

# Ultrarunning World

Road, Track and Trail ultra distance news and events

Vol. 01 April 2007



Barry 40 and the Welsh Ultra Distance Championships

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# Ultrarunning World

Trail, Road and Track ultramarathons

## Welcome to the first edition of Ultrarunning World

I have been an running ultras since 1995 and in that time I have met so many helpful personalities I decided to put a magazine together to share the wisdom. This led to 5 issues of a small magaize called Multiday Running and then the idea grew to create Ultrarunning World. This a resource for people who are thinking about stepping up from the marathon distance to the ultra-marathon and multiday events.



With Montrail sponsoring a new ultra championship in the UK this year and the recent increase in numbers at races around the globe the recent announcement that the 100km and 24 hour distances are to be trialed for the upcoming Commonwealth Games was no real surprise.

The advent of cheaper travel has brought many distant events within the budget of more people today and the ultrarunning community has a much stronger international flavour today than in years gone by and this magazine although based in the UK will include ultras and multiday events in Europe, the

Americas and indeed, the rest of the world.

If you would like to write a race report for your event, write about a race you took part in or contribute something relevant to the sport and the community or advertise relevant products or services then please send mail to [editor@ultrarunningworld.co.uk](mailto:editor@ultrarunningworld.co.uk).

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Next edition: Winter 2009/10



Think the MDS is tough? Try this Yukon Arctic Ultra on for size with Jessica Simon's article page 27

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# Barry 40 Mile Track Race 2007

Photos by: Fifi and Dave Cooper

## Barry 40 Mile Track Race Report

It's an often used cliché, but in the world of ultra distance running you can take nothing for granted (writes Mick McGeoch).

Twelve months ago the race was held in arctic weather, and snow lay on the ground. This year a beautiful early Spring day dawned to greet the runners with near perfect racing conditions. Only a gentle southerly breeze, which did increase a little in mid-race, did anything to detract from a race day which only runners can dream about.

A total of 23 athletes faced the starter from a total of 31 entries. Sadly, recent illness to Matthew Lynas, Chris Finill and Viesturs Dude, causing their withdrawal did detract somewhat from the overall quality of the field, but those running still represented a fascinating blend of youth and experience, speed and endurance. Picking a winner remained a risky business.

A select quartet soon detached themselves from the rest. John Pares (Buckley Running Club), Scotsman Andy Farquharson (Kent AC), Rob Wood (Road Runners Club, but based in Taunton) and Colin Gell (Sale Harriers) all seemed to be running easily. Pares, Farquharson and Wood all ran here last year when John Pares won decisively. All three were aged in their early forties. By contrast, Gell, at 27, represented the young pretender, and the fastest improving ultra man. The early miles passed uneventfully with the group



**John Pares** operating at a little outside 6:30 miling (32:44 at 5 miles). Next came Mark Shepherd, a newcomer to the Barry race, whose banter with girlfriend and lap scorer Rachael kept everyone amused. Running with Mark was Walter Hill, another contrast. Walter represented consistency and experience – at age 53 his six previous attempts at this race had seen him place between third and sixth every time. The ladies race was one of contrasts also. Straight into the lead went Elaine Calder from Strathaven Striders in Scotland. Elaine is a relative newcomer to the world of ultra distance, and that was reflected in her relatively

bouncy but beautifully rhythmical action. Inexperienced perhaps, but she had already twice won the Scottish Ladies 50 km title, as well as her home club's 50 mile promotion. Not far behind came Ramona Thevenet-Smith, from Woking. Hugely experienced, Ramona has represented UK at 24 Hours, as well as having been twice runner-up in this race. Her style represented efficiency, and economy of effort. Close behind Ramona ran the defending Welsh Champion, Loretta Daley, from the host club, Les Croupiers of Cardiff. A partially-sighted athlete, last year's race was Loretta's first ever ultra, and she's learnt much from the experience. Loretta's expression was one of tenacity. Whatever the outcome, she was going to fight all of the way.

Race strategies began to unfold. By 10 Miles, reached in 65:39, Pares, Farquharson and Wood remained together, Gell having conceded 40 seconds after a "pit-stop". Calder led the ladies (78:48), with Thevenet-Smith less than a lap back on 80:14, and Daley in third on 83:17 – already almost seven minutes faster than at the same stage last year.

Around 15 miles Wood began to concede ground to the others, though Pares and Farquharson remained together, as if each was looking for a weakness in the other. By the halfway distance, reached in 2:11:47, they had opened up a two and a half minute lead on Wood (2:14:15), with Gell on 2:16:09. Shepherd and Hill were still going well and still occupied fifth and sixth positions. The ladies had consolidated their





**Andy Farquharson**

positions too, with Calder on 2:36:35, holding a four minute cushion over Thevenet-Smith (2:40:47). Daley came through in 2:49:30, now 14 minutes ahead of her 2006 performance.

Watching an ultra distance race is akin to reading or watching a good thriller. Seemingly not much happens in the first half, even though the clues are there as to the likely outcome.

Interpreting those clues, however, isn't always easy. For the ultra cognoscenti, for example, most anticipated that the relative anticipated advantage in endurance of Pares would prevail over the relative anticipated advantage in speed of Farquharson. A "pit-stop" by Andy on Lap 93, in which Pares suddenly acquired a 78 second

lead seemed merely to confirm this view. Like an animal hunting his prey, John actually quickened his pace for a few laps and by Lap 97 actually caught Andy – albeit now with a lap advantage.

The athletes ran together once more, but not for long. On lap 100 Farquharson surged and broke away. A high-risk strategy, Andy was clearly intent on retrieving the single lap deficit.

By the end of lap 114, he'd caught his man, and the race was on in earnest. John and Andy passed 30 miles together in 3:17:54, and almost immediately a further "pit-stop" cost the Scotsman 28 further seconds. Surely after another disruption to his running rhythm he couldn't come back again? Wrong again, he could.

By lap 125 the two were back together again, but this time, sensing the kill, Andy went straight past and into the outright lead for the first time. But there was still nearly nine miles to run – could he hold on? The psychological advantage was beginning to shift. After looking in control for so long, John was beginning to show the strain. Andy was growing in confidence with every circuit, and it was showing.

By 35 miles Andy's advantage was up to 1:49 – exactly one lap. The two ran together for a few circuits before Andy made his run for home. A last lap flourish saw him cross the line in triumph in 4:28:02. This represented a 13 minute improvement over his previous best time at Barry, but more importantly showed that he can be a winner at this level. This might just prove to be the springboard to greater things. John plodded on gamely for second, just over three minutes back in 4:31:20. It was another

wonderfully consistent run, in which he retained his Welsh title, and was his first loss in four track ultra starts. However, for John the Barry race represents the first hurdle in a busy 2007, with the London Marathon, the UK 100 Championships, and most importantly, the World 24 Hour Championships in Canada in July. Colin Gell, in his first ultra for almost a year, held on to finish third in 4:40:36.

Meanwhile, what of the ladies? The positions of halfway seemed to be clear-cut. Elaine extended her lead over Ramona to over five minutes by 30 miles, and to almost seven by 35 miles. All over, surely? Wrong again. A pit stop on lap 145 cost



**Elaine Calder**





**Mike Alderson, Ramona Thevenet-Smith and Andy Smith**

Elaine 4 minutes. Suddenly a seven minute advantage became three. Sensing a potential upset, Ramona increased her pace. Elaine appeared not to have a lot left, and suddenly a dramatic turnaround looked possible. Both athletes could sense it. Ramona was running 10 seconds a lap quicker. But the laps were running out. In the end, Elaine held on, clocking 5:25:49, with Ramona just 57 seconds behind. It was the closest ladies race in the 21 year history of the event – a real classic. In third place, Loretta was running superbly. Her finishing time of 6:05:15 not only retained her the Welsh title but represented an enormous 54 minute improvement over 2006.

Whilst two thrilling races were

unfolding, there was even more drama. In this race two years ago, Geoff Oliver, then 71 years old, smashed the World Best Performance for 40 Miles for an athlete over 70 with 5:38:19. During that race he missed the world best time for the intermediate distances of 30 miles and 50 kilometres by very small margins. After a 2006 season ravaged by injury, surely he couldn't come back at age 73 and break those two records?

The existing 30 mile record of 4:05:57, set by Australian Randall Hughes in 1995, represented an average pace of just over 8 minutes per mile. 30 times 8 minutes equals 4 hours. A fairly simple equation – an extremely difficult task.

To achieve this would require not only a massive amount of training

in preparation but also meticulous pace judgement. Geoff Oliver was brilliant at both. His five mile timing splits reveal everything: 40:09; 40:07; 40:19; 40:15; 40:15; 41:38. By the final few circuits everyone in the stadium was aware of the magnitude of the achievement, the other athletes were all encouraging him and the race officials were cheering him all the way. He clocked 4:02:43 at 30 miles, three minutes and fourteen seconds inside the old mark. The next four and a bit laps up to the 50 kilometre mark were almost laps of honour as he registered 4:13:44 at that distance for his second world best (previous record being 4:16:12 by Max Jones in Portland, Oregon in 1997). We wondered if he would continue till the end of the race, given his efforts up till



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then. Of course was the answer, though he did finish very tired in 5:55:56. This brought Geoff's personal tally of world bests at Barry to three, and the overall total in 21 editions of the race to a mightily impressive 57! Local interest centred yet again on Gary Hyatt, or "Top Man" to his mates. Gary completed the distance in 15<sup>th</sup> place in 6:09:11, to register his eighth finish in ten starts. He was encouraged every step of the way by wife Pip and daughters Kate and Sally, who again prepared all the refreshments which kept the army of helpers going through their long ordeal. The race statistics reveal that 18 of the 23 starters completed the distance: what a superb testament to the dedication and mental application of all. Any report would not be complete without a vote of thanks to the groundsman, Bill Cooke, whose support and help enabled the race organisation to function as smoothly as ever.

In spite of all the contrasts mentioned above, the two races actually had a lot in common: the fight for honours was waged between an athlete from each of England, Scotland and Wales. Both races were nail-bitingly close and both resulted in wins for Scotland. But it was the septuagenarian who stole the show.



Geoff Oliver

# Welsh Ultradistance Championships

The race incorporated the 18th edition of the Welsh Ultradistance Championship. Sadly, one of the disappointing features of an otherwise enthralling event was lack of support for this championship. Just seven athletes entered, five of whom finished. John Pares and Loretta Daley successfully defended their national titles with magnificent performances. Particular mention should be made of Loretta who improved on her performance of last year by a massive 54 minutes, and who looked untroubled throughout.

John will no doubt view the race with a tinge of disappointment at losing his overall race title in such a closely-fought contest. It should, however be stated that in the last 12 months John has won the UK 24 Hour Title and will be representing UK in the World 24 Hour Championships in Canada in July, and we all wish John well in this event.

It was good to see Tony Holling feature prominently to take the silver medal, having won the Welsh crown back in 1997.



Congratulations also to David Thomas of 3Ms Gorseinon on taking his first national medal, the bronze, after several attempts.



Ultrarunning World

# 21st Annual Barry 40 Miles Track Race

Sunday 11th March, 2007

## Official Results

1. Andy Farquharson (V40)	Kent AC	4:28:02
2. John Pares (V40)	Buckley R.C.	4:31:20
3. Colin Gell	Sale Harriers	4:40:36
4. Mark Shepherd	Team Kennet	4:55:24
5. Walter Hill (V50)	Crawley AC	5:05:56
6. Bill Graham (V50)	Bitton R.R.	5:09:20
7. Elaine Calder (FV40)	Strathaven Striders	5:25:49
8. Ramona Thevenet-Smith (FV45)	Woking AC	5:26:46
9. Tony Holling (V50)	Port Talbot Harriers	5:29:56
10. Mark Cockbain	Road Runners Club	5:35:59
11. Mike Trew (V45)	Poole AC	5:36:34
12. David Thomas	3Ms Gorseinon	5:51:12
13. Geoff Oliver (V70)	100 Km Association	5:55:56
14. Loretta Daley (FV40)	Les Croupiers	6:05:15
15. Gary Hyatt (V55)	Les Croupiers	6:09:11
16. Andy Smith (V45)	Woking AC	6:17:16
17. Mark Green (V50)	100 Km Association	6:53:06
18. Malcolm Knight (V60)	Newbury AC	6:58:53

NB. It should be noted that Geoff Oliver's intermediate times of 4:02:43 (30 miles) and 4:13:44 (50 Kms) will be submitted for ratification as World Best Performances in the MV70-74 age category.

## Retirements

Alan Mann (V50)	Les Croupiers	124 laps in 4:26:04
Rob Wood (V40)	Road Runners Club	103 laps in 3:01:44
Michael Alderson (V45)	Poole AC	101 laps in 4:28:23
Jeremy Mower (V40)	Gloucester AC	81 laps in 2:39:30
Wendy Lynas (FV50)	Thames Hare & Hounds	26 laps in 1:09:17

## Welsh Ladies 40 Mile Championship

1. Loretta Daley	Les Croupiers	6:05:15
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## Welsh Mens 40 Mile Championship

1. John Pares	Buckley Running Club	4:31:20
2. Tony Holling	Port Talbot Harriers	5:29:56
3. David Thomas	3Ms Gorseinon	5:51:12
4. Gary Hyatt	Les Croupiers	6:09:11

Provisional Date for 22nd Annual Barry 40 Miles Track Race: Sunday 9th March, 2008



# 'The Jez and Lucy Show'

## 'Highland Fling' Race Report 2007

Those of us who were at last year's race were lucky to see the emergence of a wonderful new talent in Scottish Ultra running. After Jez Bragg's run, I went to the bookies to bet the house on him winning the WHW race, but they would only take a 'double' combined with Gretna getting to the SPL this season, and as I knew that would never happen, I turned it down. Jez duly smashed the WHW record, and this



Lucy Colquhoun Photo: J Kynaston

year he broke Norman McLennan's 'Fling' record by 1 hour 13 minutes, getting home in 7:26:15. He was however almost overshadowed by another remarkable performance. Lucy Colquhoun had never run an Ultra before, but 'gave it a try', and in an astonishing run knocked nearly one and three-quarters of an hour off Debbie Cox's course record, finishing third overall in 8:47:40. She has undoubtedly discovered her best event and we were privileged to be there to see the birth of an Ultra legend.

These terrific performances were assisted by typical Scottish Spring weather - not a cloud in the sky and a light breeze. The temperature at the six o'clock Milngavie start was perfect for the 72 runners, although it warmed up as the day went on, with one or two getting slight sunburn - in Scotland! - in April! (surely some mistake - ed) This led to records all over the place, with Davie Atkin improving the Super-Vet time by forty minutes to 9:44:15, and Rob Reid improving his own Super-Duper Vet time by nearly fifteen minutes to 11:48:30. Goodness knows what time Rob would achieve if he ever runs the course without taking his customary 'Derrydarroch Dip.' (For those who don't believe he actually goes for a swim - the photos will soon be posted on the web) Cath Worth set a superb Female Super-Vet time of 10:14:45, which will take some beating.



Jezz Bragg

Photo J Kynaston

Through the pack there were the usual happy tales of aches, pains, blisters, and Everton getting beaten by Man U. Happily, none of those who retired are seriously damaged. Nom and Allan have 'tweaked' knees, Stewart and Tom were feeling nauseous, David V.'s Achilles tightened up, Paul S., who was going very well, succumbed to a blister souvenir from the London Marathon, and Jim C., and Nachii had given their all and retired well up the course. We hope to welcome them all back next year to put the record straight.

The splits show some remarkably disciplined runs. George Cairns gets the 'haud me back' prize, improving from 38th at Balmaha to 9th at the finish. Honourable mentions also to Stephen Cant (39th to 13th) and Rosie Bell (42nd to 23rd). The prize for consistency goes to Iain Ridgway who was 5th at every checkpoint (the listed Balmaha 6th was really 5th equal), who also gets the prize for the highest finisher not to get a prize. Another special mention must go to Davie Atkin's mum, who ensured he turned 50 the day of the race, and added this year's Super-Vet win to last year's Vet victory - a double that is unlikely ever to be repeated. We're sorry we missed the party, but as the A82 was being closed at 10 o'clock, we had to head South - next year we're staying up.

Foreby the astonishing performances of the elite athletes, the highlights of



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the 'Fling' are found throughout the field. It was good of Norman to come to the start and support the runners, even though his back failed its last minute fitness test. Having the previous year's winner start the race is an 'ancient tradition' we should start right away. The smiles as people finish are always a joy. This year's brightest was Andree Lyon's as she outmanoeuvred Ray McCurdy and Jim Drummond to win the 'Final Finisher' prize in 14:51:10. Another highlight was seeing Cath and Kendra-Anne coming out of the shower, (are you sure you want to write that - ed) which has given us a great idea for next year. (I bet it has - ed) By pure co-incidence, the girls were met at the finish by a North Yorks Moors AC club member who had hired the cottage alongside the line, and invited them in for tea, cakes and a shower. Classy lassies these Yorkshire girls. Kendra-Anne is making enquiries about the 'Fling' hiring the cottage next year.

A special mention must be made for the 'Mainland Mules', our first ever relay team; well they said it was a relay, but we only ever saw Heather actually running! The 'Mules' greatly added to the gaiety of the day, particularly cheering on the finishers at Tyndrum. We have spoken to the SAF and there will definitely be a 'Relay Fling' (4 x half-marathon (approx)) next year, so tell your clubs to get in training - it's a great way to introduce folk to the joys of Ultra running. The 'Mules' are Davie's support team for the WHW race, and

so, in his honour the prize will be called the Davie Atkin Memorial National and International Trophy. (DAMNIT for short).

There is much thanks to be given to all our helpers. To the marshals - Emma, Tim McClune, Tim Downie, Anna and Alistair, our support car with Mary and Arthur, and the support runners Dinah, George and Alistair, who are all threatening to enter next year. For pre-race advice we are indebted to Ian Beattie and Dario of WHW Race fame, and to Andy Kerr for running the website (from New Zealand!). However, the primary plaudits must go to Ellen, who not only organised the event, but competed, and then did some timekeeping and presentations. Without Ellen, there would be no 'Fling', Hopefully we will reconvene at Milngavie, provisionally on Saturday 26th April, 2008.

Kendra-Anne has asked me to mention the Lyke Wake Race, a 44-mile Ultra, which her club, North Yorks Moors AC, is organising on Saturday 7th July 2007.



Breathtaking views along the route of the Highland Fling

Photo John Kynaston

**Murdo MacDonald**

# Run Across America

## Martin Illot

In April 2007, Martin Illot, from Windsor, embarked on a 3000 mile solo-run from Los Angeles to New York to raise money for Thames hospicecare. If successful, he believes he may be the first British runner to complete the run across America unaided.



The Run Across America is dedicated to the memory of Martin's father, himself a keen marathon runner, who died in 2003 soon after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. He had supported Martin in his successful attempt in running from Land's End to John O'Groats in 2002 and they had planned a similar attempt at a trans-American crossing before the tragic events unfolded. "Dad was a popular figure with Maidenhead Athletic Club and loved running in the USA, especially morning jogs around Central Park whilst working in New York".

Martin will began his run on the west coast, at Huntington Beach, Los Angeles on the 31st March, heading northeast towards Las Vegas. The route follows a familiar route for trans-USA runners from LA to New York covering a distance of approximately 3100 miles. The route takes him through the Mojave Desert of California, over the Rocky Mountains in Utah and Colorado, across >>>

### Highland Fling 2007 Race Results

Pos	Name	Time	Class	35	Neil MacRitchie	11:47:40
2	R Cunningham	8:44:56	2nd	36	Rob Reid	11:48:30 1st MSDV
3	Lucy Colquhoun	8:47:40	1st CR	37	Steven Battle	11:57:10
4	Allen Smalls	8:47:40	3rd	38	Ellen Thomson	12:01:00 3rd FSV
5	Iain Ridgway	8:56:48		39	Charles McCusker	12:13:55
6	Colin Hutt	9:16:34	1st MV	40	Ian Campbell	12:14:45
7	Joe Sheridan	9:24:38	2nd MV	41	Allan Harley	12:20:10
8	David Atkin	9:44:15	1st MSV	42	Phil Tipping	12:24:59
9	George Cairns	9:57:30		43	Mark Barnes	12:27:40
10	Paul Holmes	10:07:15	3rd MV	44	Mark Hamilton	12:31:50
11	Cath Worth	10:14:45	2nd/1st FSV	45	Graham Henry	12:32:40
12	Martin Dietrich	10:14:45		46	Peter Halpin	12:33:10
13	Stephen Cant	10:22:00		47	Margaret Turnbull	12:34:00
14	Debbie Cox	10:34:04	3rd	48	Keith Hughes	12:35:40
15	John Kynaston	10:36:10		49	Tony Thistlethwaite	12:53:30
16	Steven King	10:39:21		50	John King	12:54:40
17	Ian Beattie	10:39:57		51	C Campbell	13:21:00
18	David Foord	10:39:59	2nd MSV	52	David Hay	13:21:00
19	Kendra-Anne White	10:42:00		53	Andy North	13:25:15
20	Lynne Kuz	10:42:47	2nd FSV	54	Shirley Colquhoun	13:28:50
21	Hugh Kerr	10:50:20		55	Eric Baird	13:34:15
22	Tim Norwood	11:01:58		56	Martin Deans	13:46:30
23	Rosie Bell	11:05:50	2nd FV	57	Christopher Hever	14:21:10
24	Erwin Losekoot	11:05:50		58	Toby Lill	14:22:00
25	Aileen Scott	11:16:20	3rd FV	59	Tomo Thompson	14:22:00
26	Emma Hargrave	11:21:10		60	Ray McCurdy	14:41:15
27	Duncan Baker	11:21:10		61	Jim Drummond	14:41:50
28	Stewart Barrie	11:24:50		62	Andree Lyon	14:51:10 Final Finisher
29	Eryk Grant	11:25:30	3rd MSV		Stewart Bertram	DNF
30	Ian Rae	11:27:46			Nom Cabrelli	DNF
31	Duncan King	11:29:40			Jim Clarke	DNF
32	S Thompson	11:36:40			Allan Millar	DNF
33	James Lidsey	11:39:14			Eliyan. Narasinghan	DNF
34	Andy Cole	11:43:00			Paul Scholte	DNF
					David Venables	DNF
					Tom Wilson	DNF
				R	Mainland Mules	8:44:45



## Ultrarunning World

the plains of the mid-west in Kansas and Missouri and the Central lowlands of Illinois. The final leg takes him over the Appalachian Mountains and Coastal plain, through the eastern states of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York, with a projected finishing time in Central Park sometime in June or July.

“I am very grateful to the many individuals who provided support and advice during the planning phase” said Martin before his journey began, “Alan Firth, the Trans-America Race Director of the 2002 & 2004 races and a Swedish ultra-runner, Rune Larsson have been especially helpful. There are many other journey runners I would like to thank and the authors of so many fascinating books and websites on the subject, including Paul Staso who completed his solo run in 2006 and is planning a crossing by bike in 2007, Jonathan Williams, Matt Wyble and Brandon Newlin, Randy Ellis and Nick Baldock”.

Martin’s preparation for the Trans-Am included a 28 day Trans-UK crossing, popularly known as LeJOG – Lands End to John O’Groats, an 815 mile warm up, where he got a good grasp of the logistics and what would be the essential supplies necessary to get him 3100 miles across the North American continent.

More recent training saw Martin supplementing his daily regime with several ultra races including the Tring2Town, a 45 mile run along the Grand Union Canal from Tring to Little Venice and the Thames Meander (a 50 mile run from Reading to Shepperton along the river Thames) in February.

Being unsupported, Martin is carrying his equipment



and supplies in a baby jogger and find’s his accommodation en route or sleeps beneath the stars. There have also been some all night sessions where no suitable stopping point inspired Martin to continue until he came to another town or place where he could rest. The baby-jogger method has been used successfully by solo-runners including Paul Staso, Rune Larsson and Jesper Olsen, in recent years and Martin used to carry his children this way.

Martin’s employer, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, one of the leading regulatory agencies for veterinary medicines in Europe gave him extended leave to fulfil his longstanding ambition. “It is a fantastic to get the opportunity to attempt this without having to leave one’s job”; says Martin “It is an employer that understands the need for a healthy work-life balance”.

His wife, Rebecca, and four children have also been very supportive - “especially now they have an opportunity to visit New York in June!” adds Martin. Gratitude is also extended to his relatives in California who have helped get the project off the drawing board and his mother, Brenda, who has helped finance the project.

Martin is hoping to raise £10,000 for Thames hospicecare.

Visit Martin’s website at:  
[www.runacrossamerica.moonfruit.com](http://www.runacrossamerica.moonfruit.com)

# TRANSE GAULE 6

August 15 - September 1, 2007



MANCHE - MÉDITERRANÉE

*18 days / 1150 kilometers*



# - TRANSE GAULE 2007 -

*The only coast-to-coast stage race in France*

- coast-to-coast 1150 K ultramarathon race across France
- 18 stages, 18 days
- shortest stage : 49 K (30 Miles) / longest one : 75 K (47 Miles)
- daily average : 63.9 K (40 M) - on secondary asphalted roads
- rankings by adding daily times. Cutoff : 5,5 kph (3,4 mph)
- **START : Wednesday, August 15** at ROSCOFF (Brittany)
- **FINISH : Saturday, September 1** at GRUISSAN-Plage (Roussillon)
- 8 provinces visited : Brittany, Pays de Loire, Anjou, Poitou, Limousin, Auvergne, Midi-Pyrénées & Languedoc-Roussillon
- support vehicle & handler(s) allowed (not required)
- organisation : **PHARE-WEST ORGANISATION**  
Email : [transEgaule@yahoo.fr](mailto:transEgaule@yahoo.fr)  
Internet : [www.YaNoo.net](http://www.YaNoo.net)
- aid-stations (daily) : at Km 15, 30 then every 10 K until finish line
- race director : Jean-Benoît Jaouen - Tel : +33 (0)6 33 49 13 99

<b>1st edition (2001) :</b>	15 entrants, 11 Finishers
- 1130 km -	Winner : Maurice Mondon (FRA) 96h15'
<b>2nd edition (2002) :</b>	26 entrants, 23 Finishers
- 1130 km -	Winners : Rainer W. Koch (GER) 94h04'
	(F) Ria Buiten (NED) 124h00'
<b>3rd edition (2004) :</b>	24 entrants, 14 Finishers
- 1149 km -	Winners : Jean-Jacques Moros (FRA) 94h00' (record)
	(F) Sigrid Eichner (GER) 184h30'
<b>4th edition (2005) :</b>	24 entrants, 24 Finishers
- 1149 km -	Winners : Janne Kankaansyrja (FIN) 98h08'
	(F) Hiroko Okiyama (JAP) 116h43' (record)
<b>5th edition (2006) :</b>	38 entrants, 27 Finishers
- 1150 km -	Winners : Werner Selch (GER) 109h17'
	(F) Regina Van Geene (NED) 176h34'

**More info :** J.-B. Jaouen - « Kerlosquet » 29250 St-Pol-de-Léon - France

**40 entrants Maximum**  
**Entry Fee : 1166 Euros**

2nd participation : -5% ♦ 3rd : -10% ♦ 4th : -15% ♦ 6th : -25%

*In the spirit of TRANSAMERICA Footrace but certified without parched deserts or endless straight roads, this race is designed for those who have read the « FLANAGAN'S RUN » novel, dreaming to participate in the race...*

*From french Far-West Brittany to sunny South coast, across quiet Central France countryside, running a reasonable marathon and half daily, this event is*

At the 2007 Brno 48 hour race in the Czech Republic, Ireland's Tony Mangan reached beyond himself to set a new 48 hour indoor world record.

# Uno in Brno!

## Tony Mangan

I felt the Japanese runners eyes burning holes through my back. We were in the latter hours of the Brno 48 hour indoor international endurance race in the Czech Republic. He was probably wondering who was this upstart. I had googled him last week and knew he was a member of their gold medal-winning team from the world 24 hour championships in Taiwan. He had finished 7th there. I was 16th.

I moved to the left he moved to left. He was waiting for me to go. Cat and mouse. I was in no hurry, as I had a nice lead of about 10km. I stopped to send a mothers day sms message! Kenjai grunted and charged off. This was his 3rd attack of the 4 he had mounted on me. Knowing he was nearing his limit this time I went with him just to show him I was feeling very strong. It was a short attack. Just one lap of the 250 meter concrete track of the indoor arena. Eyeballs- out-stuff, we ran it in about 70 seconds but it seemed sub 60. Most of my other laps were in the 1:30 to 1:40 region. At the end of this lap his hand went up in the air, almost as a sign of submission. I had managed to fend off his 2 previous attacks, lapping him a few times when he faded. I never did get to send that mothers day message but later my mam had said. "Son that was the best present any mother could have wished for!"

We jogged on for a couple of hours, towards the never-ending finish. Refreshed with about 2 hours to go we spoke for the first time. He told me not to worry that he wanted to go through 400km in style. Still, I had to take this seriously as anything could happen to me giving him an outside chance of victory. He lifted his pace gradually, adrenalin filled, running through the pain barrier. I was watching him carefully from the opposite side of the track matching his pace. He was running clad in his white Japanese singlet and blue shorts with a forward leaning style which was easy to pick out amongst the other runners.

### “I took a half hour nap after 20 hours and another half-hour at 32 hours”

I started this race wearing my Dublin clubs Metro St. Brigid's singlet for the first 14 hours. As it was St. Patrick's day at midnight on the first day I changed into my Irish national singlet. This was first time in 20 years as a member of my club I didn't wear my clubs colours for a non-championship race. It was my plan to change back at midnight, but I decided I didn't want to change the luck of the Irish. After 2 hours I was

in 26th place of the 51 runners. As the hours ticked slowly by I was gradually moving up the standings, passing other runners, one by one. I felt like a grand prix driver moving up through the grid. By the 24 hour mark I was 3rd place, later getting a presentation for that competition within a competition; 223km run, almost identical to the distance I covered in the Verona European championships 6 months earlier, finishing 9th. For once the weather could be guaranteed for a race. The arena which is usually used for expos had been heated to 17degrees C. I wondered what my friends and family were doing at home. My club, MSB were hosting the St. Patrick's Day KBC assets 4 mile road race in the Phoenix Park. It would be nice to run a shorter race sometime I thought. I don't like to listen to an audio device during these races - preferring to concentrate on form, style and pace - besides a radio is never far from my ear in real life and it makes for a nice rest.

Here in Brno, I took the lead with 10 hours to go. I was running like a man possessed. No way did I want to finish second again in a big race. Passion, ambition and a hunger to win were the fuel that drove me on through that second long night. This Japanese runner, Kenjai Okiyama, is some competitor, courageous full of running, never-say-die attitude





**Kenji Okiyama, Tony Mangan and Vlastimil Dvoracek**

- we had an incredible tussle! On each of those 4 attacks I managed to hold him off by raising my pace steadily so he found it hard to keep his attacks going. I took a half hour nap after 20 hours and another half-hour at 32 hours. Upon returning to the track I got sick and wasted another 15-20 minutes. The only time I walked was for 3 laps immediately before my first nap.

Peta a young science student was assigned to look after me giving me my carbohydrate Sustained Energy drinks, Hammer Nutrition Gels and E-Caps. Also, Alan Young a UK athletics official was very generous with his assistance even though he was there to crew for William Sichel who broke the Scottish 48 hour record and finished 6th. These helpers were instrumental to my success. I owe them a huge debt. This was the first time I wore Injinji Tetratsoks and for the first time in 3 ultras I didn't get a blister, in fact my feet hardly had a blemish! The official aid stations were well stocked and included beer! As a non-drinker I chose the alcohol-free one, occasionally. They were of course not pint

glasses but shot glass size. Sometimes one finds it hard to stomach regular drinks and as beer is rich in carbohydrates - it's a welcome refreshment!

Towards the end of the race I was escorted by the race referee to my finishing spot to put down a marker to mark what I thought to be a course record. Jaroslav Kocourek, a Czech runner was the first to shake my hand and congratulate me on breaking his indoor world record! I asked him what he meant: "was it not a course record"? "Yes it's a course record but the course record is the world record!" That was a pleasant shock to me!

I looked for Kenjai and gave him a massive hug. We exchanged flags and were photographed holding each others flag. Then third place Vlastimil Dvoracek came over. We exchanged race stories. I fell into a chair and gave 2 television interviews and numerous photos as the arena sign flashed "World 48 hour indoor record Tony Mangan Ireland 426.178km " (264. 81miles) Kenjai's second place total was 412.9km. Third was the Czech runner

## Ultrarunning World

Vlastimil Dvoracek in 374.9km. Irina Koval from Russia won the women's race with 353.4km. Nina Mytrofanova from the Ukraine was second, 334.4km. Michaela Dimitriadu, Czech Rep. 322.3km, third. My 24 hour splits were 223km and 203km.

We got onto the podium sharing with the 3 women's winners. We were all so tired, almost falling off and hanging onto each other as the presentations continued with individual awards for each finisher. Eventually they allowed us to sit down on the podium while the ceremony continued.

I went back to the hotel, showered and slept for about 4 hours and went out to dinner with the other runners. I sat with Kenjai. He told me about life as a runner in Japan. His wife is a 10 day runner. It was very expensive for him and his handler to come here. I felt sorry for him. I was wearing my traditional race night tee-shirt which reads: "Battered, shattered, plastered and twisted!" I was happy and this made up for so many heartbreaking second place finishes during my ultrarunning career.

My club physio Michael Farrell deserves a lot of credit for his great work getting me ready for races. Many times I have doubted if I can get over some injuries but Michael always seems to pull me through. In 5 years working on me the masochist has never failed me!

Race director, Tomas Rusek did a wonderful job putting on this incredible race which went like a well-oiled machine without a hitch. The trophy I was presented with was so big I didn't know how to get it home! He called to my room the next morning to give me a large sports bag which the trophy barely fitted into. I went to the airport put the 48 hour shoes into the x-ray machine and pitied the operator! As I put them on I heard some Irish weekend revelers asking. "Did you run?" Thinking they were talking to me I turned just as the other was replying, "Are you crazy? I couldn't run across the street!" I had a little chuckle and walked very slowly through the terminal. I was happy.

■

## Brno 48 Hour Indoor Race

March 16-18 2007

1	Tony MANGAN	Ireland	426,178
2	Kenji OKIYAMA	Japan	412,909
3	Vlastimil DVORÁČEK	Czech Republic	374,909
4	Jirí Hofman	Czech Republic	360,627
5	Irina KOVAL	Russian Federation	353,436
6	Evgeniy USHAKOV	Russian Federation	350,867
7	William SICHEL	United Kingdom	344,267
8	Nina MYTROFANOVA	Ukraine	334,423
9	Vladimir TIVIKOV	Russian Federation	325,867
10	Sergey KLEPTCOV	Russian Federation	324,594
11	Stéphane MATHIEU	France	324,145
12	Christian CHMEL	Austria	322,687
13	Michaela DIMITRIADU	Czech Republic	322,342
14	Joerg KOENIG	Germany	319,290
15	Petr DOSTÁLEK	Czech Republic	311,319
16	Alexander BOGI	Slovakia	302,390
17	Christian LANDSTEINER	Austria	301,765
18	Nadezda TARASOVA	Russian Federation	301,186
19	Petr SPÁCIL	Czech Republic	288,621
20	Jan ONDRUŠ	Czech Republic	283,590
21	Bertil PALMQVIST	Sweden	272,875
22	Jaroslav KAŠE	Czech Republic	272,520
23	Krisztina NAGY	Hungary	267,999
24	Peter MEYER	Germany	267,640
25	Stanislav HOLECEK	Czech Republic	265,555
26	Kent MOELLER	Denmark	262,395
27	Geir FRYKHOLM	Norway	253,210
28	Christophe LABORIE	France	249,061
29	Werner GLEISSNER	Germany	246,887
30	Nikolai SOKOLOV	Russian Federation	246,436
31	Frode ANDERSSON	Norway	242,377
32	Peter KLUKA	Slovakia	241,811
33	August JAKUBIK	Poland	235,000
34	Csaba SÁNDOR	Hungary	230,647
35	Djuro OBRIJEVIC	Serbia	225,858
36	Kjell-Ove SKOGLUND	Sweden	220,631
37	Jeno HORVÁTH	Hungary	211,680
38	Edyard KHIROV	Russian Federation	198,863
39	Miroslav OSLADIL	Czech Republic	192,750
40	Joachim HOIER	Germany	183,750
41	Blahoslav KRÍŽ	Czech Republic	173,073
42	Dan COFFEY	United Kingdom	170,510
43	Zoltán NAGY	Hungary	163,249
44	Dan ORÁLEK	Czech Republic	160,750
45	Mattias BRAMSTANG	Sweden	153,000
46	Bohuš BARBORÁK	Czech Republic	140,000
47	K.-G. NYSTROEM	Sweden	108,131
48	Hans-Peter BURGER	Austria	70,750
49	Ivan DURKOVSKÝ	Slovakia	70,500
50	Rastislav ŠTENDA	Slovakia	68,250
51	Pavel ŠMÝD	Czech Republic	51,250



# Seven Days in the Swiss Jura

by Kris Whorton

Photo's: Peter Graf

I think most ultrarunners would agree that running is about land and the amount of time it takes to cross it. It is also about how you handle the distance physically and mentally. A basic concept in geography--and by extension running--is that if you can see the horizon, the journey doesn't seem to be so long. In contrast, if you can't see beyond the next bend in the road or trail, it seems to take longer and perhaps cause a bit of mental, as well as physical discomfort, even as it excites and inspires. Ultrarunning is also about experiencing life with all the euphoria and the pain. We can't explain why we run, why we thrive on the hours spent moving, but it is something we need at a level that is essential to our existence and I think it has a great deal to do with exploring both the most complex and the most fundamental aspects of ourselves as thinking, breathing beings. Part of this belief comes from the changes my body has undergone over years of running, especially on trails. My favorite clothes that I wore for years are either too loose or too tight in ways that don't work, but my core is stronger so I no longer have back aches when I'm running and my shoulders rarely get tired. When I run, I can run steeper and more technical terrain for longer, without getting fatigued. So the physical changes are mostly great things but the other part involves coming to a metaphorical or mental place where I

no longer worry so much about the next bend or the horizon but instead focus on staying in the moment, or on the current trail in most cases. This idea of knowing and seeing, of trying to manage something so "beyond the bend," is often in my thoughts as I head out to run and it was prevalent as my husband Randy and I prepared to begin a 7-day ultrarunning adventure through the Jura mountains of northwest Switzerland. Aside from back to back 20 to 30 mile running days to prepare for the Swiss Jura Marathon, we really didn't have any experience with stage racing and we both knew that sometimes a 100 miler, and even a 50k, can be a bit of a grind. I also knew that there are times when I will resort to nearly any escapist tactic to avoid training and running.

But once we were accepted into the event, there was no escape and my focus shifted to our shared concerns of how to train so we would be prepared to run 28 to 35 miles a day for 7 days (for an average of 50k a day), meet specific time limits, and recover in time to do it again the next morning. We devised a 14-week schedule, which we followed essentially, but not religiously. With the remaining unknowns (How accurate were the maps? What if everyone spoke German? How would it be to sleep in a big room with 100+ people we didn't know? Would there be enough to eat? and so on), we practiced

a Buddhist like detachment, figuring we would handle it, whatever "it" turned out to be, when we had to. We managed to get ourselves to the pre-race meeting at the race headquarters in St. Cergue, Switzerland, a small charming mountain village where every building seemed to be decked out with window boxes filled with geraniums, petunias, and herbs, and the richly green mountainside was dotted with ski lifts shut off for the summer. Randy and I typically run together in events because for us, each race is an opportunity to enjoy and share the things that are important to us: running and nature. I remember feeling a sense of being out of time as we waited with 80 men and 13 women from Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Ireland, and France under the



## Ultrarunning World

start banner beside Lake Geneva and then we took off, finding our rhythm and absorbing the new world we found ourselves in. We quickly left the city and ran through farmland, which included vast fields of cultivated sunflowers and wildflowers, and views of the lake and the Alps. We climbed up and up through a pine and deciduous forest, which reminded me of both the Colorado Rockies where I grew up and the east Tennessee forests where I currently live, to grassy, rock strewn “pastures” populated with scruffy, wind blown pines and the ubiquitous Jura dairy cows and their bells. The cows were an odd yet comforting presence: each was equipped with a bell (large bells for large cows and smaller bells for the babies) and the bells rang and clanged from the valleys to the ridge tops for much of the first four days of our journey. As we ran down from the mountain top that first day, I realized I had felt a bit anxious prior to and since the start in part because I usually run on familiar trails, even in races, and I was out of practice with not knowing what lay ahead. Although there were many givens, the sleeping arrangements, the massages, the great meals, and the miles,

each day presented a new opportunity to experience the literal and metaphorical idea of travel. It is one thing to study a race course map (or in this case seven), to review aid station locations, and climbs and descents, but if you are running in a place you aren’t familiar with, each step is new geography; and for ultrarunners, I think this factor is a big part of the thrill. The Jura provided challenging climbs, either in meters gained or in frequency of hills; a variety of running surfaces, from paved or perhaps crushed gravel roads, to grassy pasture, to rocky, rooted and leaf covered forest trail; and terrain, from meadows, to grassy mountain tops, to exposed cliffs, to deep gorges; and stunning scenery, picturesque villages and private farms.

Because Switzerland hasn’t been in a war or experienced occupation since the days of the Roman Empire, there are buildings in many towns dating to (and perhaps before) the 11th century. This is not to say that every town was beautiful and charming, but each had something to recommend it. Travelers and ultrarunners know that the subtleties and particularities of a place or a race can’t be seen on a map, in a book, or on a website and there is only so much you can do to prepare. As we studied the schedule from our home in Chattanooga in the weeks leading up to the event, we planned on days three (due to distance), five, six, and seven as our metaphorical bends in the trail because we believed the cumulative mental and physical fatigue would be

profound. Ironically, for three and seven we felt the same expectation and excitement as the first day and five seemed particularly magical; it passed so quickly that we found ourselves at the city’s edge and crossing the finish line almost before we knew it. Almost from the start of that day we had the sense of joy and well-being, inexplicably and more than simply an endorphin high, that can be so elusive but the pursuit of which is generally enough to get a runner out the door in the first place. On the evening of that fifth day, and even today, all I remember clearly is dew covered grass and wildflowers and a sense of being completely and essentially alive as we crossed the top of La Chasseral and surveyed the valleys around us. As





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is often the case with running, the euphoria and endorphins of day five were nowhere to be found as we headed out into the soft dawn light the next morning. We had skipped the previous day's massage and our legs felt heavy and resistant for the first 10 miles. Every climb felt longer and steeper, our bodies felt sluggish, like we needed at least one more full sleep cycle, and our minds felt fuzzy and unready to take in the world that was unfolding around us. Luckily the course was spectacular and we eventually settled into a place of contentment, until the descent into Balsthal, which made my quads scream. Running the last few miles under the hot sun, I struggled with enjoying the journey and instead seemed to stress about the next bend. I felt frustrated for "failing" to stay present and then I thought about the geography we had covered over the last six days, how strong and happy we had felt each day, and I reeled my thoughts in and relaxed as much as I could. Once we were showered and had rested a bit I felt a calmness and sense of peace about the fact that we were almost finished with the run, the event, the thing that we had trained for and that from the start had seemed too vast to get my mind around. As we climbed and climbed through pastureland and densely wooded forest trails on the last day we tried to cherish every moment, every step, knowing we would be finished in just a few hours. It was cool and overcast, and amazingly out of time. We

moved toward an end we weren't sure we were ready to reach and then we dropped into Basel's suburbs and ran the last four miles, which carried us along a riverside trail to the finish line at the city's 14th century cathedral. And then, like the somehow anticipated but still surprising ending to a movie, we were done. We stopped running, hugged each other, shook hands with the race crew and other runners, received hugs and congratulations from our new friends, drank proffered drinks, and finally wandered over to the big fountain where we soaked our hot feet and applauded other finishers. Of the 96 people who started the 350k, 61 people finished (54 men and 7 women). It seemed that the accumulation of miles and the unseasonable heat had taken their toll. I can still feel

suffered with, and celebrated with and knew that like us, they were changed, perhaps and probably, profoundly, and that we would likely never see one another again and might never be able to explain our experience in such a way that it would make sense to anyone else. In writing no less than five drafts of this essay, I know that I still can't explain so much of my experience in the months of training for and running the Swiss Jura Marathon. And I know that aside from that strange perfectionist attitude that many runners and writers possess, the real issue is that I don't know if words always exist for the things that we experience in the physical and mental realms of our lives. Perhaps the search for words to express the sentiment inherent in an experience works

on the same plane as this idea of being able to see the horizon, or not. We are more often comfortable expressing what we know, hence the popularity of clichés, than we are in experiencing new things and then struggling and striving to share them through the limited geography of our language. **Additional Information Sidebar:**



the timelessness, or out of body quality of that last day and those last miles when we were excited about finishing but sad and hesitant to reach the finish line too quickly.

As we sat at the awards dinner before we all headed back to our places in the world, I looked at the people, the runners, who we had slept near, ate with, sweated and

The Swiss Jura Marathon celebrated its 16th year this year. The format, course, and some particulars may vary from year to year but the event is not to be missed. This year we ran through the Lake Geneva (or Vaud), Jura, and Basel regions from the far northwest corner (almost in France) to the north central portion (almost in Germany). Some of the towns are fairly

## Ultrarunning World

small and you will need a detailed map to locate them. The 2006 daily breakdowns appear below:  
Day 1 - Geneva to St. Cergue (28 miles - 4650 gain/2461 loss)  
Day 2 - St. Cergue to Le Sentier (29 miles - 4232 gain/4331 loss)  
Day 3 - Le Sentier to Fleurier (35 miles - 5413 gain/6299 loss)  
Day 4 - Fleurier to les Chaux des Fonds (28 miles - 6627 gain/5774 loss)  
Day 5 - Les Chaux des Fonds to Biel/Bienne (33 miles - 4987gain/6857 loss)  
Day 6 - Biel/Bienne to Balsthal (31 miles - 5840 gain/5643 loss)  
Day 7 - Balsthal to Basel (32 miles - 4888 gain/ 5578 loss).

**For more information**, please visit [Swissjurarathon.com](http://Swissjurarathon.com) and click on the British flag for the English version of the website (unless you prefer German or French). Much of the information is only available once you have applied and been accepted into the event. The race director, Urs Schupbach, speaks German

but his right hand man, Hans Schellenberg, speaks English and French and is extremely helpful both before you go and once you arrive at the event.

**Logistics:** Each night was spent in a different town at a modern sports center (basically a recreation center or public health club). Pads and pillows were provided, showers were available and massages optional (for an additional \$12.00). Breakfast (granola and yogurt, bread, butter, and jam, coffee and tea) and dinner (soup, salad, meat and two sides) were hearty and tasty and there was plenty of food. A commissary was open at the finish where it was possible to purchase soup, salad and spaghetti, beer, wine and water. Luggage was transported from town to town and each day's course had three aid stations stocked with bouillon, tea, sports drink, water, fruit, bars and personal drop bags. A note about the event: coordinating

everything was a logistical challenge for the organizers and there was a fairly significant volunteer staff comprised of kitchen help/cooks, course markers, aid station people, luggage handlers, start finish line/results people, etc. but everything was handled so efficiently that there wasn't a single time that we noticed the amount of work that went into each stage (which means it was all managed flawlessly). Many people spoke English, and everyone was kind, friendly, and helpful. The price was exceptionally reasonable. I can't think of a single thing that would keep me from doing the Swiss Jura again, aside from the fact that there are so many races in the world and it is compelling to try new events. However, if you are interested, study the website and I suspect you'll find yourself penciling in "Swiss Jura" for the second week in July. It will be worth it. I promise!

## Swiss Jura Marathon 2007 Results

MIKSCH Thomas Germany 31:18:02  
LUKAS Jens Germany 31:57:42  
PASANDIN Francisco Switzerland 32:14:19  
SCHNEIDEWIND Andreas Germany 32:46:15  
FATTON Christian Switzerland 33:57:14  
STEISLINGER Ralf Germany 34:05:44  
SCHÖCH Jürgen Germany 34:39:10  
STEPHAN Frank Germany 34:55:06  
SCHWAGER Linus Switzerland 35:19:59  
VANICEK Michael Germany 35:50:14  
HOIER Claus Denmark 36:24:27  
SCHLATTER Adrian Switzerland 36:27:10  
BAUDEK Gerald Germany 36:52:05  
ROBERT Claude Switzerland 37:06:44  
MISTEL Michael Switzerland 37:41:46  
ALEFSEN Götz Switzerland 37:49:12  
BRAUN Wolfgang Germany 38:00:01  
BAUMGARTNER Hansueli Switzerland 38:27:48  
WAGEN Martin Switzerland 38:49:22  
SCHULZE Peter Switzerland 39:16:30  
PITTET Pascal Switzerland 39:28:17  
HILDEBRAND Carmen F1 Germany 39:38:11  
DETTWILER Andy Switzerland 39:50:06  
BAUMANN David Switzerland 39:59:04  
SCHACHER Christian Switzerland 40:20:44  
GUMBRECHT Alwin Germany 41:16:02  
FLURI Josef Switzerland 41:18:41  
BOLLENBACH Birgit F2 Germany 41:39:13  
HUSER Peter Switzerland 41:53:47  
MORTENSEN Jan Denmark 41:59:55  
BELKIN Waleri Germany 42:32:54

SIGNER Stefan Switzerland 42:51:15  
VAN DER BIJL Bram Netherlands 42:55:18  
JUST Jörg Germany 43:05:30  
ZUTH Jürgen Germany 43:15:27  
LANGE Michael Germany 43:18:55  
MATHYS Georges Switzerland 43:46:43  
CHEREK Uwe Germany 43:51:30  
WHORTON Kris F3 USA 43:52:49  
WHORTON Randy USA 43:52:49  
NUSSBAUMER Sepp Switzerland 44:21:52  
SCHMIDT Klaus Germany 44:56:39  
SCHUBERT Reiner Germany 45:38:10  
ACKERMANN Philippe Switzerland 46:38:37  
HARRER Helga F4 Germany 47:26:57  
KLEMCKE Rainer Germany 47:43:34  
KLAASSEN Dietrich Germany 47:44:06  
TOOBE Peter Germany 48:04:51  
HOCHSTEIN Gerlinde F5 Germany 48:28:36  
SCHULER Margrit F6 Germany 48:28:36  
MAISENBACHER Jörg Germany 48:49:30  
BRÜMLICH Hagen Germany 49:06:59  
MORITZ Waldemar Germany 49:30:20  
WAGEMANN Eberhard Germany 50:37:48  
HÄNDLE Heinz Switzerland 51:01:34  
SCHÖCK Maya F7 Germany 51:16:40  
WIEDMER Hansruedi Switzerland 51:20:27  
LAURITZEN Gert Denmark 51:23:08  
GYSIN Ernst Switzerland 51:29:41  
KISTNER Klaus . Germany 51:53:34  
GUT Paul Switzerland 52:19:06



# The North Face Ultra-Trail Tour du Mont-Blanc

Aisling Coppinger

Our journey to Mont Blanc began in Winter 2005 when a group of us met one night to discuss competing in an endurance-type event the following year. When Mont Blanc was suggested we all loved the idea of the Alps and the debate was settled. The race was to be held at the end of August and would consist of 158km run continuously over 45 hours with the total elevation being over 8500 metres; about the same as Everest! Scary as it seemed we all were really looking forward to it. We discussed the type of training that we might need and it was decided that in order to try something at altitude we would travel to the Pyrenees in January 2006 to do the Trail Blanch or as we called it 'The Snow Race'. For most of us it was the first experience of any kind of altitude. It was very tough mostly because the terrain consisted mainly of waist deep snow.

The rest of our training included various Ultra distance events such as the Connemara Ultra and the Scottish National 50k. But my personal favourite was the night-time runs. In order to get used to running in the dark and also while tired, we did various runs over the Wicklow Hills starting at 10 or 11 at night and lasting for 6 or 7 hours. They were brilliant! We would start at Glendalough and sometimes in the first mile or so we would be met with some very odd looks from tourists and locals around Laragh as a group of mad runners

with head torches and backpacks ran past! For the rest of the run it was just us and the night and the hills. It was so peaceful and quiet and beautiful. We sometimes met deer and the odd camper but otherwise it was just us. Coming back into Glendalough at sunrise with the fog rising over the lakes was spectacular and I'll never forget it.

Before heading to France we found it difficult to get information on the race as our French was very poor and there was very few English reports on the event. We debated (quite extensively!) what gear to wear, what food to carry etc. but the big debate focused on the use of POLES!!!! To use or not to use! I think initially we all felt that poles (the hill walking variety as opposed to the dancing!) were for walkers and resisted the idea. But every single race report, without exception, was expounding the merits and saying they were an absolutely essential piece of kit and not to be done without. So after getting used to the idea I settled on a pair of kids walking poles as they were super light and I imagined I would be spending







Photo: Catherine Poletti

more time carrying them than using them but little did I know then!

And so at the end of August early one Wednesday morning, with the training done, we headed to Geneva. We had hired a bus to get us to our apartment, as there were about 15 of us heading to the town at the start of the race; Chamonix, France. It's a great town with lots of outdoor gear shops!! It was buzzing with all sorts of enthusiasts, hill walkers, hikers, mountain bikers, climbers and of course competitors for the Ultra Trail.

Registration was the following morning and involved having all your gear checked to ensure you had all the compulsory items. The rain jacket I had was very light but it wasn't questioned by the

officials but some people were told their gear was too light but was OK. You had to carry some food, water, head torches, first aid items and of course an emergency blanket. All of which would come to be used by myself anyway!

With numbers collected the only thing that had to be done the afternoon before race start was to drop off two bags which would be placed at two stages along the course for us: Cormayeur in Italy and Champex Lac in Switzerland. Into these bags we put things like a change of clothes and rain jackets, replacement bars and gels etc.

The race itself was to start at 7pm on the Friday evening. We made our way to the tiny town square at about 6:15. It was already packed

full of competitors, their husbands, wives, girlfriends, dogs, buggies, bicycles, it was a bit mad! We all felt the square should have been kept to competitors only as there was so little room and we were all nervous enough already! It was so tense as we waited on things to get going. There was a lively energetic atmosphere though and as the time approached we all wished each other well and waited for the church clock to signal the start. As it chimed we could see those at the head of the crowd surge off with a burst of speed and waited for the crowd in front of us to move. It took some time before we got under the start banner and we were walking through the town for a while before we began to run. Crowds were lining the narrow streets all the way out of



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Chamonix. After a while on the roads we started onto some forest tracks.

In the early stages we ran through towns like Les Houches and Les Contamines that had food and water stations. The early stations were congested and I chose to run straight through many of them in order to try and get away from the crowds. This didn't really work though as the crowds were quite congested for about the first 50k. At one stage we all came to a complete stop on a narrow trail for about 20 minutes apparently because someone was injured. As night approached we found the cheering crowds at each of these towns did not dissipate at all. They were out clapping, shouting and ringing cowbells right throughout the night. A few of us would meet up at some of these early stations and discuss what was coming next (a climb or a descent!) and how we were doing and so on.

As the bigger climbs began the terrain would become more and more remote. We were finding that the climbs were lasting hours and were extremely steep. Often all you could see were the trail of lights from runners' headtorches meandering up or down the hills! This first night was a series of steep, steep climbs and descents with two of the climbs at a height of 1500 metres higher than where we had started (about 2500 above sea level). I remember so little about the first night I must have been on autopilot!

The terrain for a lot of the Mont Blanc trail is similar to the Wicklow Way. It's obviously much steeper but similar muddy and rocky areas with most of it being really high up and often

running across narrow mountain ridges. It was extremely well marked with luminous markers that lit up at night under the glare of your headtorch. The poles turned out to be absolutely essential as they took a lot of the impact from your legs on the descents. Another piece of kit I found brilliant was the Berghaus bag that the IMRA gave out this year for completing the Leinster League (I didn't qualify for one I just stole Tony's). It was the perfect size, had all the right compartmentation and most importantly of all my gear remained dry throughout which was critical!!

I didn't find the first night too cold. A long sleeved top and a rain jacket was just about enough as long as I kept moving. Once I stopped I felt cold so I just kept going through most of the feed stations. As the next day dawned it was about 7am when I arrived in Refuge Elisabeth. I was using the table of times that the organisers had given to all competitors to work out the distance between what they called 'Refuges'. It became apparent that it was no good trying to use the charts by distance as often it would take hours to travel a couple of kilometres. I knew from this that it would be about 10:30am before I reached the town of Cormayeur which was to be the first of the 2 big stops. So after a quick sip of coffee at Refuge Elisabeth I headed to the next refuge which was the first of the Italian stops. Here I filled up a bottle with some of my high 5 mixture and ploughed on as the day became warmer. After that it was a really tough descent, extremely dry and dusty route down to Cormayeur. Mentally this section was draining as it seemed

to take forever to travel even short distances and this became a feature of the whole event.

It was such a relief to reach this milestone and still be feeling ok. I decided since I had time (there were cut off times at critical points along the course) to get a quick massage here and a shower. I got changed quickly and applied some sunblock but was still unable to eat anything and as I made my way through the crowds in the large sports centre I spotted Tony and some of the other Irish. I was thrilled to see them. I was feeling a bit low and it was good to see familiar faces. Some of the team were suffering though at this stage and I felt gutted for those that were feeling like they couldn't go on. Tony was looking strong and although I felt like company Tony was urging me to go on and so I did. The climb out of Cormayeur was cruel and punishing as it was hot and sunny and inside a dry forest. I reached the next refuge and had trouble with my water carrier leaking all over me! This was nothing compared to the trouble I was about to encounter.

As I headed along a fairly flat stretch (none of the course was flat, it was always either a steep ascent or descent) I felt a sharp and intense pain in the right side of my knee. I tried to stop and flex it out but nothing worked. I don't remember thinking at this stage I might have to pull out of the event but I remember feeling it was going to be very tough to complete another 80k or so in this much pain. I kept moving to the next refuge at the top of a hill where they gave me ice for it.

Then, as I rested for a couple of minutes, up the hill towards me

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came a few more Irish and I was so thrilled to see them! It was such a mental boost to be able to just say hi and have a few words with other people after such a long time alone and in pain! This wasn't the kind of event where the competitors talk to each other, it's just too tough to try and focus and talk at the same time and somehow small talk seems inappropriate! We were all finding it very tough at this stage but at least the sun had gone in. Next of all out of the blue came Tony and I was just delighted to see him! I decided then that I would stick with Tony as just seeing him was enough to make me feel better and I knew I'd be fine as long as we were together and that I could handle anything!

We descended for a while to the next refuge where we downed a quick cup of coffee before embarking on one of the toughest climbs of the whole thing called the Grand Col Ferret. At this stage it was approaching about 6pm and the rain had begun and the mountain was just a thick muddy path. It was a 700m climb over a couple of kilometres through slippery dense mud often difficult to know where to even put your foot. I found this section quite scary as I thought there was a serious chance I might just slide off the mountain!! This was one of the steepest sections made much worse by the mud so it made moving very slow. Reaching the top of the hill we were met by yet another North Face tent where we were again scanned as we passed through. This was to be one of the highest points on the course and unfortunately for us, the coldest. Little did we know that because conditions had turned so bad competitors beginning the climb behind us were being

advised not to continue. At this stage I was soaking wet and becoming colder and colder. I got quite worried as we moved along because although we were travelling downhill I was getting colder and finding the wet clothes intolerable. Tony then had the genius idea of wrapping me in the emergency blanket, which was to prove very fortunate as I eventually began to feel dryer and warmer. On reflection it would have been wise to carry warmer heavier rain jackets just as the French and Italians had. They seemed to be much better kitted out for the cold and wet weather conditions we were experiencing.

### **“This wasn't the kind of event where the competitors talk to each other”**

On reaching the next refuge we decided it would be wise to dry ourselves for five minutes by the fire and try and get some warm soup into us. Moving on it was a case of keeping our eyes on the clocks at each of the refuges as we now only had about 40 minutes of a buffer zone outside of the cut off points and after getting that far it would be dreadful to not make the cut off times and be put off the course!

Being tight for time was probably a good thing for us as it meant we never stopped for too long at any of the towns or North face tents or refuges. The stops known as refuges were usually high up in the remote parts of the mountains and are normally used by people trekking through the Alps to rest. At other stages these stops were made up of North Face tents and you could usually get food or drinks or refill your water carrier. You were always scanned for your

chip and so your progress could be monitored by the officials and friends trying to keep track of you at the finish line. The stops in the towns were also always manned by eager volunteers and they did all they could to greet you warmly and sort you out with water and anything else we needed. It was always a huge mental boost to reach any of these controls and we came to look upon them as real lifelines but never managing to be able to stop for too long!

Anyway we kept moving with a sense of urgency and this probably kept our adrenalin levels high. Later in the night, as we approached the bottom of another steep climb, we could see some orange lights high up on a hill and assumed it to be Champex Lac. After a number of hours climbing we looked down to see the same orange lights below us only to realise we still hadn't reached it! The rain was still falling lightly at this stage and at about 2am we reached our 2nd stop. We only had time for a quick change of gear and threw some extra layers into our bags in case the night got cold. At this stage we were travelling about 31 hours and Tony was reasoning that there was only one major climb before daybreak so with that in mind we hurried on to begin our ascent up Bovine.

Bovine was a rocky climb, like scaling a waterfall. The rain got much heavier and dense fog made it impossible to see where your next step should be so it was a case of; one step upwards, look around for the markers, another step up, look around for the next marker and so on. Visibility was only as far as each next step and the climbing became slow as we crossed fast moving rivers and



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waterfalls in these conditions.

As the next day dawned and we descended into Trent we had a sense that if we could stay within the time zone at the next stop we had a great chance of getting back to the finish on time. Trent was one of the towns that you had to be scanned in and also out. It was about 7:45am when we passed through and the cut off was about 8:15. This didn't seem like an awful lot considering I was carrying a knee that wouldn't bend and was in a lot of pain. But we reasoned that the next climb out of Trent was to be the last major climb of the whole event and if we could hang on to our time we would be ok. In order to keep the knee pain at bay I resorted to a couple of things; (1) Tylenol, which I would take before a big descent as the downhills were killing me (2) freezing cold water from the mountain streams splashed onto my leggings to numb the pain! It worked for short periods of time and that was enough!

We tried to savour the climb out of Trent. It felt like a real milestone and although it was about a 680m climb over a short distance it wasn't long before we heard the most beautiful of sounds on those mountains; the North Face generators. Scanning through this control we rounded another mountain shoulder till we started descending a muddy and treacherous downhill. We slipped and slid our way for miles and miles. When we finally met a road we were only on it for a couple of steps and we were back onto mountain again! This felt like one of the longest descents as we could hear a town below us but seemed to be taking hours to get there. Eventually we reached the

town of Vallorcine.

Reaching Vallorcine our spirits were hugely lifted. For the first time in the whole event we felt like we were actually heading on the final stretch for home, reckoning we had about 3 to 4 hours to go with all the major ascending/ descending behind us. I felt really elated and you could sense for the first time that other competitors felt the same. We began to talk to other people for the first time about their experience, with most of them finding it "tres dur". Many of those we spoke to were running it for the second time after having to pull out the year before. People were now taking time to take photos and as we headed off on a gentle uphill trail we decided we would phone family and friends at the finish to let them know we were doing ok. It was a nice call to be making as we finally felt confident enough to say we were going to finish on time!

With one more major stop at the town of Argentiere we were on our final 9k. It just couldn't go fast enough! As we approached the finish town of Chamonix the organisers dealt the final cruel blow of bringing you almost right into the town and then bringing you right back out again up another huge climb! While getting through this punishing test out of the blue we saw the familiar face of Adrian Tucker just up ahead of us waiting for us to come along. He had competed the night before in the 86k Mont Blanc race and had come up the last few kilometres to meet us. It provided us with such a lift to see a familiar face and he was able to tell us exactly how far we had to go. We were finally getting closer to the end. As we approached the town

we could hear the crowds which lined the streets to the finish line and could see family and friends waiting on us with a tri-colour! The two of us finally crossed the line together running through the noisy crowds after 43 and half hours and 158 kilometres later. It was a hugely emotional moment.

The event had been much tougher than any of us expected. No matter how much any of us trained for this we could never have been prepared for the resolve required mentally to just keep going. The toughest part for me had been on the second day when the thought of spending a second night out on the mountains alone became unbearable. Although we never at any stage had to encourage each other to go on, it was an advantage to have each other there. It meant we each had one less thing to worry about i.e. each other!

After the event we walked back to our apartment and contrary to what we might have expected we only slept for about 2 hours! I think the pain in my legs woke me up! It's not something I'll forget in a hurry, not least because I'm still having nightmares about it! It's definitely a unique experience, the scenery alone is spectacular and often hair raising in its severity (some of the narrow passes are so dangerous there are chains to one side of the path and nothing but air to the other!) There is nothing easy about it and the organisers have it billed as the toughest foot race in Europe.

The only question now is where next?





# Ultra Athletes Grapple Arctic Front

Jessica Simon

**“Whoever comes with the best plan finishes,” said Andrew McLean, Canada’s ultramarathoner of the year at the start of the 2007 Yukon Arctic Ultra.**

But even the best plans can be thwarted by the Klondike’s unpredictable nature. What started as the Braeburn Bustle for the first 100 miles in -20° C slowed to the Scroggie Creek Crawl when the multi-discipline endurance race froze in its tracks at 60 below.

Forty-two runners and skiers shot downstream from Whitehorse at 10:30 a.m. on February 11. The trail, built over

a heavy snow season, was the best in the event’s five year history. Overflow was glacier solid, open gravel was minimal, and the base was firm.

First across the marathon finish line at the Takhini Hot Springs was Germany’s Richard Malz-Heyne at 3:02 p.m., followed five minutes later by Keith Thaxter on his fourth marathon in six weeks. At 4:46, local skier Claude Chabot came in third.

After a four hour layover, nine 100 mile runners joined a dozen 300 mile contestants and eight intrepid 430s. No moon lit the way when they struck out under dark stars. Leading the

no purse event was McLean on the 430, women’s 100 mile title holder Shelley Gellatly, and the 300’s Italian team of Stefano Miglietti and Enrico Ghidoni.

Behind them, midfield runners bivvied down on piles of dog straw left behind by mushers in the Yukon Quest Sled Dog Race who had lunged from the starting chute the day before.

Pulks became brittle and holes wore through several toboggans. Snow filled the loads and blowouts created impossible drag. Snowmobile crews sped along the trail with replacement parts and checked on the sacked out athletes.

Hardest hit were 430





Photo by Diane patrick

skiers Sam Taylor of Britain and Scotland's Jim Groark. Along with defective equipment, Groark developed problems with his wrists and the pair withdrew before Dog Grave Lake at mile 60. By Braeburn, nine contestants scratched, including McLean.

His stellar start ground to a halt when a stress fracture in his foot felled him at the 100 mile

mark. Northbound, eight 300 runners and five distance trekkers remained.

Favored to win the run to Pelly Crossing, Miglietti and Ghidoni didn't disappoint. Team Terraz tore through the wilderness

at a steady four kilometers per hour. "We never stopped on the trail," said Miglietti, who shaved 20 hours off his 2005 time. In 126 hours they shattered Andrew Matulionis' 129 hour record set in 2006.

Equally noteworthy was red

***"...the daytime high was -35; nights were doubly bitter."***

lantern winner Sean Brown. Shin splints developed half way into his third attempt at

the toughest and coldest human powered race on earth. But, taped and determined, he hobbled over the finish line on the minute of the eight day deadline.

Beyond Pelly, English adventurer Andy Heading led

the way a full 36 hours ahead of fellow German veterans Joachim Rintsch and Tom Wolter-Roessler, Austria's Klaus Schweinberger and Ireland's Pearse Allen.

At 9:59 p.m. on February 19, Heading reached Scroggie Creek, eighty miles into the heart of Jack London's Yukon. By then the daytime high was -35; nights were doubly bitter. Heading took a 24-hour time credit to wait out the system, but prospects worsened. After two days at a stand still, Heading's body relaxed from race mode. It was apparent he would not see Dawson.

For the rest of the pack, what started at a trot slowed to a plod. Stove fuel wouldn't vaporize, zippers froze, and metal canisters seared double-gloved fingers. In a daily grind of wood gathering, fire building, and snow melting, the troop's average 50 miles per day dropped to 30, then 17.

Trail crews struggled to keep their machines operational and extracted Schweinberger and Allen overland. Rintsch and Wolter-Roessler, shepherded into Scroggie Creek 100 miles short of Dawson, met Heading on February 21. With no way for them to reach Dawson within the 13 day limit and with the mercury frozen in the thermometer, race director Robert Pollhammer called the 430 at mile 337 and all three were flown to Whitehorse.

Although the elements defeated everyone's plans, the attempt counts toward future success in 2008. On parting, McLean said the experience "made it easy for me to decide to come back. ■

Scotland's multiday specialist talks about his motivation to run ultras

# Discovering The Goal

## William Sichel

I have been asked what the source of inspiration was for my initial attempts at 24 hour racing. The real source goes back a long way. In my early teens I developed a very strong urge to be 'world class' at sport – the only problem was that I didn't know what sport. Where did this powerful driving force come from? I'm not completely sure. I came from a very large and un-sporting family but may have been influenced by a magazine called 'World Sports' that was popular in Britain in the early 1970's. Also I changed school frequently as a young teenager and being painfully shy and very small for my age I found it very difficult always being the new boy. I overcame my shyness by my undoubted prowess on the sports field. You name it – football, rugby athletics - I was your man.

My first real attempt at being world class came with table tennis which I discovered a talent for through my local Youth Club. I thought this was to be the chosen sport. I devoted some eight years to concentrated training and indeed loved the game, but, eventually, it didn't love me. I pursued my dreams to the end of the world. I decided that if I was to be world class I would have to go and mix with those who were world class and that meant the Far East where then, as now, the world champions can be found.

I lived and trained in Japan in the late 1970's for a period of 6

months and also had a 6 week training spell in China in 1980. I competed at international level for Scotland. In practice I was world class but when the umpire said "love all", I wasn't. I called it the x factor that was missing – something psychological which stopped me putting my world class techniques into a match situation.

When I retired from table tennis, a bit disillusioned, the marathon boom was just hitting Europe. I was living in Holland at the time and decided to 'have a go'. On three months training and using the "Van Aarken Method" of starvation prior to the event, I ran 2hrs 43mins in the Birmingham People's marathon in 1981. I wasn't in a running club and thought it was a poor time as I was 30mins behind the world record!

Many years later and in a new life in the Orkney Islands in the far north of Scotland, I re-embarked on my marathon career. Consistent performances then led to me being head-hunted to ultras which I fell into with immediate success coming second in the Isle of Man TT 40 mile classic (now discontinued) and winning the Scottish 100km Championships in 1994 at my first attempt. I made my international debut in 1996 and competed regularly for Great Britain at the 100km during the 1990's. In my first World 100km Challenge, in Moscow, I was approached after the race by

Andy Milroy and told that "I would make a good 24 hour runner". For someone who can't resist a challenge that was another carrot that couldn't be left un-nibbled.

My inspiration, as always, was to become world class. Why did I think I could run for 24 hours? I was running 100km consistently under 7hrs 30mins and saw that a number of runners were combining fast 100kms with good 24hr performances. If they could then why couldn't I? Don Ritchie also advised me to give it a go and not to wait years before trying a 24 hour.

My first stab at the 24 hour came in the Sri Chinmoy event in Tooting, south London in October 1996. Once again I won on my debut, which was a great thrill but I wasn't very thrilled with the distance, just 202km. In what was, unfortunately, to become a trademark for me, I was dogged by stomach trouble and vomiting for much of the second half, ruining an otherwise excellent debut.

Otherwise what was it like for me? I really enjoyed the experience. My fears of boredom with running multiple 400m laps proved unfounded – I was too absorbed with inner thoughts, controlling my pace, timing my eating and drinking etc.

What did I learn from my first race? 1) That I could do it 2) that correct pacing was vital and 3) that I could successfully >>>



## Ultrarunning World

combine 100km and 24hr running if I wanted to.

I learnt that I could run a lot further – there was a lot of potential to reveal itself. I felt that I could run over 240km which in my book was world class. The cause of the vomiting and stomach problems has taken years to work out.

Almost 10 years later and after running eighteen 24 hour races I have finally discovered that I perform best on a very, very low calorie intake in these long races. My body is at the extreme end of ultra specialisation. All these years I have been trying to take in TOO MUCH food. Taking in more than is necessary for me is actually counterproductive. Recently I have had a devoted handler to help me at

races and most importantly **to gather data** during the event for later analysis. This data (especially from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of races when the memory fades) revealed the vital information that had eluded me for many years.

Regarding pacing - in that first race I used a run-walk strategy in the first half – the second half was ruined by vomiting. In later races I also tried fast continuous running then ‘hanging on’ for the later stages. Nowadays I have come back to the run-walk system as I have discovered that short walking breaks, from the start, **preserves running speed** later in the race.

Becoming world class? Well, I’ve now twice passed the 240km mark – I rest my case.



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## Motivation: Differences between a 5 Km and an Ultra

By Neil L. Cook, Head Multisport Coach, Asphalt Green, NYC, NY, USA

### Short Races – 5 Km?!

You may consider it heresy to even contemplate a 5 Km race when you run ultras – 50 miles, 100 miles, multi days. But, believe it or not there are many runners out there doing short races. Yes, and some actually race 5 Kms. I know, an ultra runner hasn't even warmed-up by 5 Km! So, why compare ultra running with a 5 Km?

Well, we're going to talk about two things that both a 5 Km race and a multi-day race involve – motivation and pain.

The pain experienced in a short race is typically intense, very intense. You're pushing your body to the actual physiological limit. I know, you are doing the same thing when you get to the end of an ultra. But, you know it's different. A very different limit and pain.

The effort required to run a fast 5 Km will typically push an athlete's HR well above Anaerobic Threshold and approach their maximum HR at the end of the race. In fact, a 5 Km race is a good field test for maximum HR.

This is an all out "Red Line" effort. There typically is very little holding back. The first mile is used to get up to speed and then you hold that effort through mile two and mile three becomes a battle, hold the speed and keep your heart from exploding!

### Ultra Distance Events

To a 5 Km runner the pain an ultra runner must deal with is beyond imagination. The hours of continuous struggle – keep moving forward, keep the effort level on that fine line – enough to

get a good performance or make the cut-off time at the next check point and hold back enough to reach the finish line. The 5 Km racer never fears not reaching the finish line and there are no check points or cut-off times.

The conflict is metering out energy over an extended period of time. Using just enough now to maintain pace and reserving enough for the later stages of your event. The 5 Km runner will never run out of energy!

Then, there's that creeping fatigue. Three hours into a 24 hour event your body is settling into the pace and effort. You are still concerned with the current tasks – pace, effort level, hydration and fueling. As the time moves on – six hours, the effort gets harder. Not that you are increasing your pace, but the growing fatigue – physical and mental – are requiring more energy to keep you on pace.

Muscle efficiency decreases as exercise time goes on. While you are trying to keep your effort level low enough to use fats as fuel, there is always a bit of muscle glycogen that gets used. And, after six hours you begin to feel the effects of depleted muscle glycogen.

Think of what you do in your life, other than run ultras and sleep, that requires focus and doing the same thing for six or more hours? Mentally, fatigue – muscle and general body fatigue – and loss of glycogen makes it harder for your brain to stay focused. And, we have little in our daily lives that prepares us for the surprises that we will experience mentally as we go on past that six hour point.

### Motivation

So, as time goes on we pick up more and more things to focus on. First, energy supplies. While most people have enough fat to fuel most ultra distance events, mobilizing those stores becomes harder as we deplete them. Our bodies are designed to reserve a certain level of fuel to maintain basic bodily functions. That extra fat is tucked away and kept secure for survival. And not the survival shuffle we see at the end of an ultra! Remember, our brains need glycogen as a fuel. So, even if our exercise level is low – we're moving slow enough to burn only fats with our muscles – our brain needs glycogen and those stores will start to deplete. Re-fueling is critical to mental focus. If we let our glycogen levels drop, we will lose the ability to focus on our effort, task and goals.

Hydration is the same. It doesn't matter if the weather is ideal – cool and overcast – we will lose water. Through the production of energy as well as some sweating to cool muscles in the most ideal of weather conditions. Electrolytes are lost as long as we are exercising. So, the replacement of water and electrolytes is critical. Don't rely on weather conditions to dictate your hydration and electrolyte replacement strategy.

Just as the 5 Km runner needs to increase the effort – both physical and mental – during the last mile of the race, the ultra runner needs to do the same.

During the last 50% of the distance, maintaining the same pace will require more energy. Muscle efficiency diminishes and



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as muscles fatigue. In addition, fatigue muscles do not stretch as easily, so the task of contracting the opposing muscle becomes harder.

The reduction of glycogen will also cause a reduced ability to function at a mental peak. A common complaint is as a long run goes on is the inability to do simple math – I'm running a 50 mile race, I've covered 34 miles, I've got how many to go? Let's see, 34 minus 50, nope! 50 minus 34 is? Hmm. When ever I did long runs with my good friend Ralph, we'd excuse each other's repeating the same jokes and stories.

As humorous as that may be, the problem is real and can be dangerous. As the time goes on your ability to think clearly, to focus and care for your needs diminishes. It starts with the ability to maintain pace. While slowing as time goes on is partly physical, it also has a large mental component. As time goes on it gets harder to keep the effort level high enough to maintain pace. Actually, the effort level needs to increase to maintain pace. So, maintaining an even pace requires greater energy expenditure as the time goes on. In addition, our ability to focus on our task gets more difficult. The hills look bigger, seem harder to climb and the distance between aid stations seems further. All of this makes our efforts harder and our ability to accomplish our goals harder.

With the 5 Km race, the focus changes from completing the distance to speed. The primary focus in a 5 Km race is how fast you can go. There is rarely a thought about not finishing. In an ultra the primary focus is on finishing. All your mental energy is expended on monitoring and controlling your effort to meter out

energy and take in energy to get you to the finish line. Completing the distance and not speed is the demon.

This reaches into the depth of your soul. Anyone can endure 30 to 60 minutes of physical discomfort and continue to focus on their goal. When you shift to an ultra – 6 hours, 12 hours, 24 hours and multiple days you are cutting into your very being. Your motivation for doing such an event will come into question. You are looking at your level of confidence. Any wavering of confidence will lead to failure.

What's the result of a miscalculation in a 5 Km race? A slow time? A missed turn only leads to a bit of extra distance to reach the finish line. But, in an ultra a miscalculation can lead to disaster. Missing a turn may send you off into uncharted territory. Caution is critical. Fatigue is known to impair judgment. And the risks are much greater.

Before venturing out on your next ultra, I suggest examining your goal and your motivation. A deep and objective understanding of both your goal and motivation will lead to a better performance. Holding on to your goal and your motivation will make the later stages of your ultra easier. Okay, not really easier but you will be better prepared to deal with the inevitable decline in physical and mental performance.

Your focus and resolve will be better and your pace will not slow as much.

During a 5 Km race you may question your ability to push your body as hard as necessary to reach your goal. But, that focus and effort level will only last minutes. During an ultra you will need to push your body for hours. You will need to maintain

your focus for hours. You'll be asking yourself the same question over and over. But, you may not remember your answers!

### How do you improve?

Physically, you need to train. You need to train long and well. But, I suspect many ultra runners do not train mentally. They do not put themselves in a position to experience the same doubts and questions they encounter towards the end of an ultra while they are training. You can be certain the 5 Km racer does exactly that. Well, his task is easier. Go run hard for 20 minutes and you'll be there and those doubts will appear. You'll have a chance to ask yourself those questions – why do this? Do I want this enough to suffer through the pain?

But, you can't go out for repeated 18 hour runs. Most ultra runners don't have the time to devote to running that long. Most will not recover enough to continue training. The best in the world do just that. They don't experience any surprises in the last quarter of their races. They know the feeling and the doubt that will greet them during the last 25% of the race. They also know how they will respond, they know what they will need to do to maintain their pace and reach their goal.

So, what do you do? Back to back long runs will help you approach the fatigue you'll experience during the last 25% of your race. They will give you experience with the doubt, the fatigue and your responses. Also, if your ultra goes through the night, be sure to run through the night prior to your event. Practice what you'll experience and you'll be prepared.

# About The Authors

**Mick McGeoch** is the Race Director of the Barry 40 and a member of Les Croupiers Running Club based in the Cardiff area. The Barry 40 takes place on the track at Jenner Park, home of Barry Town football club in South Wales in early March and is one of the longest running UK ultras.  
[www.lescroupiersrunningclub.org.uk](http://www.lescroupiersrunningclub.org.uk)

**Murdo Macdonald** organises the Highland Fling along with Ellen McVey. The Highland Fling is a 53 mile race along the Southern part of the West Highland Way from Milngavie to Tyndrum, just outside of Glasgow in Scotland. The race first took place in 2006.  
[www.highlandflingrace.org/](http://www.highlandflingrace.org/)

**Martin Illot** is a veterinary surgeon from Windsor in the UK. In 2002 he ran from Land's End to John O'Groats and in April 2007 began his 3,000 mile solo Run Across America, dedicated to the memory of Martin's father, Donald, who passed away in 2003 after a short battle with pancreatic cancer.  
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**Tony Mangan** is one of Irelands leading multiday runners with several National and World records to his name including the Brno 48 hour indoor world record.  
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**Kris Whorton** is an accomplished US ultrarunner with several hundred mile women's victories including Kettle Moraine, Umstead and Pinhoti as well as placing at the European multiday stage races - Swiss Jura and the Moravian Ultra Marathon.  
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**Aisling Coppinger** made her ultrarunning debut for Ireland in 2009. She is a sub-3 hour marathoner and won the 2008 European Mountain Running Championships (W35).

**Jessica Simon** is a journalist and lives in Whitehorse, Yukon, home of the challenging Yukon Arctic Ultra. Jessica has just published a book called From Ice to Ashes available on Amazon.com

**William Sichel** lives on Orkney and has performed at world-class level for 24 hours and has run the Badwater 135 mile race Across California's Death Valley. He has the modern Scottish 6 day record as well as the 6 day over 50 record.  
[www.williamsichel.co.uk/](http://www.williamsichel.co.uk/)

**Neil Cook** is a New York based coach with many years of experience and is a prolific writer. His website has a wealth of valuable insight and experience.  
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## Photographers

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Courtesy of Ultra Marathon Mont Blanc





# 24 and 48 hour races around the world in 2007

Date	Country	Race Name	Location	Hosts / Info
13-Jan	USA	24 Hours of Prompton	Cancelled	www.nesportsltd.com
16-Feb	RSA	Paul Selby 24 Hour Circuit	Bedfordview, G'teng	Entry Form
17-Mar	USA	Pacific Rim One Day Race	Sacajawea Pk. WA	Fred (360)749-4372
24-Mar	ITA	24 Ore Delfino Bergamo	Bergamo	runnersbergamo.it
30-Mar	RSA	Paul Selby 24 Hour Circuit	Johannesburg	
31-Mar	GBR	CLIC24	Cheddar, Somerset	clic24.org.uk
Apr	FRA	Les 24 heures Des Gravigny		
5-Apr	GRE	Loutraki Ultramarathon Festival	Loutraki	Loutraki
7-Apr	FRA	Les 24 heures de Montigny National Champs.		www.jc-montigny.com/
7-Apr	RSA	Toyota 24 Hour Circuit Race	Randburg	Toyota ultra festival
Apr 8-9	FRA	8eme 24 hr de Saint-Fons	Saint-Fons	
14-Apr	USA	24 Hours for Africa	VA	Run For Africa
Apr 21	AUS	Coburg 24 hour Carnival	Coburg	Coburg Harriers
Apr 21	USA	Virginia Cancer Relay	Hampton, VA	Peninsula track club
Apr 28	USA	24 -Hour Adventure Trail Run	Triangle, VA	Athletic Equation
5-May	RUS	24H Track NC	Moscow	www.parsec-club.ru/
May 5-6	DNK	3rd Danish 6/12/24 Hour Race	Borhold	Ultramarathon.dk
5-May	FRA	24 HEURES DE SENE	24hsene.free.fr/	
5-May	ITA	24 ore Termitana (2 <sup>a</sup> edizione)		Info: runnerb@libero.it
May 5-6	ESP	European Championships Madrid	I.A.U.	
5-May	USA	Cornbelt 24 hour Eldridge	Cornbelt.org	Application
12-May	FRA	24 Heures Non Stop D'eppeville		gerard.froidure@cegetel.net
12-May	CHE	Self-Transcendence 12/24 Bâle	Basel	srichinmoyraces.org.ch
12-May	USA	24 Hours of Moab		Gemini Adventures
May 17	FRA	Les 24 heures de Brive		pbac19.net
18-May	NLD	24-Uur Loop Apeldoorn	Apeldoorn	Apeldoorn
May 26	FRA	6, 12, et 24 heures de Villennes		2xlpromosport/
2-Jun	USA	FANS 24 hour	Lake Nokomis, MN	fans24hour.org
8-Jun	MDA	24/12 Championship of Moldova	Park of Chisinau	Ultrarunning.org.md
9-Jun	FRA	Roche la Molière	Stade de Beaulieu	clips-rlm.com
16-Jun	GER	Scharnebeck 24-Stundenlauf		www.sv-scharnebeck.de
Jun 16	FRA	24 heures de Grainville-Ymauville		dalevasseur@wanadoo.fr
30-Jun	FRA	24 heures de Puttelange		www.sportnat.com
30-Jun	SWE	Trollhättan 12/24	Trollhättan	www4.marathon.se
30-Jun	USA	24 Hours of Laramie		Gemini Adventures
7-Jul	GER	Stadtdendorfer 24	Jahnstadion	24-stunden-lauf.de
14-Jul	GBR	East Hull Harriers 24 Hour	Costello Stad. Hull	East Hull Harriers
20-Jul	AUT	24 hours Benefit	Wörschach	www.24stundenlauf.at
24-Jul	GER	24 Stunden Burginsellauf	Delmenhorst	www.24-lauf.de
27-Jul	USA	24 Hour Around The Lake	Wakefield	Somerville R.R.
28-Jul	CAN	World 24-Hour Championships	Drummondville	24hultramarathon2007.com
July	GER	24-Stundenlauf	Ihrhove	Concordia Ihrhove
11-Aug	CAN	Dirty girls 6, 12 & 24 Hr Trail Race	Toronto	Dirtygirlsrun
Aug	CZR	Self Transcendence 24/48	Kladno	Sri Chinmoy Races
11-Aug	AUS	Goldcoast 24 & 48 Hour	Runaway Bay, Qld	Goldcoast100.com
Aug	FRA	Les 24 heures du Plan d'Eau Plouvorn	Foulées	Plouvornéennes
25-Aug	ITA	24 ore di Statte (3 <sup>a</sup> edizione)		www.fodipe.it/
8-Sep	GER	24 Stunden von Bernau	Berneaur City Park	24 Stunden von Bernau
1-Sep	USA	Badgerland F/x 12/ 24 Hour Run		Badgerlandstriders.org/
Sep	CAN	Self-Transcendence 24	Ottawa	Sri Chinmoy Races
15-Sep	BEL	Les 24 heures de Liège	Parc de la Boverie les	24h.be
15-Sep	FRA	24 heures de St Maixent l'Ecole	Spiridon Poitou Charente	
21-Sep	USA	Colorado Outward Bound 24 hour	Idaho Springs	Outward Bound Relay
15-Sep	FRA	24 heures de St Laurent du Pont	St. Laurent du Po nt	
22-Sep	ITA	Lupatotissima	San Giov.Lupatoto	Mombocar.it
29-Sep	FRA	Les 24 heures de Mulhouse	Mulhouse	e-mail
22-Sep	USA	24 Hours of Frisco	Frisco, CO	emg.colorado.com
29-Sep	USA	Hinson Lake 24 Hour Ultra	Rockingham, NC	Mangum T.C.
29-Sep	AUS	24-Hour Festival of Running	Adelaide	Sri Chinmoy Races/au
13-Oct	NZL	10th Annual Self-Transcendence	Auckland	Sri Chinmoy Races/nz
6-Oct	FRA	Les 24 heures d'Arcueil	Arcueil	Club Omnisports
13-Oct	FRA	Les 24 heures du Cher	St- Doulchard	e-mail
7-Oct	GBR	Self-Transcendence 24	Tooting Bec	srichinmoyraces.org/uk
14-Oct	USA	24 Hours of Boulder	Boulder, CO	Gemini Adventures
20-Oct	FRA	Self-Transcendence 24	Parc Borély Marseille	Srichinmoyraces.org/fr
Oct	USA	San Francisco One Day 12/24	Crissy Field, CA	pctrailruns.com
10 Nov	FRA	Les 24 heures d'Aulnat	Aulnat	24 heures d'Aulnat
24 Nov	MON	No Finish Line	Monaco	nofinishline.com
17-Nov	USA	Ultracentric	Grapevine, TX	Ultracentric.net
1-Dec	FIN	First Endurance 24 Hour	Espoo Arena Espoo	www.endurance.fi
1-Dec	ITA	24 ore del Sole (2 <sup>a</sup> edizione)		www.siciliain100km.it

# Ultramarathon races in the UK 2007

Date	Distance	Race Name	Location	Site/email
27-Jan	45 miles	Tring 2 Town	Tring	M.O.B.
18-Feb	35 miles	Draycote Water 35	Draycote Country Park	Kenilworth Runners
4-Feb	47 miles	Pennine Bridleway Relay	Waterfoot Rossendale	Rossendale Harriers
16-Feb	62 miles	Surrey Summits Marshal's Walk		Surrey LDWA
18-Feb	35 miles	Draycote Water 35	Draycote Country Park	Kenilworth Runners
2-Mar	40+	High Peak Marathon (Team)	Edale	The High Peak Club
10-Mar	31	Wuthering Hike	Montrail Ultra Champs	Fellsman.org
11-Mar	40 miles	Barry 40	Barry	Les Croupiers
25-Mar	40 miles	The Full Fat 40	Next race 2008	Compton Harriers
31-Mar	6/12 hour	St.Catherines 6/12 hour Race	K2, Crawley, W. Sussex	pamstorey@tiscali.co.uk
31-Mar	45	The Four Inns Walk	Holmbridge, Pk District	Website
1-Apr	39 miles	Connemara International Ultra	Connemara	connemarathon.com
7-Apr	30	Manx Mountain Marathon	Montrail Ultra Champs	Manx Fell Runners
14-Apr	37	Calderdale	Montrail Ultra Champs	Calderdale Hike
28-Apr	53 miles	Highland Fling	Milngavie	Highland Fling
12-May	61	Fellsman	Montrail Ultra Champs	Fellsman.org
17-May	200 miles	Seni Extreme	Birmgham - London	Ambition Events
19-May	33 miles	Marlborough Downs Challenge	Marlborough	Marlborough Running Club
19-May	210 miles	Green Belt Relay (Team)	Hampton Court	Green Belt Relay
20-May	100k	Self Transcendence 100k	Heriot-Watt Uni.	Sri Chinmoy A.C.
26-May	145 miles	Grand Union Canal Race	Birmingham	GUCR
3-Jun	32 miles	Dartmoor Discovery	Princetown	Dartmoor Discovery
17-Jun	86.5	The Ridgeway Relay	Ivinghoe Beacon	Marlborough Running Club
22-Jun	100 miles	Pennine 100	Yorkshire	Pennine Challenge
23-Jun	42 m	Across Wales Walk	Glandyfi to Kerry	Newtown Rotary Club
23-Jun	92 miles	West Highland Way	Milngavie, Glasgow	West Highland Way Race
7-Jul	44 miles	Lyke Wake Race	North Yorks Moors	North Yorks Moors AC
7-Jul	33	Osmotherley Phoenix	Montrail Ultra Champs	
14-Jul	24 hr	Hull 24 hour	Costello Stadium, Hull	East Hull Harriers
29-Jul	30	Downland Ultra Challenge	Sussex	Montrail Ultra Champs
18-Aug	43	Rhyader	Mid Wales	Montrail Ultra Champs
27-Aug	50	John Lucas Memorial Run	STRATHAVEN	Strathaven Striders
Sept	175/6-days	Marathon of Britain	Great Malvern	M.O.B.
1-Sep	45	Across Wales Walk	Anchor to Clarach	Across Wales Walk
1-Sep	56	Bullock Smithy Hike/Run	Hazel Grove,Stockport	3rd Hazel Grove Scouts
15-Sep	40	High Peak 40	Derbyshire	Montrail Ultra Champs
22-Sep	26	Pumlumon Challenge	Mid Wales	Montrail Ultra Champs
6-Oct	50	Long Mynd	Shropshire	Montrail Ultra Champs
7-Oct	24 hr	Self-Transcendence 24 hour	Tooting Bec	S.C.A.C.
Dec	50 miles	Rowbotham's Round Rotherham	Brampton Leisure Cent.	R.H.A.C.





SRI CHINMOY marathon team  
**INTERNATIONAL**

The worlds premier ultra host has been providing the ultrarunning community with endurance events beyond the marathon from 6 to 12/24/48 races to the multiday series in New York, the 6 & 10 day races and the world's longest footrace, the Self-Transcendence 3100 mile race.

## **Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team Ultra Schedule 2007**

Australia	Sep 29	6/12/24 Hour	Adelaide
Austria	May 20th	100 km	Vienna
Canada	Sep 8	24 Hour	Ottawa
Czech Republic	Aug 3	48/24 Hour	Prague
England	Oct 7th	24 Hour	London
France	June 2nd	50/100 km	Paris
France	Oct 20th	24 Hour	Marseille
Germany	Oct 6th	24 Hour	Berlin
Netherlands	April 28th	50/100 km	Amsterdam
New Zealand	Oct 13th	24 Hour	Auckland
Scotland	May 20th	100km	Edinburgh
Switzerland	May 12	12/24 Hour	Basle
Switzerland	Sept. 15th	6 Hour	Winterthur
USA	June 11	3100 miles	New York
USA	Aug. 25th	26.2	New York