let your body recover. So I think I've been the beneficiary of all the mistakes that Alberto made.

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