

# RUNNERS



ASK THE EXPERTS

WORLD

## Racing to Race

The best way to become race-ready may be to . . . race. Here's how it works

### SHOE INSERTS

#### A New Addition

I've had success wearing shoe orthotics to prevent injuries, but my orthotics are pretty heavy. I've heard you can now get lightweight orthotics that fit into racing shoes. Do these work?

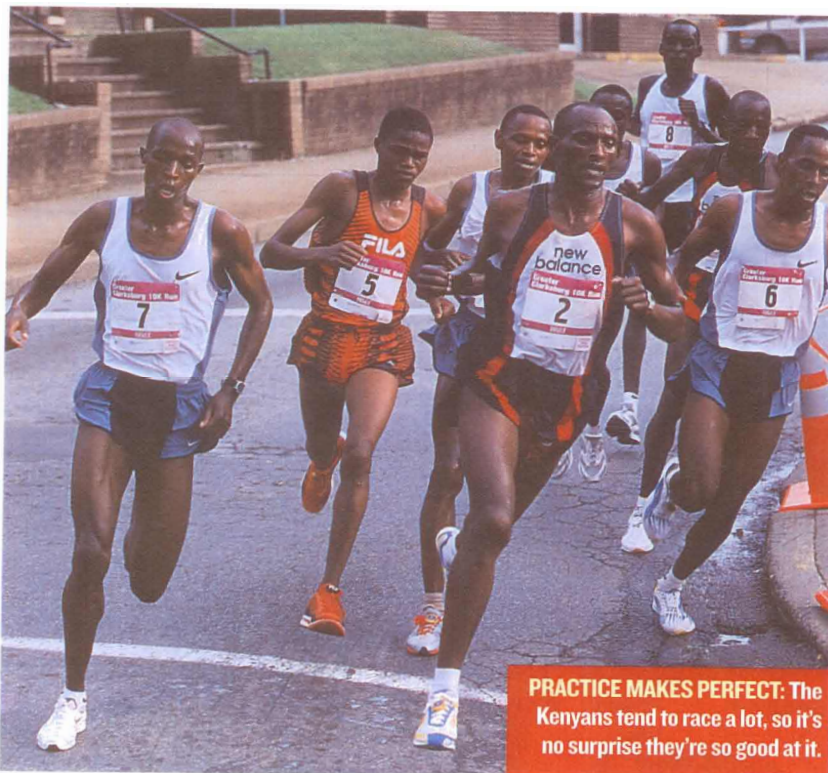
—W.G., LAKE TAHOE, NEV.

**A**bsolutely. And you'll notice the difference in weight right away when you switch to them. They come with the same corrective "post" as ordinary orthotics, so they reduce both excessive pronation and supination. This will decrease your injury risk. But only use them occasionally, because they're made from lighter materials that aren't as durable as your regular orthotics. They're also not quite as supportive. So again, use them for racing and speed sessions only, not daily training.

Typically, a podiatrist can make these orthotics in the office. Materials differ, but most are made from a combination of foam or felt. Depending on your weight, softer or firmer foam inlays are glued together and molded to your foot, or to a plaster cast impression of your foot. Your podiatrist can fine-tune them by adding more foam, felt, or rubber, depending on your biomechanics.

A word of caution: If you are experiencing foot or leg pain, or do so in the future, you may want to stick exclusively with your regular orthotics for maximum support. To find a sports podiatrist in your area who can manufacture lightweight orthotics, contact [www.aapsm.org](http://www.aapsm.org), or call (888) 854-3338.

—RICHARD BRAVER, D.P.M., SPORTS PODIATRIST IN ENGLEWOOD AND FAIR LAWN, N.J., AND MEMBER OF THE RW SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD



**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT:** The Kenyans tend to race a lot, so it's no surprise they're so good at it.

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