

# **Adventure World** magazine

**100 Pounds Down...450  
Miles To Go!**

**Why We Are Addicted  
To Adventure Racing**

**2007 USARA  
National  
Championship**

## **Plus**

- **It Happened To Me!**
- **La Ruta de los Conquistadores**
- **Adventure in Asheville**

**February 2008**



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Eyewear That's As Tough As You Are

Cover Photo: Patrick Ward

This Page: Patrick Ward



# editor's note



Frontier Adventure Sports and Training

## Premiere of Adventure World Magazine Online

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Adventure World Magazine Online. As true adrenaline and adventure junkies, the publishers and creators of Adventure World Magazine Online are scouring the globe to give our readers the latest and edgiest event destinations, outdoor venues, and gear on the planet. Our advertisers will have the opportunity to target everyone from the elite athlete to the weekend adventurer who is just crossing the threshold to a lifelong addiction.

The number of multi-sport athletes and adventure junkies are steadily increasing; Adventure World Magazine will serve as the voice for this ever growing population of adventure seeking individuals. Adventure World Magazine will cover the gamut of adventure sports ranging from mountain biking, trailrunning, adventure racing, paddling, orienteering, adventure travel and all things outdoors.

Adventure World Magazine will be the official magazine of the United States Adventure Racing Association. The USARA has expanded the adventure athlete market and sustained the growth of multi-sport racing and endurance events for over 10 years.

The AWM staff believes it is senseless to destroy our natural resources just to print a magazine to celebrate our wilderness playgrounds. AWM is committed to being "green" by publishing our magazine electronically thus completely eliminating our dependency on paper.

We look forward to the upcoming year and are excited about what we have in store for our readers. If you have any thoughts or suggestions, please send them to [info@adventureworldmagazine.com](mailto:info@adventureworldmagazine.com).

Clay Abney

Editor-In-Chief

**Adventure World**  
magazine

### Editor-in-Chief

Clay Abney

### Contributing Writers

Robyn Benincasa • Jon Barker  
Jay Curwen • Dave Poletto  
Troy Farrar • Patti Plagmann

### Contributing Photographers

Frontier Adventure Sports and Training  
Patrick Ward • Daniel Norris  
Corey Rich • Dan Campbell

Adventure World Magazine is dedicated to the preservation of our natural resources by producing a GreenZine. "Of the approximately 12 billion magazines printed annually in the U.S., over 95 percent are printed on 100 percent virgin paper. That results in more than 35 million trees being cut down each year." (statistic courtesy of Socialfunds.com)

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Adventure Sports are inherently risky and can cause injury and death. Consult your physician prior to beginning any fitness program or activity and where possible, seek out a qualified instructor. No Boundaries Media, LLC will not be held responsible for your decision to live adventurously.

# Contributors



- **Jon Barker** is the former team captain for Checkpoint Zero/Inov-8 and reluctant navigator. He has raced in approximately 100 races over the last 10 years. He still enjoys rogaining, orienteering, and hanging out with his wife, Diane (who has served as support crew for his races), and his dogs.
- **Jay Curwen** is a native of Asheville, NC, where he lives with his wife Monica and 2 boys, Chilton and Gibson. Jay is the general manager and partner in Black Dome Mountain Sports, Asheville's premier outdoor specialty store. He has also adventure raced extensively as the navigator for Team Litespeed and Team Black Dome, capturing the 2002 USARA National Championship.
- **Robyn Benincasa** is a veteran of over 35 expedition length Adventure Races and is one of only two women in the world who has won both the Eco-Challenge and the Raid Gauloises. She is currently the Captain of Team Merrell/Zanfel Adventure Racing, which recently placed 3rd at the grueling Primal Quest Adventure Race in Moab, Utah. You can generally find her and her team of intrepid Kiwi boys on the podium of the biggest expedition races on earth.



## SHEER SPEED

Alex and Thomas Huber race up the Nose of El Capitan, California during the world speed climbing record attempt

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**03.08.08 Eco Lonestar Adventure Race - Marble Falls, TX**

**04.19.08 Tex's Challenge Adventure Race - Camp Longhorn, Burnet, TX**



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**05.31.08 TSCS Adventure Race #1 - White Rock Lake, Dallas, TX**

**06.14.08 TSCS Adventure Race #2 - Muleshoe Bend Park, Austin, TX**

**06.28.08 TSCS Adventure Race #3 - Camp Carter YMCA, Fort Worth, TX**

**07.12.08 TSCS Adventure Race #4 - Houston, TX (Urban)**

**07.26.08 TSCS Adventure Race #5 - Glenrose, TX**



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## Primal Quest Heads to Big Sky Country for 2008

**By Brian Knight**

Primal Quest Expedition Adventure Race, billed as The World's Most Challenging Human Endurance Competition, is back for 2008! Primal Quest Montana features new leadership, as PQ 2006 Race Director Don Mann takes over the position of Chief Executive Officer through a licensing agreement with Primal Quest LLC. Mann has staged more multi-day, multi-sport races than any other individual in the world and brings with him an elite Management and Operations Team.

In June, 70 - 90 co-ed teams of four will gather in the mountains of Montana and face a course like no other. Teams can expect unrelenting climbs on both foot and bike, gaining over 100,000 feet of elevation (Everest x 3). They will paddle and swim in big white water and

will perform world-class mountain navigation. The pain and the suffering they will encounter will be made even more rewarding by the never-ending 360 degree vistas of absolutely beautiful, rugged and remote terrain. Says Mann, "our Montana course, in my opinion, is second to none. I can promise that you will love this course and will never forget it!"

Chris Caul, the PQ Course Director had this to say after his first test run of the race course...

*"You are about to experience some of the most rugged territory the United States has to offer! During the 10 days of the time trial, we had some very unique experiences: we followed mountain goats for miles across a knife-edged ridge line; watched an eagle catch a fish in his*

*talons; saw mountain lion tracks in the snow just as the sun was setting; viewed a moose walking just a stone throw away and not giving us a second glance; and observed grizzly bear warning signs at every trail head. This course will require each team to pull together all of its collective resources to successfully reach the finish line."*

Support crews will be a very big part of the race and teams will have a number of opportunities throughout the course to receive assistance from them. Crews should anticipate supporting and treating some very tired, hungry, and exhausted teammates at the assisted check points/transition areas. In addition to the teams' crews, volunteers from 27 different countries will welcome

*Continued on page 17*



# 2008 USARA Sprint Nationals

**By Chance Reading**

Sprint Nationals are back and better than ever! The USARA Sprint Adventure Race National Championships will challenge every level of racer by sending them over, through and around some of the best single track and paddling that central Texas has to offer. You don't have to qualify for this race, just come prepared for an adventure.

Held in conjunction with the Collegiate Nationals, this sprint distance adventure race will crown the best of the best for 2008 and send a message for the racing season ahead. Put all of that training to work and show off your short course adventure racing skills.

Sprint nationals is a Regional Qualifier for the 2008 GoLite USARA Adventure Race National Championship and the coed national championship team will receive a free entry into the 24-Hour USARA Nationals Championship along with a pile of other great prizes.

Two person teams will compete

in male, female, coed & coed masters' categories.

Come to Austin in May as an adventure racer and go home as a National Champion.

For more information go to [www.usara.com](http://www.usara.com).





# 2008 USARA Collegiate Nationals

By Chance Reading



Have you ever wanted to visit the Live Music Capital of the World? Ever heard about the amazing Hill Country single track? If so, the 2008 Collegiate Nationals Adventure Race is probably your dream come true. On May 17, 2008 teams of two will run, bike and paddle themselves through some of the best terrain in central Texas. Will you be there?

Young athletes have been competing in collegiate sports across the country for years. From scholarship athletes to intramural junkies, sport has played a huge role in the growth, health, and social development on campuses nationwide. In an effort to continue and expand this tradition, the United States Adventure Racing Association brings you the Collegiate Nationals. This event allows amateur athletes to represent their universities and see how they stack up against the competition nationwide.

Oh, and did we mention that the top finishing Collegiate coed team will earn more than just pride for their effort. The AIX Group is throwing down a \$3000 sponsorship package to help these athletes keep racing and showing off their skills. Other prizes for the top team include free entry into the 2008 GoLite USARA Adventure Race National Championship race being held in Blue Ridge, Georgia, a \$900 value, along with a heap of product sponsorship from amazing companies like Suunto, Zanafel, Merrell and Sole.

The USARA has been working relentlessly to get the next generation of adventure racers involved in racing on the national level. Visit [www.usara.com](http://www.usara.com) to get the latest updates and all of the details of the

2008 Collegiate Nationals race.

Pack your bags, we're going to Austin! See you there in May 2008.





# Terra Traverse

## 2008 Terra Traverse Expedition Journey Adventure Announces Location and Dates.

Missoula, MT- Terra Traverse™ is pleased to officially announce the stunning Province of Quebec as the location of our 2008 event. Terra Traverse™ will take place over seven days, October 4th through October 10th through spectacular wilderness and fall foliage. Terra Traverse™ is also part of Quebec City's 400th Anniversary celebration as North America's oldest city.

"Aventure Ecotourisme Quebec, Quebec's association of adventure professionals, is proud to be an organizing partner of Terra Traverse and looks forward to sharing its expertise and know-how on the ground. Quebec is renowned for its exceptional landscape and its eco-and adventure tourism industry. Its immense territory of more than 1.6 million sq. km, million lakes and thousands of rivers represents a great place to hold the Terra Traverse race, "and Pierre Hersberger, chairman of Aventure Ecotourisme Quebec.

"Quebec provides an outstanding landscape for the inaugural Terra Traverse™; from cliff-lined seascapes, epic rivers, vast forests and

diverse eco-systems to dramatic elevation changes. The event will showcase one of the finest expedition adventure racing courses ever designed. "We are genuinely excited about elevating the sport to the next level and increasing its visibility around the world", Race Director Ian Adamson commented.

Terra Traverse™ and its Expedition Journey format was born from the need to provide a journey style, expedition length adventure race that caters to athletes, team sponsors, advertisers and media. We are bringing together the world's best course designers, race directors and television producers to create an event that brings the sport of adventure racing into a new era of professionalism and media awareness.

This new format has many advantages, allowing courses to be faster, safer, longer and more technically demanding. Concurrently, logistics are simplified and media has better access. Race coverage by print and television media is enhanced providing team sponsors and event advertisers more valuable exposure.

Our Expedition Journey format reduces competitor equipment loads by eliminating the typical "death march" factor, creating faster paced

racing and covering greater distances in a much shorter time. The race is a geographic and cultural journey, providing multiple starts and finishes with teams racing side by side throughout the entire competition.

Terra Traverse™ is more than simply a race; it is a world class multi-sport endurance competition and television production that inspires competitors and viewers with an exhilarating and dramatic experience in spectacular locations.

"We are providing value for competitors that is unparalleled in the adventure racing world", says Executive Producer John Barrett. "By working with the Province of Quebec and other partners, we have reduced entry fees while providing significant prize money, a television mini-series, accommodation for athletes and a magnificent course."

Registration is in full swing! Registration fees for the 2008 Terra Traverse™ are \$10,000 per 4 person, co-ed team.

Detailed information is available at [www.terratraverse.com](http://www.terratraverse.com). For immediate contact, e-mail [info@terratraverse.com](mailto:info@terratraverse.com).

### Greenzine Fact:

**"Of the approximately 12 billion magazines printed annually in the U.S., over 95 percent are printed on 100 percent virgin paper. That results in more than 35 million trees being cut down each year." (statistic courtesy of Socialfunds.com)**





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# Why We Are Addicted To Adventure Racing

by Robyn Benincasa

Ahhhhh, the million dollar question. What makes Adventure Racers so rabid about a sport in which there are so many variables that it boggles the mind and soul? That's probably what a lot of trail runners who are considering crossing over into AR would like to know before they leap. So I'm here to help. I made the jump from Triathlon to Adventure Racing in the mid 90s because I was intrigued by a sport that relied less on negative splits and ripped abs than on wits, skill, teamwork, and the human spirit. My first race was the Raid Gauloises in 1994, and although we finished dead last, I was hooked for life. Adventure Racing is like a rubics cube of athleticism, human synergy, adversity management skills and sheer guts. If you're missing one of those essential elements, you're sunk. But when you

have a team that has that special ability to rearrange the puzzle in just right way, it's a magical experience beyond description.

The beauty of Adventure Racing is that at the end of the race, you know you've accomplished so much more than merely conquering a difficult course and testing your personal limits--you've actually proven yourself in life's most important adventure: being a great human being. Adventure Racing allows us to bring out the hero, the warrior, the healer, the leader, the genius, and the compassionate friend in each of us. In a successful Adventure Racing endeavor we are our very best, most enlightened selves, and we can see that reflected in the eyes of our teammates. This is the reason we all sign up for the world's most painful but

life-affirming races again and again. Yes, the places we go and the things we see in this sport are often truly inspiring, which is much of the reason we all plunk down that first big entry fee. But somewhere "out there", as the challenge becomes too overwhelming for one tiny speck of a human being on the vast face of the earth and we allow ourselves to experience the comfort and strength of silently sharing one heart and one mind with three other human beings, we are both transformed and transcendent. Definitely worth the price of admission, don't you think?

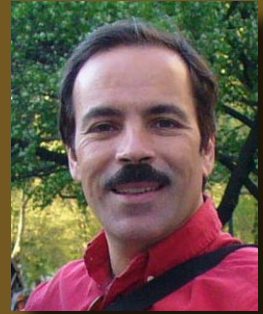
• Photo by Corey Rich at 2006 Primal Quest.



# 100 Pounds Down... 450 Miles to Go!

## How I Lost 100 Pounds And Changed My Life

**By Dave Poletto**



**The year was 1995;** I was thirty-five years old, weighed two hundred and seventy pounds, and I couldn't keep up with my active three year-old son much less jog around the block.



Having parents whom lovingly passed along those 'fat genes', I spent most of my life up to that point riding the roller coaster diet. I would lose twenty pounds on one of those crazy diets, only to gain back twenty-five or more after I met my "so-called" goal.

Needless to say, I was at an all time low in my life. What happened next changed my life forever. I took my son to a local park where we often went to enjoy the outdoors and some time together. We would throw or kick the ball back and forth and I would make sure to kick it away from him or past him so that he would have to run to retrieve it. On one of these outings, he decided to give me a dose of my own medicine. He threw the ball past me and then cheered me on to quickly retrieve the ball. After a few minutes, I was completely exhausted. My son walked over to me and gave me this look that I will never forget...disappointment!

I ended that spring day feeling my lowest low. I had hit rock bottom. Now, not only was I frustrated with

myself, my son was disappointed in his dad. That turned out to be the best and worst day of my life!

I woke up the next morning with a new determination. A feeling I had never experienced before. I was going to never disappoint my son again! But how? That was the most frightening part of my epiphany. I didn't know where to start. I didn't belong to a fitness club or have exercise equipment at home. I did not have good nutritional habits or know how to make smart, healthy food choices.

So, I started with plenty of research on the internet to get ideas on healthy cooking and sensible workout routines. I was too heavy to run for exercise, so my first goal was to lose enough weight to begin jogging around my neighborhood. I owned a mountain bike, so I could begin with biking for exercise to start dropping some pounds. That along with more healthy eating habits like baked chicken, baked fish, and vegetables, was a good way to keep up my strength and lessen my caloric intake.



Then, something amazing happened! I stepped on the scales after only two weeks of my new healthier lifestyle to find that I had lost 10 pounds! I was so elated. This only fueled my commitment that much more. The weight kept coming off until I found that I had lost about 40 pounds and could now add some light jogging to my new fitness routine. With each new week and success measured not only in the reading on the scales, I needed a new wardrobe and compliments rolled in from both friends and family alike.

The next addition to my healthier lifestyle efforts turned out to be pivotal in having long-term success. One day, I was reading a local fitness magazine and came across an entry form for a local 5-K run in the park. I immediately filled out the entry form and sent

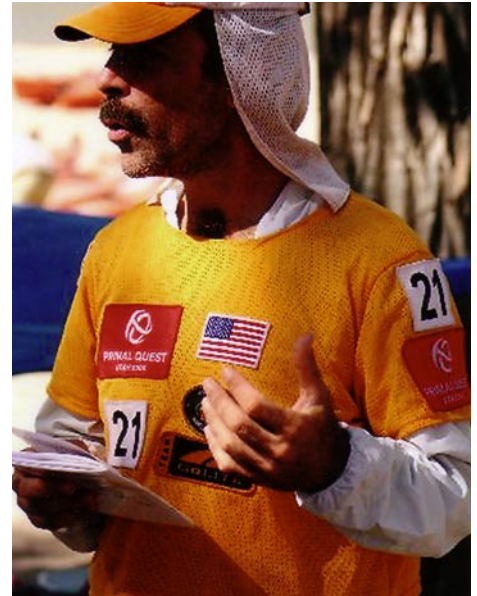
in the money committing myself to the next event, I had the motivation and goals to work toward. This turned out to be the secret of my success!

I continued to train for the run and did cross the finish line. As soon as I got home, I found the next event and quickly signed up. By filling out the entry form and committing myself to the next event, I had the motivation and goals to work toward. This turned out to be the secret of my success!

Before my transformation, I was 5 foot-eleven, weighed 270 pounds and conservatively had a forty-two inch waist. After a year of hard work, I was still 5 foot-eleven, but I weighed 100 pounds less and had a thirty-two inch waist. Since that time, I have competed in over 75 adventure races lasting from two

hours, to my ultimate goal of competing in and crossing the finish line of Primal Quest 2006.

Through all of this, I have truly found the secret to success. Commit yourself to an achievable goal, train hard, and enjoy the people you share the experience with.



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Jeff Mitchell at Primal Quest '06

**Jan Adamson** *uses the adventure race world champion*

"Mud, rain, snow, dust and fast technical mountain bike descents are no match for this beautifully designed and engineered board."

NAV360-2





To commemorate the inaugural issue of Adventure World Magazine, Axis Gear is offering a **FREE Axis Gear tech tee (\$40 value)** when you purchase a NAV380-2 coupon code: **AW0208**



A full-page photograph of a mountain biker riding a trail through a forest. The rider is in the foreground, wearing a blue helmet, sunglasses, and a black and white jersey. The trail is covered in fallen autumn leaves, and the background is filled with trees showing vibrant fall colors. Another rider is visible in the distance.

# **2007 GoLite USARA Adventure Race National Championship**

**Photos by Patrick Ward**





The 2007 GoLite USARA National Championships held in Potosi, MO in early November started with a chilly, fog covered paddle on Lake Sunnen. With temps in the low 30's, all 77 teams were working to stay warm for the start of this 24HR championship race. The course took racers through the autumn colored forest of the Ozark Mountains and on some of the most challenging single track of the well known Berryman Trail.

Berlin Bike and Werewolves of Austin were fighting it out for the overall points championship and title of #1 ranked team in the U.S. Behind by only 3.5 points, Berlin Bike would not only have to beat Werewolves of Austin head to head, but also finish in the top ten to gain the necessary points to earn the title of # 1 team in the country.

Teams from over 25 states were in attendance, including 2 teams from Alaska. Overall hopefuls such as Dart-Nuun, Dirty Avocados, Checkpoint Zero/GoLite, Team Timberland, Nike/Beaver Creek, Black Hart and M.O.A.T. were on hand to challenge defending champions, Eastern Mountain Sports.

After a short paddle leg, racers were on their bikes putting some miles in on challenging fire roads and single track sections of the Berryman Trail in the surrounding mountains. "The map looks nothing like the actual trails. It's like a spaghetti bowl out there", said Patrick Harper after pre-running the course and double checking the CP's. The navigation aspect of this race was challenging, leaving the decision making up to the teams. There were trails and roads all over the place and keeping one eye the map was an absolute necessity.

Teams raced through the night and the top five continued to leap-frog

each other. At the end of the second paddle leg, Dart-Nuun, M.O.A.T., and Eastern Mountain Sports all came out together. A 10 mile trekking section lead teams back to their bikes where they were left with a 20 mile ride back to the finish line. Dart-Nuun took the lead out of the water but M.O.A.T. was first back to the bikes with Eastern Mountain Sports hot on their heels. Dart-Nuun, although coming out of the water in the top three, had made a navigation error on one of the trekking checkpoints coming within meters of the point before detouring for almost 40 minutes. (taking them out of contention for the win.)





After battling several bike issues and limping in on an almost blown out sidewall, M.O.A.T. was first across the finish line in 17 hours 3 minutes to take the title of 2007 GoLite USARA Adventure Race National Champions. The defending champions, Eastern Mountain Sports, came in shortly behind at 17 hours 17 minutes, followed by Dart-Nuun in at 18 hours 8 minutes. Berlin Bike dug deep and pulled out a ninth place finish to earn the necessary points to be crowned the #1 team in the Nation for the 2007 racing season.

Teams got the opportunity to enjoy the Bulleit Bourbon happy hour

and mingle at the awards banquet, relaxing after a hard days work. Robyn Benincasa put her own spin on things with an array of awards ranging from the 'Most naked' award to appreciating the hymn 'I want to ride my bicycle' sung deep in the woods at night by a team. Once all of the awards and prizes were given out, the party wound down and everyone slept well.

- **Order a copy today of the 2007 Race DVD at [www.usaranationals.com](http://www.usaranationals.com).**

*Big Sky...cont. from page 7*

and support racers at Primal Quest Montana.

Also coming in the spring of 2008 is the brand new Primal Quest Sprint Series, a series of shorter, faster, high energy, adrenaline-fueled sprint races! The 4-to-6 hour events are perfect for adventure racers, runners, mountain bikers, paddlers, triathletes and any other athlete looking at for a challenging and fun experience.

The all new Primal Quest Sprint Series offers competitions for teams of two that feature standard adventure racing disciplines, including trekking/trail running, mountain biking, and paddling. Teams will also face special events like a cargo net climb, ropes bridge, low crawl, and straight out of Don Mann's Navy SEAL Training events - the infamous log PT! Stay tuned for an official announcement from PQ headquarters for dates and locations.

Stay up to date on all the latest Primal Quest news at [www.ecoprimalquest.com](http://www.ecoprimalquest.com) and [www.primalquest-sprintseries.com](http://www.primalquest-sprintseries.com).



**PRIMAL QUEST**  
MONTANA 2008





# 2008 November 7-8 Blue Ridge, Georgia

**Regional Sponsorship Program:** The 1st place coed team from each qualifying race will receive a \$400 sponsorship, provided by the regional qualifying race, to be applied to the teams entry fee for the 2008 GoLite USARA Adventure Race National Championship™. If the first place team does not attend, the sponsorship will roll down to the 2nd place team, etc.

[www.USARAnationals.com](http://www.USARAnationals.com)

**Lewis & Clark Ozark Adventure Race** • Nov-10-07  
Arkansas • [www.ozarkadventurerace.com](http://www.ozarkadventurerace.com)

**Texas Dare** • Dec-9-07 • Texas  
[www.texasdare.com](http://www.texasdare.com)

**Bonk Hard Chill** • Feb-9-08 • Lake of the Ozarks, AR  
[www.bonkhardracing.com](http://www.bonkhardracing.com)

**Swamp Stomp** • Feb-16-08 • Tampa, FL  
[www.wecefarc.com](http://www.wecefarc.com)

**Amphibious Warrior** • Feb-23-08  
Alexander City, AL • [www.auburnmarines.org](http://www.auburnmarines.org)

**The Frigid Infliction** • Mar-1-08  
Bolton Valley Resort, VT • [www.gmara.org/frigid](http://www.gmara.org/frigid)

**Natchez Trace Adventure Race** • Mar-1-08  
Wildersville, TN • [www.s2fevents.com](http://www.s2fevents.com)

**Eco-Lonestar** • Mar-8-08 • Austin, TX  
[www.terrafirmapromo.com](http://www.terrafirmapromo.com)

**Palmetto Swamp Fox** • Mar-8-08 • Springfield, SC  
[www.kandoadventures.com](http://www.kandoadventures.com)

**Sunflower 24 Hour Adventure Race** • Mar-29-08  
Lawrence, KS • [www.bonkhardracing.com](http://www.bonkhardracing.com)

**Ozark Challenge Adventure Race** • Apr-5-08  
Ozark, AR • [www.ozarkchallenge.com](http://www.ozarkchallenge.com)

**Blue Ridge Mountain Adventure Race** • Apr-12-08  
Blue Ridge, GA • [www.adventureracega.com](http://www.adventureracega.com)

**Grizzly Man Race** • Apr-19-08 • Missoula, MT  
[www.grizzlymanrace.com](http://www.grizzlymanrace.com)

**Atlantic Coast Conquest** • Apr-19-08 • Orlando, FL  
[www.mycfar.com](http://www.mycfar.com)

**Nature Cure Yough X-treme** • Apr-26-08  
Ohiopyle, PA • [www.americanadventuresports.com](http://www.americanadventuresports.com)

**Western Carolina AR** • May-3-08 • Modoc, SC  
[www.kandoadventures.com](http://www.kandoadventures.com)

**Mad Dash** • May-4-08 • Marshall, WI  
[www.adventurenorth.net](http://www.adventurenorth.net)

**MISSION Adventure Race** • May-10-08  
Versailles, IN • [www.dinoseries.com](http://www.dinoseries.com)

**Central Coast Adventure Challenge** • May-10-08  
[www.ccadventure.com](http://www.ccadventure.com)

**Desert Winds II AR** • May-10-08 • Temple Bar, AZ  
<http://adventure-race.kayaklakemead.com/>

**Collegiate/Sprint Nationals** • May-17-08  
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Rock Springs, TX • [www.toocoolracing.com](http://www.toocoolracing.com)

**Nature Cure Lionheart 24 Hour AR** • May-31-08  
Ohiopyle, PA • [www.americanadventuresports.com](http://www.americanadventuresports.com)

**Longest Day Adventure Race** • Jun-7-08  
New York, NY • [www.nyara.org](http://www.nyara.org)

**New England AR Series #2** • Jun-8-08 •  
Westover, VT • [info@racingahead.com](mailto:info@racingahead.com)

**Run, Row, Rock & Roll Adventure Race** • Jun-14-08  
Fairbury, NE • [jcraig@nebraskasportscouncil.com](mailto:jcraig@nebraskasportscouncil.com)

**The Cradle of Liberty Adventure Race** • Jun-28-08  
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Blue Ridge, GA • [www.oegear.com/nga](http://www.oegear.com/nga)

**New England AR Series #3** • Jul-19-08  
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[www.gmara.org/bitterpill](http://www.gmara.org/bitterpill)

**Woodstock Goldrush 24** • Aug-3-08  
Woodstock, GA • [tobyb@ymcaatlanta.org](mailto:tobyb@ymcaatlanta.org)

**Krista Griesacker Memorial Race** • Aug-9-08  
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**Bushwak This!** • Aug-12-08 • Vassilla, AK  
[www.egadsalaska.com](http://www.egadsalaska.com)

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Illinois • [www.thethunderrolls.org](http://www.thethunderrolls.org)

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Clayton, GA • [www.midnightrush.trailblazerar.com/](http://www.midnightrush.trailblazerar.com/)

**Raid the Rock Urban Adventure Race** • Sep-13-08  
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**Kit Carson Adventure Race** • Sep-13-08  
Lake Tahoe, NV • [www.bigblueadventure.com](http://www.bigblueadventure.com)

**The SHAG** • Sep-26-27 2008 • New York  
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**Midwest Monster Adventure Race** • Sep-20-08  
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**ZANFEL**



# La Ruta de los Conquistadores



**La Ruta de los Conquistadores** ...pegged as the toughest bike race on the planet...and I was going to Costa Rica to compete.

Was I CRAZY???

Oh yea, for more reasons than one. I live in Houston, altitude 50 feet. Total number of hills, one, the Kemah bridge. Estimated time to complete climb and descend...4.5 minutes.

La Ruta has over 40,000 feet of climbing in 4 days, where would I ever get to train for such a race in Houston. Wait did they say 4 days? And isn't November the end of the rainy season, in a tropical rain forest? So, we are riding from the Pacific to the Atlantic, coast to coast, climbing over 40,000 feet in a tropical rain forest during the rainy season. Doesn't that mean mud?? Hmmmm, Well, I used to live in New Mexico, shouldn't muscle memory take over? I competed in the Transrockies twice it had mud, shouldn't be a problem, just put on some mud tires and we're good to go. Transrockies was two-person team race, but I've raced a 12 hour before, I think I could handle this "solo" thing. And, I've always wanted to go to Costa Rica. Sign me up!!!

We arrived in Costa Rica a few days early to get in some hill training. Never to late right?

The drive from San Jose laid the stage for what we were up against. Overcast skies, misty rain, narrow, twisty windy roads, and an infinite number of very steep hills. The intensity of the vegetation was overwhelming, but amazingly beautiful. Little did I know I would be soon



be enveloped by a canopy of this hillside shrubbery in for the ride of my life.

**Day 1** arrives VERY early, 4am breakfast, 5:20am start, or whenever the sun comes up. Under an umbrella of fireworks and in a mass of over 525 racers with another 500 plus loved ones to see us off,,the gun fires to begin La Ruta, the "toughest race on the planet". Nervous?? Absolutely petrified but extremely excited for this challenge that lies ahead. After all, I am in Costa fricken Rica!! And my 2004 Lefty Scalpel is headed into uncharted territory. What better way to see an entire country coast to coast. I was actually in heaven. The race started on pavement, heading out of town and eventually up the first dirt climb. Ok, I can handle this, we just did this climb a few days ago. As we near the top of the first climb, the forest densifies, the mud intensifies and the grade magnifies.. Whew, this could be a long, long day. We fly down the other side dodging endless potholes and mud puddles. This pattern continues for hours and hours, up and down slimy, slippery rutted out mud gulleys. River crossings became pleasure baths. I was never so excited to see water and the deeper the better. Water meant, clean bike, chain and derailleur move freely again. Every 2-3 river crossings my Lefty took a very welcomed dip. Occasionally as we neared small towns, I began to notice people on the sides of the road, cheering, "Vamos!" "Vamos Chica!!" In the towns, the streets were lined with people, cheering, clapping, sticking out their arms for a brief, scant touch of my hand. The sidewalks full of cheers, school windows lined with blue shirts and smiling faces of the children all yell-

ing “Vamos” “Bien!!” I then realized I was competing in the “Tour de France” of Costa Rica. Chills overwhelmed my body, the power of the people took over and I was motivated.

It was a balmy, humid warm day, but not unbearable, as this was Houston weather!! Finally a familiarity!! After 7 or 8 hours, and climbing nearly 14,000 ft., exhausted, I had finally reached the last, long pavement climb. I was chatting with a fellow racer who happened to have his GPS. 45% grade????!! I don't think anyone can train for that!!! My granny gear had never seen so much time. Then halfway up, they threw in an element I'd never experienced, hot, wet, black tar. My tires made a sound I had never heard before, no wait it sounded like those rubber mattes with suction cups being pulled off the bathtub. It just sounded really slow!! Finally climb over, all that's left is the decent into the finish. 10hrs of forward motion, one come to Jesus talk with myself over a peanut butter sandwich near an incredible water fall on the side of the road and after ascending over 14,800 ft, day one was over. A bit slow I thought, but nonetheless, I had successfully completed the longest day.

**Day 2** was slated to be a little less ascending but much, much steeper climbs. We're headed deeper into the forests which undoubtedly meant more mud. Some of the climbs were so steep they required moving the bike upward any way that seemed necessary, push, carry, drag, or ride traversing across the roads. This technique I had only done on ski resort mountain climbs, never on a paved road. But it worked, I wasn't about to get



off my bike on a paved road! And ironically, the climbs were getting easier and more enjoyable for me. Were my muscles finally getting a flashback of the Chile Challenge? I was having a much better ride, reaping the rewards of the climbs by flying down the descents, one of my favorite things to do. The more rutted the better for me. I was actually falling for the mud instead of in it. Nearing the end of day two, getting closer to Terramall I was flying down a rutted out dirt road then onto very smooth asphalt, thinking I was home free when I came upon an ugly man waving a green flag to turn right, ugly was a warning sign for what lay ahead. There before me was the steepest, muddiest, most gnarley red sticky mud hill I had ever witnessed. It was laced with riders, no, hike-a-bikers carrying their bikes. Couldn't push as the mud stuck to the tires like ants to gu. Traction was limited. Spikes necessary. I eye-spied a small puddle of water just before heading up and my Scalpel had a little debriefing before I heaved it over my back and began digging in. At the top, some poor soul had the task of assisting us one by one heave our bike

up the last 5 foot ledge. Whew, finally now the down. OMG!!! This was the steepest, muddiest, most gnarly black, syrupy muddy downhill I had ever witnessed. And it NEVER seemed to end. Hardly rideable as there was a gully wash of chocolate syrup mud running down the middle. I walked, dragged, pushed (push, downhill?) yep. I was thinking how sorry I felt for the bike washer studs, full-on nightmare for them. At last, an end, A SHOPPING MALL!! a plush paved, finish line at Terramall Shopping Center, how ironic after what we just went through not 15 minutes ago.

**Day 3**-The Irazu Volcano climb. I woke up to a cold, damp sort of day. We were headed up to 3400 meters, basically, into the clouds.. Actually, we were greeted with what might be the typical Costa Rican's rainy season weather,, humidity, cold, rain, sunshine, wind, blowing rain, mist, and lots of fog. As I climbed, I could see the weather report up ahead, it was never the same as what I was going through at the moment and it wasn't always inviting. Howev-





er, this day brought some of the most amazing views of the race. I wasn't buried deep in a forest, but exposed to the beauty of Costa Rican coffee plantations, astonishing green and brown rolling, bouncy countryside for miles and miles. Worker's spread up and down the fields mimicked cyclists drafting in a heavy crosswind. Finally after hours of wind and cold and rain I was greeted by a table of warm potatoes, bananas and cookies. The climb was over... or so they said. "All downhill from here", doesn't mean in Costa Rica what it might mean in Texas or anywhere else in the world for that matter. I loaded up on those tiny, warm, salty spuds and headed into the fog and down a muddy, gritty "downhill".. Ok after a few "short" rutty climbs, the REAL decent began and went on and on and on. From mud to sand to gravel to ruts to puddles.

An hour must have gone by before

a welcomed patch of pavement appeared. By this time the rain was hammering down, sideways and I was reaching speeds of 60 km. Another situation I had NEVER EVER experienced. How fast is too fast, I mean, I am a speed freak, but in these conditions??? Volcanic grit and rain filled my eyes, glasses were worthless. Riders, one by one, took over the road, I think we were actually passing cars at this point. My arms were exhausted from the now 90 minute, 30k downhill from Irazus Volcano. Finally, a left hand turn into the longest driveway ever 5k down to the town of Aquiares, and the finish line for day 3. Bad

news upon arrival, I am greeted by my racing bud who had finished much earlier in the day, was headed to the emergency room for repair. He had crashed on the final downhill into the town. I would see him much later in the evening, somehow, someway, he would reappear at the hotel that night. Our accom-

modation that evening was amazing. That day I was bussed an hour away to a remote hotel, the most peaceful setting, on a lake, with huge geese prancing around the yard. Hotel Casa Turire was a "bird watching" resort. As I walked in I was welcomed pleasant hosts, bed and breakfast style accommodations and a massage therapist. Did I actually die up on that mountain today??? Should I feel guilty??? Dave was off in some sketchy ER, having God knows what done to him and I'm kicked back drinking,,,,, water in my white terry, waiting for my rubdown....NA....relish in the moment.

**Day 4-**Dave is out, brutal, gaping gash to his elbow. I'm on my own. All I can remember about Saturday morning is rain, rain, rain. This was the only day that NO ONE was on the start line until 7.57am. It was a very, cold wet morning and what lay ahead, 120k of movement, 45k worth of train tracks, the trestle bridges that we ALL had heard about, more mud, water holes long enough and deep enough to swim in wasn't exactly what I wanted to experience. The ONLY thing that



got me to the start line that morning, was the Atlantic Ocean and the FINISH line. After a creepy, crawly 5k climb back out of the town, the real ride began. "All downhill from here", yea, right, heard that before. But, actually, after 45k, they were right!!! A flying paved downhill into flat,(now were talking!!) followed by 45k pretending we were boxcars(my favorite part of Day 4!!), water holes and alas the most amazing site of the trip, THE BEACH!!!! AND the finish line. I could not believe it. I had finally finished the "toughest bike race on the planet!!" I dropped my bike off at the finish and jumped in the ocean.

La Ruta, a race on the Top 25 list of races a mountain biker must do before they retire to play golf. A race that would challenge our abilities, make us dig deep, very deep, and definitely test our mentaltudeness. A race that we were in awe of, we dreamed about, we'd heard was a total mud and grind fest. La Ruta, it was crazy hard, but one of the most amazing, thrilling, and challenging races I'd ever done.

It was more than a race....it truly was a personal growth journey.

By Patti Plagmann

Pictures by José Salazar-Mayela López/La RUTA

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# Training



## 8 Tips For Staying Found

by Jon Barker

Who am I to think I know anything about navigation? I've been lost tons of times. Well not lost, per se, but confused about my actual location and how to get to my intended location for sure. Am I qualified to write this article? I don't really know. I've done a ton of races (somewhere around 100), navigated most of them and placed or even won quite a few of them. Is that enough? I'm still not sure. In all the years of doing this sport, I still don't really feel all that confident about my ability but nonetheless, I apparently get it right or at least almost right quite often. So, after that quick disclaimer, here goes...

**Trust your compass:** Sounds sim-

ple right? It's amazing how often we think we know where we are but the "logical" direction doesn't match up with what the compass says it should be. Trust your compass (check your declination – see below) and figure out where you really are before going in the wrong direction because it "feels" right.

**Learn your features:** Go into the woods and play. Learn to recognize topographical features and how they correspond to the map. Pay attention to contour lines and make sure you know how many feet or meters they are spaced. One of the best ways to do this is to get your hands on a 1:24000 of your local playing area and pick a bunch of

"points" (top of high points, stream confluences, obvious re-entrants, etc) and then go and find them. Go point to point and be aware of your location on the map as you travel. Another great way is to join your local Orienteering club and go to their meets, regularly.

**Learn to pace count:** Really helps with flat or featureless terrain (ever done a race in Florida?). How many times have you "figured" you should be where the CP is but find out you haven't gone far enough? Figure out your pace distance in feet or meters depending on what you use (a pace is the distance between two foot strikes of your right foot) and learn to keep count while you move forward. Practice in different terrains and at night. Realize that your pace distance changes in different terrain and elevations and adjust accordingly. This is a good thing for the non navigators to practice and help with. It keeps them involved and awake.

**Use a bike computer:** You've got to get used to following your distance covered. This helps when the maps are not quite accurate and there are roads, trails, intersections that don't appear on the map. Make sure at least two team members have accurate, WORKING bike computers and know how to use them. This is another good way for the non navigators to help.

**Use an altimeter:** But, also remember to calibrate it at every known high point or a feature where the exact altitude is known. It doesn't take much of a change in weather

to throw the accuracy off.

**Route finding:** Is everything. Doesn't matter how fast you're going if you pick the wrong route. Do you go over the hilltop or around the hill? Although going around is longer in distance, it doesn't require as much climbing. Gravel road or single track? The single track might be way shorter but technical and slow. Maybe you would slow to a couple of miles per hour against 10-15 MPH + on the gravel road. Practice different scenarios so you can understand how different route choices affect your racing. Bushwhack or hiking trail? How fast can you bushwhack? What's the terrain like? Overgrown, briars, clear-cut, uphill, or downhill? You don't know 'till you try and the race is the wrong time to find out. Orienteering meets are, again, a good way to practice bushwhacking. Typically, an orienteering map will "show" you the vegetation type and thickness so you can try different routes to the same point. I keep all my "O" meet maps and regularly go back to some of the locations and practice.

**Navigation at night:** Tough, takes some getting used to. Stay on top of your map and on top of your compass at night more than ever. The lack of light makes it difficult to see the topography. You can't clearly ascertain the tops of hills on the horizon or the steepness of inclines and declines. Practice shooting a bearing and having a team mate go forward a few hundred feet and calling back to you so you can make sure he's on the right line

then move up to him and start again. Make sure you know where you are before shooting down that hill in case you have to come back up again!

**Read the map:** Especially before the race. Note the scale (typically 1:24000 in AR but not always!), the contour spacing (typically 20 or 40 feet – big difference!) and the declination (the angle between magnetic and true north). You really should have a compass that adjusts for declination. This is not so important in the southeast but hugely important in other parts of the country and the rest of the world. When planning your route, pre-race, use colored highlighters to mark your different routes. Use a different color for each discipline so you don't get confused if the race goes over the same ground. Write important details, clues and CP locations on the map, preferably in red (easier to see through) but make sure this doesn't cover any important features. The more information you have in one place, the less you are likely to miss something if you're referring to different sources (map, passport, clue sheet, etc). Don't be afraid to make a non navigating team member the clue sheet reader, as a back up, but make sure they remember to keep you up to date. Write the approximate distances between important junctions or features on the map, also so you're not guestimating during the race.

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# Adventure Destination



## Asheville, North Carolina

### Weekend With A Local

By Jay Curwen

There have been many articles devoted to activities in Asheville. There's always the standard fare – Visit the Biltmore House, take in a treatment at the world famous Grove Park Inn and Spa...Check out Asheville's well-known freakiness on Lexington Ave...It's all out there for the Googling...What I'm gonna do is take you on a weekend with a local and share the adventurous stuff to do. Isn't that why you wanted to visit?

First...Where are you going to sleep? If you're not lucky enough to have a friend with a couch to crash on, you'll need a hotel...and a tourist town like Asheville is over-run with them. For convenience to downtown, combined with economy of price, look at Tunnel Road which is the main drag east out of town. You'll find everything from a Super8 to a Hampton, all for between \$50 and \$100 per night, depending on the season. But, to get the real flavor of Asheville, spend a little more and go for a local bed and breakfast. For just over \$120 a night, you can end up within comfortable walking distance of restaurants, coffee houses and everything you are here for. Two great choices are the Aberdeen Inn or the White Gate Inn.







Author and family with Asheville in the background

## Getting There

Asheville is serviced by numerous airlines offering non-stop service from Atlanta, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Detroit, Houston, Minneapolis, Newark and Orlando.

Considered the nation's most scenic highway, the 469-mile Blue Ridge Parkway winds along the Blue Ridge Mountains, through Asheville and into the entrance of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

For more information you can visit:  
[www.activegetaway.com](http://www.activegetaway.com) or  
[www.exploreasheville.com](http://www.exploreasheville.com)

- Pictures courtesy of Asheville Convention & Visitor's Bureau (with exception of above image).

Alright! Now, come with me and I'll take you on the perfect outdoor weekend in Asheville (we'll just assume the weather is cooperating!).

## Friday

Roll into town and check in to the White Gate Inn on Chestnut Street. Unpack and head out the door for an easy 5 mile run to get the lay of the land. You can run up Town Mountain to your east and get big views of downtown through the historic Grove Park area. or head down Chestnut and pass the Thomas Wolfe House for a short loop through town.

Now for some food...You can't come to Asheville without a stop at Salsa's with its Caribbean/Mexican fusion. This is a staple for tourist and local alike. Afterwards, wander down to Jack of the Wood for a pint (or 2) of any of their Green Man ales (I'm partial to the stout). Stumble the mile or so back to your room and make sure your road bike is ready to go.

## Saturday

Crawl out from the covers early enough to walk around the corner to the City Bakery on Charlotte Street for an espresso and a couple of scones. But, get back in time to pull on your cycling kit, because the Saturday morning bakery ride leaves at 10am sharp from the parking lot right across the street from your inn. You'll find everything from visiting Pro/Cat1 racers enjoying Asheville's mild training climate, to master's wannabes on this ride (this is a relatively serious and roadie-centric outing). You need to know group ride etiquette and common sense. Stick with the group if you don't know the roads. You can expect anywhere from 2 to 5 hours. It will be casual pace for some and absolutely on the rivet for others.

Rolling back into town, you need to re-fuel and a huge burrito is just the ticket. Hit Mamacita's on Biltmore Avenue for the biggest, tastiest burrito in town. Then wander down the street to the Dripolator for an afternoon coffee. On your way past, check the Orange Peel to see if there's a show you just have to catch that night.

Now, if you've come to town with your spouse and/or the kids, you need to incorporate some fun for them as well. Take in a hike around Bent Creek and Lake Powhatan (a short 10 minute drive) or walk around and play in the creek at the Botanical Gardens near UNCA in North Asheville.

Dinner Saturday night finds you at Zambra's tapas restaurant downtown for a little more upscale feel or maybe Asheville

Pizza Company on Merrimon Avenue for pizza, beer and a \$2 movie and if you're into the indie film scene, the Fine Arts Theater next to Barley's taproom on Biltmore Avenue is more your style.

## Sunday

Rise and shine early...Grab breakfast at local favorite Over Easy Café on Broadway. You are then headed for Dupont State Forest for a day of single-track heaven. Pick up a map and any last minute needs at Black Dome Mountain Sports on Tunnel Road before you hit the road. You're looking at a 45 minute drive to get to the trailhead, but the slickrock, sweeping descents, waterfall crossings and endless terrain options are well worth it. Be sure to hit Cedar Rock, Burnt Mountain and Reasonover trails!

Getting back into Asheville Sunday afternoon, you are completely bonked from the ride and need to be packing up to head home. Check out of your room and head to Barley's taproom for a Spinach Burger or Veggie Pita before setting off for home.

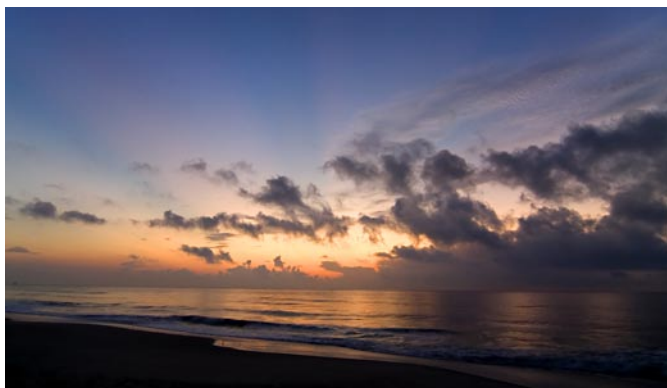


## Inside Scoop

If the above itinerary did not provide enough options for your visit, then these other options:

- Bring a whitewater boat and hit the Ledges Park playboat area just north of town on River Road or run attainments on the French Broad for a workout.
- The Asheville Track Club meets every Sunday morning at 8:30 am for group trail runs in the North Carolina Arboretum in Bent Creek.
- The Pisgah Area SORBA folks meet at 11:00 am every Sunday morning for group rides in Bent Creek as well.
- The region experiences four distinct seasons, but the average annual snowfall is never more than 16.2" and the hottest day rarely exceeds 73 degrees Fahrenheit. The warmest month of the year is July, while winter hits its peak in January.
- There are more than 2,000 miles of hiking and biking trails around the Asheville area.





## ON THE HORIZON

### Coming up in future issues:

- Dirt Divas (articles for women athletes by women athletes)
- What inspires Race Directors to create such memorable events
  - Planning for your first international event
  - Athlete Profiles (to be a monthly feature)
  - Where Are They Now?
- Adventure Sports on a Budget
  - Training and Parenthood
- Future Gear Reviews:**
  - Sunglasses • Bike Lights
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## National Ranking System

Presented by



January 2008

1. Lab Rats
2. M.O.A.T.
3. [HoustonAdventureRacing.com](http://HoustonAdventureRacing.com)
4. Bikes Plus-Little Rock
5. [TexasDare.com](http://TexasDare.com)
6. Werewolves of Austin
7. Control Freaks
8. HART Muddy & Bloody
9. JUMP
10. HART/Marmot

# Gear Closet

## Adventure Racers Embrace Numa Sport Optics

Numa Sport Optics, makers of “Eyewear That’s as Tough as You Are,” will put its products to the toughest tests outdoor athletes can muster in 2008—its quality assurance crew for brutal use and certain abuse? Adventure Racers.

Adventure racing combines traditional outdoor sports like trail running, mountain biking and paddling, and requires athletes to push themselves at these normally likeable endeavors longer than most folks would enjoy. Some adventure race events are over in hours. Others, like the Numa-sponsored Primal Quest Expedition, run on for several days. Add into the mix the challenge of navigating unmarked race courses using only a map and compass, and you have the multifaceted sport of adventure racing. Traditional gear dies fast here.

Protection is the primary function of Numa eyewear. Wraparound styling protects racers’ eyes from every angle, while superior optics shield athletes from harmful UV rays and prevent eye fatigue through long hours in the sun. They also block branches, rocks or water from getting into an eye on race day. All Numa lenses exceed ANSI Z87.1 standards for impact resistance.

Since their introduction at Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in 2007, Numa’s legend has grown around the reliability of its products. Proprietary FlexFrame Technology™ enables frames that have been



stepped on or sat upon to spring back to their original shape in seconds, offering adventure racers an unparalleled value in performance eyewear. Reliability is a fundamental requirement of adventure racing gear, and Numa meets the challenge.

Numa’s performance engineering is evident in such features as anti-fog venting, anti-slip TAK Rubber™ temple and/or nose pads, and reinforced hinges and nose-bridges to prevent breakage.

“Experiencing the unexpected is what adventure racing is all about, and having gear that won’t let you down is crucial,” said Jake Bennett, founder and CEO of Numa Sport Optics. He completed his first adventure race, a 250-mile 3-day Adventure Xstream event in Moab, in the fall of 2007. After crossing the finish line, Bennett said, “I can’t

think of a better group of adventure-seekers to test the toughness of our sunglasses.”

Numa will sponsor select adventure racing teams in 2008, including elite Colorado-based team Salomon Crested Butte and team Checkpoint Zero/Inov-8.

Numa’s commitment to adventure racing reaches beyond its sponsored teams, Bennett explained, to the promotion of the sport itself. In 2008, Numa is sponsoring and will be the official eyewear of the Primal Quest Expedition Adventure Race, the Checkpoint Tracker Adventure Racing Series, and the Bonk Hard Racing series.

“Our commitment to producing the toughest sunglasses on earth will be put to the ultimate test in 2008,” Bennett said. “We believe when



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consumers see the value proposition in a pair of sunglasses that withstand abuse in the field, they will add Numa shades to their personal list of mandatory gear.”

### About Numa Sport Optics

*Eyewear by Numa Sport Optics provides 100% protection from harmful UV rays, and effectively shields users' eyes from damage by foreign objects. Numa's FlexFrame Technology™ allows the frames to be bent and to spring back to shape, providing consumers with reliability unmatched in the eyewear industry. Performance features are engineered into every Numa product, and include vented designs to prevent fogging, wraparound styling to protect eyes from every angle, and TAK Rubber™ temple an/or nose pads*



### Numa Rider, \$125

- The Rider offers the largest field of vision of any Numa model.
- Large lenses offer optimal eye protection from wind, dirt and debris.
- TAK Rubber nose and temple pads
- Venting between frame and top of lens creates airflow to prevent fogging.
- Sliding Fork lens interchange system.
- (Rx compatible)

[www.numa-optics.com](http://www.numa-optics.com)

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### Princeton Tec Fuel Headlamp, \$24.99

New for 2008, Princeton Tec's Fuel headlamp is not only practical but inexpensive. At only 78 grams (with batteries) the Fuel emits 15 lumens of light and has a burn time of 160 hours of burn time. It features four output settings (high, medium, low and fast flash) and three Ultralight LEDs which makes the Fuel one of the lightest 3AAA headlamps out there.

Its unique design and triangular battery layout makes for a smaller front profile, which allows for the inclusion of the easy access battery door and creates a tougher and more secure housing for the headlamp's electronics. Two other features include an asymmetrical single arm bracket makes directing the light effortless and reliable along with a large easy to find push button switch.

[www.princetonotec.com](http://www.princetonotec.com) • 800.257.9080

#### • Editor's Take

After receiving this headlamp only a few weeks before the February issue was released, I was able to try the headlamp out on several pre-sunrise trail runs and found the headlamp to emit a large amount of light (compared with other products its size) and was much lighter than larger models.



## Gear Closet



### Axis Gear Nav360, \$100-\$119

#### Product Features:

- 360 degree rotation
- Weighs just 390g
- Integrated clear map protector
- Only 1/2" bar mounting space required
- Comes in 2 sizes (9X9 and 11X11)

[www.axisgear.ca](http://www.axisgear.ca)



## Adventure World magazine

### Attention All Readers!

With our second issue we are going to introduce two new features:

#### • Athlete Profiles

We are looking to profile the best individuals or teams and share their secrets with readers. If you know someone that fits the bill, email us their information and we will try to include them in an upcoming issue.

#### • Footprint Diaries (Race Reports)

Did you or your team overcome an obstacle during a recent event? If so, email us your story and you may read about it in a future issue.

[info@adventureworldmagazine.com](mailto:info@adventureworldmagazine.com)

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- COURSE TRAIL DESCRIPTION  
MIWOK 100K TRAIL RACE.

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**SALOMON** 



# It Happened To Me!

By Troy Farrar

A few years back we enlisted the help of a local paddler to improve our technique in the boat. While training he told us about the Texas Water Safari which is a 265 mile paddle race that carries the moniker of, "worlds toughest boat race." After about a minute of hearing his past experiences from the safari we proclaimed, "we're in," and our training for Safari began.

On race day, it was pouring down rain. We started the paddle soaking wet and grinning from ear to ear, excited about the challenges we were about to face. About 15 minutes into the race, we hit a submerged object and my teammate, Matt Battison, flew overboard and disappeared. Ten seconds later he broke the surface and climbed back into the boat. Unfortunately he had acquired a deep gash the entire length of his left palm, not particularly the start I had envisioned. Matt is a tough guy, so we continued on, a little worse for the wear but still excited about the challenges ahead.

Around 2 am on the first night, we came to a log jam so big it looked as if the river had ended. There were logs piled up for about 70

yards. The banks were too steep and overgrown for a portage - we would need to travel over the top of the log jam. This is a dangerous situation; if you fall through the logs you can easily get caught on submerged objects called sweepers and drown. Matt climbed out and grabbed one side of the boat. I followed, when all of a sudden the log we were standing on submerged and we went with it. WHOOSH! Both of us held onto the canoe tightly, or should I say white-knuckled, to avoid being swept under the log jam. We were submerged to our chest, with the strong current pulling our legs under the log jam; one hand holding onto the boat and another braced on the log jam. All of a sudden, hundreds of fire ants covered our arms and unanimously welcomed us to their log jam with a well choreographed group sting. The only thing we could do was laugh hysterically, asking the other, "Are you having fun?" Wholeheartedly the reply was "I think this is awesome." Later we found out that a guy from another team was actually swept under the log jam. Fortunately, he held his breath and made it through; perhaps he should be writing this story.

On the final afternoon, I started feeling pretty bad. I had been so

jazzed up that I could not sleep the night before the race and now was approaching 60 hours without any shut-eye. I decided to take a quick dip in the river to snap me out of my funk and wash away the sleep monsters. After the first 2 days of being soaking wet, the sun had finally come out and dried us off. I decided to strip down and leave my dry clothes in the boat. I jumped in and the cool water definitely rejuvenated me for the final push to the finish. Once I got back in the boat I didn't want to put my clothes on until I dried off, so I proceeded to paddle stark naked for the next 15 minutes. Luckily I was in the back of the boat otherwise Matt might not have agreed to the situation. We were laughing the entire time thinking if someone saw me paddling down the river in my birthday suit, they would think the Safari had driven me mad.

Finally, 56 hours and 265 miles later, we crossed the finish line. Despite, or should I say because of the 48 hours of rain, one gashed hand, the log jam incident and a little paddling au naturel this was one great journey. The event lived up to its name as we had definitely embarked on a true safari.

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## TECHSOX<<<

**Do you want a free pair of TechSox? If so, we want to hear from you.**

Do you have an amazing story about something that happened to you while participating in your favorite adventure sport? If so, please submit it to us at [editor@adventuresportsmagazine.com](mailto:editor@adventuresportsmagazine.com). If your story is selected to appear in AWM, we'll send you a pair of TechSox.