



Coach-Athlete Q&A

A look at some coach-replies to common questions by topic.

Subject: [question] Shin Splints.....Questions in black, Coach-responses in red:

Sonni,

My pursuit of a successful 2002 season is being hampered by SHIN SPLINTS. They came "out of the blue" ... here is some additional information. Any suggestion for prevention or improving my current situation would be greatly appreciated.

sometimes shinsplints can occur due to an imbalance between gastroc (calf) strength and the strength on the front of the lower leg.....and result in a 'pulling' away of the connective tissue there. Pounding magnifies this.

Strengthening the front of the shin.....'ankle-curls' help this.

* New pair of shoes in December ... but same size and model for the past three years

* Have increased the running miles slightly ... more intervals

* Is it ok to run on grassy surface.....it's preferable to run on softer surfaces

Are braces or shoe inserts helpful.....orthotics, absolutely. But nothing will help more than getting to the source of 'why now?' And, more than likely, that has to do with **your stride mechanics** and questions like:

1-how does your foot contact the ground (heel first, forefoot 1st)?

2-does your foot-plant occur directly under you.....or slightly in front of you? [If you heel-strike, footstrike is happening in FRONT of our body's centerline. No question. Try bouncing up and down in place (an example where your feet MUST be directly under you). With each bounce, did you jump or land off your heels? Of course not. And if you tried, could you imagine the shock?

3-when your foot plants, is it moving in the same direction that YOU are moving? Ideally, w/ good knee lift, your foot is traveling in a backward path @ foot-plant (to push YOU forward). What we've found is that w/ heelstrikers, (who're striking in front of the body centerline.....& often stiff-legged).....the foot is moving FORWARD at the moment it touches. And that's not good for mechanics, shock, of speed/efficiency.

Had a great fall workout season ... was able to ride the bike outdoors more than usual. Starting to panic ... this is the time where I start to crank up the intensity and at this point I am not able.

I'm about 45-50minutes away from you(Gastonia) in Valdese. I'd be more than glad to schedule a 1-on-1 on this if you'd like. Let me know.

Thanks
A.C.

No problem.....Sonni