

Adventure World magazine

Primal Quest Montana

- Tips For A Top 5 Finish
- Catching Up With Robyn B

Battling Blisters

The Bane Of Our Existence

Iliotibial Band Friction Syndrome

The Bull Of Africa

Return to the Dark Continent

Plus

- Chased By A Wolf
- North Lake Tahoe
- The Racing Compass

September 2008

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My Christmas List!

I recently returned from Outdoor Retailer Summer Market last month. I spent three full days running from booth to booth and I still felt like I was at the Smithsonian Museum with a deadline to see the entire collection. I am told that there were over 1000 vendors there this time. If I am lucky, I got to see a fourth of that.

While there, I got to meet Andrew Skurka, have coffee with Robyn Benincasa, compare iPhones with Jordan Romero, and see lots of fabulous gear that will be on the market later this year and into Spring 2009.

We briefly discuss a few finds at OR in this issue, but over the upcoming issues, we will be highlighting many of the finds that we thought worthy to make it in the pages of AWM. Also, our gear reviews and spotlights will continue to grow in the publication.

So, with that said, urge you family and friends to refrain from buying you something that you will never use and to wait for that Gear Wish List that you are going to create from the pages of AWM's Gear Closet. I know that my list has grown substantially since my trip to Salt Lake City.

We are excited that our readership has grown since our first issue in February of this year. We are now being read in over 15 countries around the world and growing daily.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and we look forward to seeing you on the trail.

Clay Abney
Editor-in-chief

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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contributors



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 2nd at the grueling Primal Quest Adventure Race in Big Sky, Montana. You can generally find her and her team on the podium of the biggest expedition races on earth.



Will Ramos is the lead photographer for some of the top adventure racing companies in the country including Primal Quest, Odyssey Adventure Racing, EX2 Adventures, Ambush Adventure Sports, Don Mann Enterprises, and The A List. His photographs have been featured in numerous publications worldwide.



Shaun Bain and his wife, Bonnie, live in The Woodlands, TX (near Houston). He is a contractor and part of Team MOAT/PEAK.com, the past USARA National Champions and Defending National Champions. His team finished fifth at PQ Montana. For more about Team MOAT/PEAK.com, visit www.peak.com/teammoat.



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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Trinidad Coast 2 Coast Set for October



The Tropical Power Limited Coast 2 Coast 2008 Multi-Sport Race will take place on October 18-19. Athletes are already preparing their minds and bodies for the tough two-day stage race that comprises trail running, cycling and paddling. The race attracts athletes from all disciplines, including triathlon and swimming. Last year, there was an increase in the number of cyclists and marathoners who participated in the event.

The event course begins at the Toco Lighthouse on Trinidad's East Coast and ends at Williams Bay Chaguaramas, in the West. Local participants are expected to test their mettle against regional and international racers – athletes have the choice of entering either

as an Individual or Relay Team, and for the first time, novices can enter single stages of the race.

This is the third year that the event is being held – top local triathlete Jason Gooding won the 2005 event, while the 2006 race title was taken by then-reigning Multi-Sport World Champion, New Zealander Richard Ussher. Ussher came back to successfully defend his title in 2007, beating out local racers like Diane Henderson (a diligent duathlete), Clarence Tobias and Cantius Thomas (both seasoned marathoners) and strong cyclists like Sean de Freitas; as well as other international athletes such as American Mitchell Figueroa, who has participated in the Ironman European Championship in Germany, and South African paddler Martin Dreyer, who has had experience racing in New Zealand's Speight's Coast to Coast – the most elite race on the international Multi-Sport Racing calendar.

The prizes for this year's event include over \$10,500 USD in cash prizes for the winners in various categories. This, along with a high quality course and a great destination has been attracting tremendous interest in the race. "The course takes participants through some of the most beautiful and challenging terrain in the Caribbean," says Race Director Ryan Mendes, "so that's another thing that makes the event unique."

For more information on the Tropical Power Coast to Coast, go to www.trinidadcoast2coast.com.

Photos courtesy James O'Connor



news from the field

Heating Up in the Deep South!

Gulf Coast Adventure Racing descended on Baton Rouge, Louisiana for its fourth stop in their "Racing to N'Awlins" adventure racing series. With temperatures soaring to ninety-seven degrees and the humidity typically high for mid-July, seventy teams of three descended on the campus of the 2007 National Champion LSU Tigers for the third annual Baton Rouge Urban Adventure Race.

The event began at 7:30am in an attempt to get a jump on the heat. Racers traversed the campus hitting such points as Alex Box Stadium, home to the Tiger's baseball team since 1938, before biking along the levee to downtown Baton Rouge. From the bike drop, they headed out on foot running throughout the city collecting checkpoints and completing mystery challenges. At one such mystery challenge, racers were each handed a plastic cup which they had to hold in their teeth while immersing themselves in a timed fountain and having



to transport their water back to a designated bucket filling it to overflowing. This challenge was well received by all racers as this was about halfway through the course and everyone was ready for a break from the heat.

Top teams finished in a little under three hours while those on the back-end crossed the finish line in just over five hours.

For a listing of the remaining 2008 Gulf Coast Adventure Racing events, go to www.gulfcoastadventure.com.



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lows for single hand use. The new flavor and packaging are slated to reach stores in November 2008 with a retail price of \$1.99 per FASTPAK. And, on an environmental note...the new packaging minimizes waste, as it is 33 percent smaller than the previous SHOT BLOK package.

Available in 8 Flavors (3 with caffeine and 1 with the three times the sodium). For more information, visit www.clifbar.com.

news from the field

Adventure Racing And The Office Can Finally Co-Exist!



The 2008 BG US Challenge – the ultimate corporate team adventure race for businesses all over the United States – is here again and you don't want to miss it. Over 50 teams from top US companies such as Volvo, HP, El Paso and Motorola will compete in this two-day, three-night stage race Oct. 16-18.

The race will be held in Lake Placid, NY, home of the Winter Olympic Games in 1932 and 1980. The organizers have partnered with the Olympic Authority to stage what is sure to be an incredible race at this historic venue!

The Challenge is based on the unique Intelligent Sport® formula, which brings adventure racing to the business world by putting some of the country's most successful business leaders head-to-head in a true test of mind, body and team spirit. Not only an adrenaline rush, this event motivates and empowers the individual and enhances loyalty, communication and productivity within organizations. Over the course of the event, participants will run, mountain bike and paddle through the mountains while tack-

ling engineering tasks, orienteering, cracking codes and solving puzzles. It's fast-paced, requires quick decisions under pressure and brings teams together like no other event in the world.

Teams are made up of four people plus one optional substitute and may be male, female, or co-ed. Five of the top teams will qualify for the World Team Final, which brings the best teams from Intelligent Sport Series events from around the world together to compete. This year's World Team Fi-

nal will be held in Cyprus (yep – that island in the Mediterranean!) in December.

The BG US Challenge also raises vital funds for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Over the past four years, participating teams have raised close to one and a half million dollars. The target this year is to raise a million dollars from the 2008 US Challenge.

For more information or to register your team, visit www.uschallenge.com.



news from the field



THE 2009 COASTAL CHALLENGE TO INCLUDE FIRST EVER NIGHT STAGE

The Coastal Challenge (TCC), the World's Expedition Run™, has announced that its 2009 race, the "Rainforest Run," has reached the halfway point of its 125-person registration capacity. The race, scheduled February 1-6 along Costa Rica's tropical Pacific coastline, opened registration this spring with a revamped web site and new blog.

"We're thrilled so many competitors and teams have joined our 2009 racing community," said Tim Holmstrom, race director. "We're celebrating our fifth anniversary with a spectacular and funky course that combines the best of Costa Rica's natural beauty with a stunning and challenging route that will reward athletes of all levels. In short, this is going to be an insane tropical adventure with exotic scenery, rugged landscapes, and amazing wildlife."

Set in Costa Rica's pristine southern region, the "Rainforest Run" will utilize the country's rich rainforests as a backdrop for a diverse course that moves from jungle and rainforest trails to highlands, coastal ranges, reefs, and river crossings. The route, which takes a decidedly different feel from last year's "Route of Fire" in the Northwest, will weave from the beach into the Talamancas, a coastal mountain range, before finishing in Corcovado National Park, a Unesco World Heritage site and one of the world's premier rainforest experiences. The Rainforest Run will also feature a first-ever night run in which racers will traverse a portion of the course in the dark, navigating via torch-lit trails.

The race offers four categories of participation:

- Team Expedition Run - Runners sign up in teams of three to six
- Solo Expedition Run - The full 200+ kilometer Expedition Run
- Solo Adventure Run - A shortened, yet extremely challenging 125-kilometer route
- Guest Adventure Tours - Daily adventure tours like river rafting, nature hikes and more available to guests of the runners.

For more information, visit www.thecoastalchallenge.com.

Photo courtesy of Tim Holmstrom

news from the field

Badwater Ultramarathon

The 31st anniversary AdventureCORPS Badwater Ultramarathon, held July 14-16, 2008, concluded at 8360' (2533m) up Mount Whitney, after **Jorge Pacheco** of Los Angeles, CA and **Jamie Donaldson**, of Littleton, CO, took impressive wins ahead of high caliber fields to record the second fastest men's and fastest women's times in the history of the event, widely acknowledged as the most demanding and extreme running race offered anywhere on the planet.

For both Pacheco and Donaldson, their victories were sweet redemption after their rookie efforts in the race in 2007 when both led the field for most of the race and seemed destined to win, only to falter in the last miles of the race and drop back to 4th man and 5th woman overall,

respectively.

Pacheco, a 40 year-old machine operator, went to the front early in the men's race and despite a consistent effort by Hungarian national Akos Konya of Oceanside, CA, who placed second here in 2006 and 2007, he was able to hold on to win by a comfortable 29-minute margin with a time of 23:20:16. That left Konya in his now all too familiar 2nd place once again, in a time of 23:49:44, a PR by two minutes and the third fastest race finish in history.

Donaldson, a 33 year-old middle school math teacher from Littleton, CO, geared her entire year since the 2007 race towards her 2008 Badwater effort. She made specific changes to her fueling plan and to her clothing - to avoid chafing - and entered the race with a strategy and pacing plan to at least better her 41 hour finish from 2007. In the end, she led an impressively strong women's field with a time of 26:51:33. Not only did she shatter Pam Reed's 2002 women's record of 27:56:47, but also she bested all but two of the men running in the race. Reed also broke her own record, placing 5th overall and running fourteen minutes faster than she had in 2002.

Seven-three of the 80 starters finished the race, which was beset with uncertainty over road availability following flash floods in the northern half



of Death Valley National Park and near Lone Pine in the days prior to, and then during, the race.

At one point on Monday afternoon, race organizers advised competitors of a finish location change - the plan was for racers to continue as normal to mile 102.9, then turn around and run back to Panamint Springs, a distance of 133.5 miles - only to reverse this notice a few hours later after a concerted effort by the California Department of Transportation, who put six road graders into action when a flash flood shut down the race course near Lone Pine.

With its start line at Badwater, Death Valley, the course rises from the lowest elevation in North America at 282' (85m) below sea level. After a grueling 135 miles of paved roads, the race finishes at Mt. Whitney Portal at 8360' (2533m). The Badwater course covers three mountain ranges for a total of 13,000' (3962m) of cumulative vertical ascent and 4700' (1433m) of cumulative descent. The Portal is the trailhead to the Mt. Whitney



Photos courtesy of Chris Kostman / Badwater.com

summit, the highest point in the contiguous United States.

The race began with the traditional wave start, with 22 runners beginning at 6am, 27 at 8am, and 31 at 10am. This is done because of lack of parking at the start line and, even more so, to minimize congestion of runners, crew, and vehicles on the roadway in the National Park. Because hosting food and drink checkpoints along the side of the road in this forbidding environment is impossible, each entrant brings their own support vehicle and at least two support crew members to tend to all their needs.

The 2008 race roster included 43 Badwater veterans and 37 rookies: die hard ultra-runners comprising the world's elite in this sport, and athletes who have the necessary running credentials, but are primarily known for their exploits as adventure racers, mountaineers, triathletes, or in other extreme pursuits. Twelve countries were represented at this unofficial world championship - Australia (2), Brazil (2), Canada (2), France (6), Germany (6), Guatemala (1), Hungary (1), Mexico (1), New Zealand (1), Norway (1), UK (2), and USA (55) - from 19 American states. There

were 21 women and 59 men. The youngest runner was 27 while the oldest was 66, with an average age of 47.

The average finishing time is approximately 48 hours, while the overall time limit is 60 hours. For those who finish in less than forty-eight hours, their reward is the coveted AdventureCORPS Badwater Ultramarathon belt buckle. There is no prize money.

As the on-course action revealed, the 2008 race field was particularly competitive. Veteran contenders include Akos Konya, 33, of Oceanside, CA (Hungary citizenship), the 2006 and 2007 runner-up, Charlie Engle, 44, of Greensboro, NC (3rd place finisher in 2005 and 2006), David Goggins, 32, of Chula Vista, CA (5th place in 2006 and 3rd in 2007), and Jorge Pacheco, 40, of Los Angeles, CA (Mexico citizenship) who placed 4th in 2007. Three former champions were also competing: Dean Karnazes 45, of San Francisco, CA (2004), Marshall Ulrich, 57, of Idaho Springs, CO (1991, 1992, 1993, 1996), and David Jones, 55, of Eagleville, TN (1997).

The women's field, the largest in the history of the race, was also

deep with talent, most notably Pam Reed, 47, of Tucson, AZ, the 2002 and 2003 overall champion who also won the women's field in 2005, along with Monica Scholz, 41, of Jerseyville, Ontario, Canada, a five-time finisher who led the women's field in 2004 and 2006. Other veteran contenders include Jamie Donaldson, 33, of Littleton, CO, who led the women's race in 2007 for 122 miles before falling back to fifth place, as well as eight-time finisher Lisa Smith-Batchen, 47, of Driggs, ID, the 1997 and 1998 champion.

Although the weather varies from year to year, there is no such thing as "an easy Badwater Ultramarathon." This year, as the runners passed Stovepipe Wells, 42 miles into the race, temperatures exceeded the 111F recorded for Monday at the Furnace Creek Visitor's Center, yet the main problem faced by many athletes was the 50-60% humidity from the thunderstorms letting loose on the race course just west of Death Valley.

For more information, visit www.badwater.com.

By Paul Skilbeck and Chris Kostman.



We picked up a pair of the SOLE Platinum Sandals while at Outdoor Retailer last month. They made me change out of my running shoes and wear the flips the remainder of the day. For those that have never been to OR, imagine walking around an amusement park all day in flip flops. Well, they worked perfectly. With an MSRp of \$79.95, the SOLE Platinum Sandals come with a Truth in Comfort Guarantee. If for any reason you are unsatisfied with these sandals, you can return for a replacement or refund within 30 days.

World's And National's Back-To-Back

After covering 176 miles, 32,000 feet of climbing and finishing close to an hour and a half ahead of the next female, Rebecca Rusch claimed her 2nd 24-Hour Solo World Championships in Canmore, Canada on July 27.

“The competition was much more stout than last year”, said Rusch. “The course was brutally hard and the severe thunderstorms added a whole dimension of difficulty. The weather turned the course into part hike-a-bike and part treacherous, high-speed mud surfing. I did suffer a pretty serious crash in the middle of the night. I hit a high-speed mud rut and launched myself and my bike into the air and down an embankment. I landed like a lawn dart straight on the top of my head,



but came away with just a very stiff neck. I did crush my helmet, but not my head, so it did the job well.

Despite being in the lead for most of the race, I dug really deep and kept the pressure on. There are so many things that can happen in a 24-hour race, so I did not want to leave any room for error. By the finish, I was completely empty, elated and could barely speak. I will say that my muscles and brain were completely spent from the effort, but the usual pain in my wrists, back and joints was noticeably absent.”

Only six days after winning her second 24 Hour Solo World Championships, Rusch made her way to Wisconsin for the 24 Hour US National Championship. This time she was racing on a four person women’s team where she

was joined by Muffy Ritz, Karoline Droege, and Claudia Hattrup. With less than a week between events, Rusch and her team, Ket-chum If You Can/Specialized won Nationals beating out the defending champions.

For more about Rebecca Rusch, visit www.rebeccarusch.com.



Photo (bottom right) courtesy of Joan Linder



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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

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Illinois • www.thethunderrolls.org

Nature Cure BlackBeard AR • Sep-13-08
Outerbanks, NC • www.americanadventuresports.com

The Midnight Rush at the Raging Russell • Sep-13
Clayton, GA • www.midnightrush.trailblazerar.com/

Kit Carson Adventure Race • Sep-13-08
Lake Tahoe, NV • www.bigblueadventure.com

Midwest Monster Adventure Race • Sep-20-08
Quincy, IL • www.monsteradventure.com

Wild Adventure Race • Sep-20-08
Biwabik, MN • www.wildadventure.com

Terra Firma Adventure Race • Sep-20-08
Smithville, TX • www.terrafirmapromo.com

Overmountain Extreme • Sep-26-0
Morganton, NC • overmountainextremear.com

Raid the Rock Urban Adventure Race • Sep-27-08
Little Rock, AR • www.raidtherock.com

The Shag • September 27, 2008
Ringwood, NJ • www.NYARA.org

Berryman Adventure Race • Sep-27-08
Big Springs Park, MO • www.berrymanadventure.com

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Fontainebleau Adventure Race • Oct-11-08
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race director profile

Geoff Hunt

AWM: How long have you been putting on adventure races?

Southern Traverse started in 1991 - so right at 17 years. We have not missed a year. However, in 2001, we put on two races - The ARWorld champs in Switzerland (September) and then the Southern Traverse (November).

AWM: What made you want to start hosting your own events?

Competing in events but in those days not finding enough events to race in. In Jackson Hole, I became aware of a race that was something like ski, mountain bike, cross-country ski and run - 'ski, skate, stride and ride'.

One of the first events that I organized was based on this idea in Queenstown - ski down the local ski mountain to our road bikes and



bike down the road thirteen kilometers and then run into town nine kilometers to finish in the Mall. I organized it but also competed in it (generally for 1st place with another close friend).

About this time, I also began organizing ski mogul contests 'Boogie in the Bumps' - of which I was a specialist. I set the course, paid the judges, and competed, generally

for first.

AWM: What is your favorite event that you host and why?

I guess that Southern Traverse has been the one because of the places that we have gone, and experiences that I have had on the checkouts, the friends that we have made at the race and the great races that we have had.

The second one and close on the heels is the Peak to Peak - a ski, mountain bike, paddle, run, bike race - fast and furious (though I have never been able to compete in it) two-hour race from one ski mountain to another.

AWM: What in your opinion makes your event (s) unique?

The company's mission statement is 'to produce an event (race) that we would want to compete in.' During the early years, I competed



Continued on page 44

The Bull Of Africa

Rests After The Adventure Of A Lifetime

by René Taljaard



Photos by Wouter Kingma

One hundred and sixty-eight athletes. Five hundred and seventy kilometers. South Africa's wild and wonderful Eastern Cape. Seven days. The Bull of Africa isn't easy to pin down, but that is pretty much the crux of it.

This year's race began on the 9th of August when forty-two teams of four athletes each set out from the starting line at the Katberg Golf Estate. It ended exactly seven days later on the 16th of August at the Balugha Inn Race Headquarters, with only twelve full teams finishing the entire course on time.

South African team USN, was the first to cross the finish line; triumphantly emerging on the other side of an arduous journey that took them over mountains, through rivers and across kilometres of rugged coastline. They completed the race in exactly ninety-seven hours, only three of which was spent sleeping. Sweden's Bjurfors Adventure Racing took second place, followed by Australian team Blackheart/Bunker Capital in third place.

When asked about the Bull of Africa 2008 and how it compares to their previous adventure racing experiences, USN's Martin Dreyer said, "The efforts of the race orga-



nizers was huge. They really included the locals and did a good job of showing off our country. We were blown away by the diversity of checkpoints – being up in the dry mountains and then coming down to the wild coast... every day was just 'wow'."

From Katberg, Hogsback and Thomas River to Komga, Mazepa Bay and Haga Haga, the Bull of Africa had competitors hiking, paddling, and cycling through and across what may very well be some of the most beautiful places on earth. At times an inspiration, at other times a curse – the harsh, diverse, yet always spectacular terrain of South Africa's Eastern Cape

Province was as much a part of this race as the teams were.

However, it wasn't just the landscapes that made this course great. It also featured enriching cultural elements such as at checkpoint 16, for example, where teams were required to write down a quote from famous apartheid freedom fighter, Steve Biko, to prove that they were there: "It is better to die for an idea that lives rather than to live for an idea that is dead."

The Bull of Africa is more than a race; it is an expedition that some have referred to as one of the toughest sporting events in the world. It doesn't demand, but assumes one





hundred percent physical exertion and mental dedication from the athletes who make it. Interestingly though, even those who didn't are saying it was a true African adventure and an experience they will never forget.

"This is the biggest race we've ever organized and it was a lot of hard work, but the feeling we get from the teams is that they loved the race; they especially enjoyed the diversity of it", said co-organizer, Sonja Otto, "That is our reward and what makes all the hard work worth it."

On the topic of location, co-organizer, Hano Otto, added (with a hearty laugh): "The teams were so taken by the hospitality of the Eastern Cape's people and the nice transition areas, that some of them stayed there a little longer than they should have."

When asked if they would do it again, Sonja responded: "Of course! This is what we do and what we're good at. The Bull of Africa will be held in Kwa-Zulu Natal next year – we're expecting as many as seventy teams to enter and it's going to

be bigger and better than ever."

The Bull of Africa prize giving ceremony was held at the Inkwenkwezi Game Reserve on the 16th of August, when a cheque of R100 000 (over \$12,000 USD) was handed over to the winners. Monetary prizes were awarded to the top seven official teams and all the finishers received Bull of Africa trophies. The celebration also featured a photographic slide show by Wouter Kingma, a video presentation by Andrew King and a hearty South African feast that was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

A number of athletes took the opportunity to say a few words when they went forward to receive their trophies:

Tatum Prins, the female member of South African team McCain Adventure Addicts – that was moved down from second place to the bottom of the list of official finishers when it was discovered that they inadvertently skipped a checkpoint along the way – had this to say: "Sonja and Hano organized a brilliant race. What happened to us

was unfortunate, but rules are rules. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank my team – we raced our hearts out and it was awesome."

"We would like to thank USN for a great race," said Mats Andersson from Bjurfors Adventure Racing, the team that finished second, "And thanks to the organizers for a true adventure race – it wasn't all about muscle, you needed a brain as well."

"I'm sure many people had life changing experiences during this race," said USN's Martin Dreyer, "The people we've spoken to also absolutely loved it – all that can be said for those who didn't is: Africa isn't for sissies."

René majored in Journalism, English and Philosophy at Rhodes University and currently resides on a farm in Haga Haga, South Africa, from where she works as a freelance journalist, copywriter and photographer.



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Primal Quest Montana

Included in this section:

Keys to a Top 5 Finish

Q&A with Robyn Benincasa

Race Director Wrap-Up

SPOT and PQ



Photo courtesy of Will Ramos Photography



Preparation, Luck & Great Teammates

The Making Of A Top 5 Finish At Primal Quest

By Shaun Bain

Primal Quest takes preparation, luck, and great teammates.... just to get there and to do well.

The race starts the moment you make the decision to enter an event of this magnitude. Then, you begin acquiring the gear from the required list. Your training becomes focused to the proposed terrain and disciplines that will take place in this year's event. And, if you are lucky, your teammates will be close enough, geography wise, to get some quality time together. I believe teammates are the glue that makes all the other factors stick together. The better they are, the better everything else works together. Our team for the event was Dave Boyd, Leslie Reuter, Nathan Winckelmann, and myself.

We anxiously awaited the announcement as to where the race

would be held in 2008. We were hoping for a race in a hot and flat venue so that we could continue training in our hot and flat home terrain. As soon as we found out that this year's event would be held in Montana, we shifted gears and began making decisions as to how best replicate the terrain that we knew we would experience there. Climbing will be a definite, river boarding seems to be a new regular event, and of course the staples of mountain biking, trekking, and paddling.

Mountain Biking – The team prepares by racing the cross-country races around the state of Texas (TMBRA).

Trekking – We can trek in the woods of Texas and try to simulate the mountains with a run at the college stadium stairs or the local high-rise hotel.

Paddling – Not a lot of white wa-

ter spots in Texas but we can always find a watering hole in which to paddle.

Climbing – Usually involves tall pine trees or secret trips to bridges and parking garages during the night.

River Boarding- A dump in the lake and a run down the 'tubing' rivers would give just a slight taste of what would behold us coming in to this year's race. Let me rephrase....this would NOT even give a sniff of what we might face on this section of the course.

As a team, we meet for our usual Texas races and the occasional training session with a couple or all of the teammates. We try the new gear, tested by our local consumer reports expert Dave Boyd. He is not employed by consumer reports, but his knowledge of gear might make one think otherwise.

Photos courtesy of Glennon Simmons

To help defray the cost to make it to this epic event, we sought sponsorship opportunities. However, just prior to leaving for Primal Quest, our primary sponsor had a company shakedown and all funds were restricted. At this point, we began to scramble for a last minute replacement sponsor for our team. Fortunately, PEAK.com, an Internet social community for those that like to enjoy life outside of the office, provided our team with our needed assistance to make it to Primal Quest. They are also sponsoring a PQ story contest which will be awarding \$500 for the best PQ story submitted to the PEAK.com website.

We loaded up our RV and after a 2-day drive; we are as close to Canada as we were to Mexico when we left out of Houston. We stopped along the way to stretch our legs and implement a last minute equipment addition check by taking our snowshoes out for a test run. We do not get much chance to snowshoe in south Texas.

Arriving into town, the raging water of the Gallatin River was flowing along the highway into the town of Big Sky. It was June and it felt like summer, but you knew where that water was coming from (snow capped mountains) and that the water temperature had to be as treacherous as the unpredictable waves racing our RV downstream.

After gathering our team and getting ready for our gear check, we find ourselves at the pond on the grounds of the Big Sky Resort. During this gear check for the water sections of the race, we quickly realized how important a last minute decision by our captain, Dave



Boyd, would come into play. Several days before departing Houston, Dave pulled the trigger and ordered dry suits for the team. These had to be shipped next day in order to make it in time for our departure. This was the one piece of equipment that we did not get to try prior to arriving at the gear check. It was tough prying the gaskets over your head, arms, and legs but we did match nicely as all the suits were the same. We made our way to the testing water and saw the big difference between dry suit and wet suit. Body in dry suit and our hands in wet suit material gave a real feel of the difference the cold water would have on the two.

After several days of on-site preparation, packing and repacking, trying to cut weight that was not needed and organizing your race equipment and food for the TA and for the people that might be helping you find it when you are not coherent, we were ready to get started.

As we made our way to the starting line, we find ourselves surrounded by familiar faces and those of the popular NIKE and MERRELL

teams. What I found very interesting was that neither of those two teams stepped to the front. I think they knew they had 'been there and done that' and I would like to think they were giving other teams that feeling of being in the spotlight at the front of the pack at the race start. Mind you, a quarter of the way up the mountain, they found their place very close to the lead.

The first day of the race was straightforward. We made our way up to the top of Lone Mountain and carefully followed an easy route back down to the Gallatin River stopping at a few points to keep us in the parameters of the course. So far, our preparation, luck, and teammates (PLT) were all doing well and paying off with a nice smooth run to the first dark zone.

Bonking, hitting the wall, is very common in expedition racing. We came into PQ Montana wanting to make sure we banked sleep throughout the race. We spent the last half of PQ Utah walking like zombies and swore we would not race again without banking sleep early. The first day allowed us to

hit a dark zone and get us started off right with a few hours of sleep. The next few nights were followed by small amounts of sleep that rejuvenated the feet from the pounding of the treks the day before.

The dark zone came and went and the paddling started at daybreak, which went by rather quickly. Traveling in a river raft the skills needed to make your way down a fairly open river traveling at more than 14 miles per hour is rather easy. As the river started to gather momentum and narrow in spots, the river dealt us our first blow. As I watched the faces of the spectators who applauded Leslie and I narrowly escaping a wall of river, I could see they witnessed something different in the boat behind us that carried our two other teammates. I quickly looked back and Dave and Nathan are floating alongside their boat. Nathan passes with the boat in hand and Leslie and I eddy out to wait for a chance to grab Dave. We pulled Dave aboard and headed to retrieve Nathan who had managed to right the boat. After Dave and Nathan are back in their boat, we are once again on the river. Our



first potential game-ending move was thwarted.

Now we turn the means of transportation to a river board. The skills might not be much higher but you better hold on tight and hope for a little luck and enjoy.

The River Boarding section was a blast. The suits we ordered worked perfectly, the boards kept us a lot higher than our previous boards, and the waves kept you alert the whole time. We faced a major challenge on this part of the course.

As a team we jockeyed back and forth, everyone keeping an eye out to make sure we were all together. A quarter of the way in to the run, I was next to Dave when we both got shot up a wave and dropped off the other side. Pretty routine, except for the large boulder that was under my leg when the wave dropped me on the other side. Like a baseball bat being slammed across a mobster's enemy's head, my leg begged for mercy. I could swear that the only thing holding my leg to my body was the dry suit I was wearing.



There I was, thinking my time at PQ was coming to a close. One move, that I can't even say was a bad move gave a striking blow that felt like it would end the race. Quitting is not the first option that comes to mind, but letting your teammates down and the thought of having to quit start to fight with the will to keep going. I put my head down but quickly realized that the water didn't get turned off and the next batch of waves was two seconds away from the last. I looked at Dave and got a concerned look in return.

My face must have displayed the pain, but could quickly hear our mantra for the race this year... HTFU that briefly means 'Harden Up'. Not being able to stand to get out of the water, I wasn't sure how long I would last. I hobbled my way around the portage and watched as my teammates helped carry my stuff. Entering back in the water, we managed to make it to the end of the river board section that many of the teams didn't even get to experience. One more scare for the river board section was Nathan saying he had a hole in his suit. The thought of Nathan being sunk (the dry suit is like a Ziploc bag) in the river filled my head but we found it to be a smaller hole that was just adding a little cold water to the suit. We would make it to the end of the run before it was an issue.

I would like to say we rolled on and the race ended without incident. However, the next section would be affected by the last.

My badly bruised leg caused the team to crawl at a slow pace. The downhill runs are usually enjoyable and fast. Even though the team carried my pack, it was the lack of flexibility that continued to slow us down. My leg swelled, my knee looked like a grapefruit and it was turning black and blue. We kept pushing hoping it would start to get better. The seat came up a bit on the bike and that made it feel better but the snow trekking injured it even more, twisting it in ways that were unpredictable. The team was supportive, quitting was never mentioned and we tried to keep perpetual forward motion (PFM). Celebrex and some other anti-inflammatory drugs helped



keep the pain tolerable.

As my leg started to come around our pace began to improve until Nathan's IT band started to give him some problems. He was relegated to pedaling with one leg and Dave towing. His leg pain escalated to a point that brought up the 4-letter word QUIT. We had two options. We were close to the bike drop or we were about to head into another long trek that looked to mimic the same one the day before that had

us averaging less than 2 MPH. Our pow-wow by the horses (there were a couple of cowgirls rounding up a lot of horses nearby) brought about a discussion of whether we would just die a slow death as the other teams passed us by or whether we could keep a pace that would allow us to stay in front of our other competitors. Leslie told the team that if we weren't racing we would go for a hike anyways ...so lets get to hiking. Dave tested Nathan's mental

toughness by giving him the option to quit by telling him that “we are close to the TA, let’s just head back and the crew can pick us up.” Not always a great tactic when the potential of your teammate to quit lies with the opposite answer, which I heard a team had the same scenario and the teammate walked away and left them with only three to finish the race. The word quit usually elicits two feelings, one being relief and the other strength. Nathan didn’t crack and our young, green teammate passed a test that would make him stronger. As we walked out of the alley of horses, Nathan said, “don’t let me quit.” I am sure we all wanted to be put out of our misery from the death march that had started way to soon from my earlier leg problems, but we kept moving forward and actually finished that long trekking section feeling strong.

Begging for real mountain bike legs, the course was toned down and we would not see much difficult terrain in the biking legs. Our team is pretty strong on the bikes and we had hoped for epic

bike legs that would have taken us through some of the same mountains that required us to trek up and over passes through alpine trails. The biking sections traveled safely around and not so much up and over the mountains. Bike leg mishaps were the occasional flat tire, seat adjustments, bathroom breaks, and some towing. Our spirits were relaxed and the time went by quickly on the bikes.

The long trekking legs challenged the team more than we had been in previous races. When a team is farther back in a race, you tend to get a lot of input as to how long a particular leg might last from the racers in front. When your only feedback for the length of a leg involves a split from Team Nike or Merrell, your time frame is a little skewed. Beginning each trek leg, we would have an idea of when we might finish that particular leg. However, our estimated time was never enough. The time spent after your estimate has passed starts to get hard on a team. Food and water levels get low and sleep deprivation begins to take it toll. This

is the cracking zone. If you can make it to TA, the friendly faces, or the thought of changing disciplines rejuvenates you. We had a couple moments in this zone and when the dust settled we were close enough to a TA to get that much needed rejuvenation. When you’re not close, you need to withdraw from the cracks and wait to be rejuvenated. Just like a cranky kid that just needs a nap.

With the reading of this race excerpt we could have been planted anywhere in the standings. All teams have their challenges and how they handle them together, as a team, will help keep you moving forward. Team MOAT/PEAK.com has a lot of races in their backyard, Texas, and we have a lot of promoters in Texas. ‘You’ll come out and race.’ We are firm believers that racing makes you faster not long treks on the beach. We have raced many races together (as a team) and have noticed a direct correlation between the number of races done together to achieving better results as a team.



Catching Up With Robyn Benincasa After Primal Quest Montana



AWM: What was the highlight for you and your team during Primal Quest Montana?

It may sound weird, but the highlights of the race for me are usually the moments when the team is bonding and kickin' butt together versus experiencing the external world around us. We could be almost anywhere (as long as we're outside in a stunning place!), and I'd be just as happy as long as we're getting that rush that only comes from 4 people operating together at their full potential and creating a synergy that we just know is allowing us to put time on our competitors. I LOVE that stuff. The moments that come to mind as truly enjoyable for me were the long hours on the mountain bike (which we're GREAT for an ex tri girl) where we were hammering in our paceline and gettin' er dun. On the second long ride into the wind and uphill, Travis was having a killer day and he was not only off the front for most of it, but he was recounting stories about American

History (of all things? John's request) for the team at the top of his lungs. He cracks me up. John was incredibly strong on the bike sections, too, and kept us on track and going hard. A great pal and a great draft! :). And it was truly a joy to walk 50 feet behind Aaron Prince for hours and hours at a time, knowing I'd never catch him (and that he'd never slow down, either) but that we DEFINITELY weren't going to get lost. That confidence is such a gift. He's amazing. If I have to choose my favorite majestic Montana moment, though, it would have to be in the Bridgers. Hiking that ridgeline was a pretty epic experience, especially watching the sunrise after a long night of slowly crawling along the craggy ridgeline (we had a pretty good scare up there with rockfall, so it was a good time to thank The Powers that Be for allowing us to see the sunrise at all) . It was pretty crazy up there at sunset the night before, too, since wind was INSANE as we reached the top of the initial climb. As we crossed the

first open saddle at the top of the col the wind literally picked me up and moved me several feet a couple of times. Me! Imagine if one of the little girls was up there? :). Scary and fun and definitely memorable. Finally, it was truly a highlight for us to have Sue Harvey-Brown, our Merrell Goddess and Steve Sisler (and family!), our ZANFEL pal, at the race supporting our team before and after the race, respectively. Its so cool to have sponsors that have become friends (and family!)and are so "into" the AR scene and our team. We're pretty lucky.

AWM: What was the toughest section of the race that made your team dig down deep to push through?

In general, PQ this year, didn't have any of those hateful sections where you are wondering the entire time "what the heck could this course setter have been THINKING?" Thank goodness. We don't mind hard stuff, but when its "hitting yourself in the head with a hammer" or "digging a hole and

Photo courtesy of Jeff Akens

filling it back up” type of hard--intended just to make you suffer-- its just bad for the sport. I have to applaud Don’s team for focusing on the cool stuff and leaving out the brutality. It allowed many more teams to finish and feel successful than in past races, which is key for the future of AR. That having been said, while I have to admit that I enjoyed the wide open spaces and the pace that allowed us to go, the fact that we were basically on trails and roads for 80% of the race didn’t really lend itself too much to those fun strategy/navigation decisions that keep racers on their toes and offer an opportunity to use something other than sheer speed to close the gaps. Keeps the race more interesting, I think. Maybe next year! Yadda yadda yadda, the main suffering in this race came from just time on one’s feet (and a darn painful tibialis anterior strain and somewhat insolent new metal hip in my case) and time in the saddle, versus hideous bushwacking or technical sections. Groovy by me. In fact, I don’t think that my boys had to push much at all. Aside from pushing me up some of the hills. They’re just so dang strong.

AWM: The whitewater paddling and swimming on the Gallatin River was epic! How did your team work through the challenges on the river?

Uh yeah, epic. A little too epic for me! I think the decision to shut down that part of the course was a good one. The conditions were probably fun for someone with lots of whitewater swimming experience, a full dry suit, and plenty of sleep--but that was none of us! I know that the organization really wanted to pull that off for the HD

Rush TV coverage, so I hope they got the footage they needed. But I could go a loooooong time without doing something like that again. At least my boys were looking out for me, and John Jacoby is such a water boy that I knew he wouldn’t let me disappear.

AWM: Robyn, you’ve been very forthcoming about the struggles with coming back to race shape after your hip replacement. How were you able to prepare your body and mind to do battle with the best adventure racers in the world after undergoing such an invasive surgery?

Strangely, there was never really a question in my mind about whether I’d race again--but there probably should have been! To me it was just a matter of how much it was going to hurt. :). I just wasn’t prepared to call it quits yet, so I was on the stationary bike 4 days after surgery and on my road bike and the stair-climber in 10 days. I waited about 10 weeks to try to run, which still isn’t exactly pretty. For the first 6 months, my right leg sure felt like it was a “barbie leg” that got ripped off (well, it did) and put back on kinda wrong (hopefully it didn’t), but I kept dragging it along with me anyway. Now, at 11 months post op, it’s finally not my primary thought as I take the first few steps of my morning runs. Woo hoooo! It did affect me in PQ a bit in the first few days since the tendons were still a little angry (and probably scared. :). But I’m literally getting stronger and faster every day now. Which is kinda fun. I’m sure the boys will be happy about that at the World Champs in Brazil this October. ;) I think the hardest part of the comeback trail was

the mental aspect for me, feeling so slow and just wondering every single day whether I’d truly be able to keep up with these world-class boys or whether it was just a pipe dream. I literally wasn’t sure about the answer to that until a couple of days in. Luckily, I had just the right team for the job. They were all pretty darn understanding during my painful moments and very willing to be on the business end of a very stretched-out tow line. :). I was so grateful that they were all as cool as they were, giving me all kinds of encouragement when I needed it, and pretending I was doing great, even when I was sucking. :). They really boosted my confidence, and each one of them told me that they genuinely enjoyed our team and how well we raced together--The sweetest words a captain can hear. It was also very gratifying to discover that they, like me, weren’t all about winning, but about having a good race as a team and doing the best we could at each and every moment. To me, that’s what AR is all about: discovering those transcendent moments that make you the “best four” athletes versus the “four best”. If you can uncover that teamwork “sweet spot”, you’re going to be a truly successful expedition length adventure racer. And in my opinion, success in this sport is not about where you finish, but who you ARE. Oops. Kinda went off on a tangent there, but the bottom line is that if I have John, Travis, and Aaron (and/or others like them) around me for the next few years, I’ll still be out there squeezing the last drops of team synergy goodness and epic, life-affirming adventures out of this sport, barbie leg (make that bionic leg!) and all.

On the SPOT at Primal Quest

Over the course of Primal Quest Montana, the SPOT Messenger continued to impress everyone on the PQ staff, but none more than the Medical and Search and Rescue teams. When the Gallatin went from challenging white water to wild, white-knuckle ride, the decision was made to pull everyone off the water, and the SAR team was able to quickly locate every team and keep track of their status, thanks to the SPOT. The fact that the Messenger is waterproof, and floats, also proved invaluable in the conditions the teams were encountering.

On several occasions during PQ, teams inadvertently activated their SPOT Messengers, setting off a flurry of activity that begins with a signal being sent to SPOT's monitoring center in Houston, TX, which immediately alerts the PQ Search and Rescue Team. From there, the SAR Team gets in contact with local authorities and coordinates with staff in the field to get on site just as quickly as they can. Fortunately, in these two cases, there was no emergency, but knowing the exact location of the teams in the field had allowed rescue teams to respond very quickly and with pin point accuracy.

During one incident, one racer took a spill, going over the handlebars of his mountain bike at high speeds. He was reportedly unconscious for as much as 45 seconds, and the team activated its SPOT device to call for aid. Coordinating with the Comms staff, the medic in the field, who was also carrying a SPOT Messenger, was on location in a very short time. Primal Quest

HQ was able to track the medic, and direct him to the team who had issued the 911. The medic was able to quickly render aid to the fallen racer, who was soon given a clean bill of health, and sent on his way, continuing his Primal Quest race. These incidences have made it abundantly clear that the SPOT Messenger is the must have device for anyone traveling in the backcountry. Not only does it allow you to send messages to your friends and family, letting them know that you're okay, but it also allows them to track your progress practically anywhere in the world. But the real value of the device is it's ability to call for help from those remote places, giving outdoor adventurers a measure of safety never before seen.

This is what others had to say about the SPOT Messenger at Primal Quest Montana:

"Having used the SPOT devices during our pre run, we were 100% assured of your product. Knowing our racers had SPOT gave us the

confidence to design a course that would redefine the limits of human endurance. With out this product we could not design courses in the extreme wilderness of Montana. Thanks SPOT!"

Chris Caul
Course Director, Primal Quest

"Your product rocks! Our team, CareerBuilder.com could not have been more impressed using your product during the 10 day Primal Quest endurance race in Montana. Thanks for allowing our family and friends to track our progress over one of the most spectacular race courses imaginable."

Tom
Team Careerbuilder.com

Kraig Becker is the author of The Adventure Blog. He also serves as the Media Director for Primal Quest.



Photo courtesy of Will Ramos Photography



Race Director Wrap-Up

We felt it only pertinent that we catch up with Primal Quest Race Director, Don Mann, and get his thoughts about this year's event and what Primal Quest has in store for the future.

"We were a little concerned in the final weeks leading up to Primal Quest Montana," said Mann. "We were facing double digit snowfall, grizzly tracks were spotted along the race course, and Class IV and greater rapids where the paddling and river boarding legs were to take place. As the race director, safety is paramount."

In addition to the safety protocols already in place, Mann and his staff made the decision to allow the teams to carry GPS units (time penalty if used) and several paddling legs were eliminated due to high water accompanied by large logs

traveling down the river at more than ten miles per hour. This high water was the result of large snowfall leading up to the race start and then quickly melting. "Through ten days of racing, the most serious injury we experienced was when our sponsor director broke her wrist," stated Mann.

"Montana was a fabulous location for this year's Primal Quest event," added Mann. "We had a tremendous amount of support from both local and state officials. The race was featured in over seventy-five magazines, including a two-page color article in the Wall Street Journal. We had almost three times the traffic on the PQ website leading up and during the race. And we were told by some of the sport's best, including Monique Merrill and John Jacoby, that this was the best race ever."

As for the future of "The World's Most Challenging Human Endurance Competition," we have learned from Mann that the race will be held in one of three western states (top US locations include South Dakota, Idaho, and Wyoming). The 2009 event will also be unsupported thus helping to reduce team cost. Also, look for an international destination in 2010.

"We are very excited to have a three-year contract with Rush HD to cover the events," said Mann. "This year's race will be featured in four thirty-minute segments that will air over seventy-five times beginning later this year."

We will provide more information when the television schedule is available.

Photo courtesy of Will Ramos Photography

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7/12 - Baton Rouge Urban Adv. Race

9/13 - Gulf Coast Adventure Race

10/11 - Fontainebleau 4-hour Adv. Race

10/11 - Fontainebleau 8-hour Adv. Race (USARA Qualifier!)

11/15 - New Orleans Urban Adv. Race

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Have You Heard? The United States Adventure Racing League... and It's Coming Fast!

by David Poletto



If you haven't heard of it, don't feel left out. The United States Adventure Racing League (USARL) is a new approach that will do much in bringing our great sport of adventure racing into households all across the country and even throughout the world. Corey Rosen, president and

founder of the USARL is developing a league that will do just that...bring adventure races to televisions and arenas throughout the U.S.

What's that, you've seen adventure racing on TV before? Not like this! The USARL will broadcast adventure races live as they happen. With real-time broadcasts along with top of the hour sports show commentating, adventure racers and non-racers across the country will be able to cheer on their favorite team to victory. And, set up in a festival atmosphere, fans will have unprecedented access to the courses on race day to share the experience with their top teams.

For the adventurous, you don't have to stand by the sidelines to watch your favorite teams do battle at these USARL events. Amateur racers will be able to stand side-by-side with the pro teams to experience these courses on race day. And, great swag and prizes will be awarded to these top amateur teams at each event.

The USARL will be the first professional co-ed sport in the world and will be dedicated to providing eco-friendly adventures to fans and spectators from across the country. Mainstream sports such as football, baseball, basketball, hockey, and stock car racing all have live television coverage. Events such

photos by Will Ramos Photography



as triathlons, skiing, weightlifting, adventure racing, hunting, poker, have limited live coverage of their events with multi-day or multi-week tape delays on the majority of their broadcasts.

The USARL is dedicated to producing the first series of professional adventure racing events and bringing them live to the United States sports fans. Coverage of this dynamic sport via television and online will create the largest Adventure Racing and sporting community in the United States. And, SPOT will be providing a live leaderboard and live GPS tracking for all league events.

By combining the USARL, Primal Quest, ARTV, and RBI with our sponsors, a platform will be created to promote health-friendly and environmentally sound products and services the public will always feel secure turning to.

The USARL is focusing on mid-distance and expedition length adventure races. Historically, stations such as ESPN, Discovery Channel, Outdoor Life Network, RSN, USA,

CBS, and Fox have covered adventure racing. The USARL, with the assistance of American based adventure race organizations, will produce a season of twelve events that all regionally based teams will compete in. Each team will host a race giving them “home-field” advantage for one race throughout the season.

In 2009, the USARL plans to hold open tryouts in twelve regions producing a reality show television series to air in each area to generate a fan and spectator base for each team. With the assistance of Primal Quest Expedition and the Primal Quest Sprint Series, the USARL will produce twelve individual tryouts across the country to find the best adventure racers in each region. Once the teams have been chosen, the coaches will work with these newly formed groups for training and preparation to compete in the first season of the USARL. This will test even the most veteran adventure racers by putting them through a series of twelve races over the course of a nine month season. Best of all, these league racers and coaches will be paid a salary for

their participation in the league.

Beginning in 2010, broadcasts of the USARL will become known to the public as Adventure Racing TV (ARTV) produced by Remote Broadcasts Inc. The teams will be made up of four active athletes, two support crew members, which will act as alternate athletes, and two coaches. The qualified teams will compete in all races, in a points-style series. In conjunction with these events, the league will provide 24 hour live GPS coverage of all teams participating in these races. ARTV will be broadcast on a national cable and satellite sports network such as Fox Sports, ESPN, or HDNet.

We bet this peaked your interest and you want to learn more about the United States Adventure Racing League. Go to www.USARL.net for more details.



photos by Will Ramos Photography

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athlete profile

Dan Dehlin

Location: Marquette, MI

Sports: Trail Running and Nordic Skiing

Age: 27

Occupation: Sales Representative

Athletic Background: I didn't start running until my sophomore year of college. I would run a mile and then walk home and I gradually started to go further and further. Shortly after that I met my wife and the rest is somewhere along the trail.

Athletic Goals: I would love to defend my title at the Grand Island Trail Marathon the end of this month, after that the focus switches to training for the Hasegawa Cup in Japan in October. I would love to be up front over there. As far as long-term goals, I would really love to have a crack at the Western States 100 miler, if only I could get in.

Athletic Highlights: 2007 Free State Marathon, 2007 Grand Island Marathon Champion, 2nd Place Free State 100k, 2008 Keweenaw Trail Running Festival Champion, 1st Place 2008 Golden Gate Headlands Marathon.

Favorite Workout: My favorite workout is also my nemesis, 30 minute warm-up/5x6 minutes Threshold/ 30 minute warm down.

What Inspires or Motivates You? My wife is my biggest motivator. She trains harder than I ever will. She's training twice a day so motivating myself to get out at least once is pretty easy.

Note: My wife (Lindsey Dehlin) is a 2 time Olympian on the US Cross Country Ski Team. I am the hack athlete in the household.

Favorite Fuel: Hammer Heed (Subtle Strawberry) and Hammer Endurolytes.

Favorite Indulgence: Orange Slices (The candy ones, all sugar, I'm not talking fruit here).

Typical Workout: The training schedule varies but I usually end up on the trails 10 - 15 hours a week split between distance workouts, interval workouts and an over distance workout.



*Photo courtesy Vasque Footwear
Photographer: Chap Achen*

where are they now?



Photo courtesy of Tony Di Zinno

Cathy Sassin

AWM: What was your proudest achievement during your racing career?

Two races come to mind. First, coming in second with Team Spie (behind John Howard's team) at the Raid Gauloises in Ecuador, after having pulmonary edema on Cotopaxi and separating my A/C joint on the biking section (day 4). All I can say is that the fear of letting my teammates down, who were incredibly strong and supportive, was enough to race full out for the next six days, regardless of the injuries.

The second was with Team Atlas Snowshoes, racing just on the heels

of John Howard's team at the Eco-Challenge in Patagonia, with a three-female and one-male team. Although, we finished in fourth place, we definitely gave everyone a run for their money.

AWM: What are you doing now that you are retired from competitive racing?

After I retired, I started doing commentating and hosting for various adventure (race and non-competitive) television shows. The year I retired, I was engaged, got married to my husband, Todd, and we now have twin two-year olds (adopted from Guatemala), Ariana and Mateo. If you were still racing...what event would be a must do in 2008?

I would do any race that would take me to New Zealand, Europe or South America.

AWM: Summary of race history.

Competed in six Eco-Challenges, six Raids, two X games, two Southern Traverse, two Elf Authentic Adventure, Beast of the East and numerous other smaller races.

AWM: When did you compete in your first AR?

The 1994 Raid Gauloises in Borneo. I raced with Mark Burnett's Team American Pride, met some lifelong friends (both on the tea and off). Even though two members of the team dropped out and we finished

unqualified, the adventure racing bug had gotten under my skin. That race started some of the most fantastic years of my life.

AWM: What was your favorite thing about racing?

My teammates, the world travel, the relationships developed with sponsors and beating the heck out of myself over and over again, year after year.

AWM: Why did you retire from competitive AR?

Along with racing, I also had my own business in Los Angeles. So life was a delicate balancing act with making payroll, servicing clients, and constantly traveling. I felt that I had accomplished everything I had dreamed of and more during the years that I raced, and it felt like it was time to move on to other important things in life, particularly, starting a family.

AWM: Excluding yourself...name your all-time dream team for expedition AR (1 girl/3 guys)

It's impossible to make a list that short, but for sure it would include Robyn Benincasa, John Howard, Steve Gurney, John Jacoby, Eric Cassaigne, Matteo Pellin, Jeff Robin, Pep Olle, Roman Dial and Keith Murray (in no particular order).

AWM: What is the biggest "life lesson" (if any) you learned from AR? Regardless of how dismal things may look, they will always get better if you just keep moving forward!



Photo courtesy of Greg Yetter

Battling Blisters

The Bane of Every Adventure Racer's Existence

by Frank Meyer

When compared to the vomiting, muscle tears, diarrhea, dehydration and near total exhaustion that many adventure racers suffer in the course of competition, blisters may seem like a rather curious choice to be the focus of a column. I mean, C'mon, you're an adventure racer! You've already spent two days at Primal Quest, trudged miles through snow and swollen creeks, and even river boarded a flooded river. It's just a teeny blister, suck it up! The reality, however, is that a painful blister – especially one that becomes infected – can end your day on the trail just as

fast as a sprain or broken bone.

In fact, blisters rank as the #1 reason why outdoor enthusiasts cut their trips short in the outdoors, according to an American Journal of Medicine study (“Medical Risks of Wilderness Hiking”).

A nagging blister, though, needn't end your race prematurely. With the right gear and know-how, blisters can be prevented and effectively treated, allowing you to cross the finish line every time. Here are some of AMK's Blister tips to keep you on the righteous path:

- Make sure your shoes fit properly. Blisters are caused when heat – friction – is exposed to the skin. If your footwear is too big or too small, friction will occur.
- Gradually break in new shoes. Take few short runs to allow

your shoes to meld to the shape of your feet before embarking on the Big Race.

- Keep your feet dry. Blisters more readily form on wet skin.
- Sock it to 'em! Wear a thin liner sock under a thick outer sock, so that friction occurs between the sock layers, not on your feet.
- Moleskin it! If you regularly sustain blisters or hotspots in the same areas, make sure you cover those parts of your foot with moleskin before the race. Try Adventure® Medical Kits new Moleskin. They come with 22 pre-cut shapes, eliminating the need to carry scissors and are made with a more aggressive adhesive, so they'll stay on your feet all day.
- If you develop a small blister (roughly the size of a dime), do not puncture or drain it. Apply



a GlacierGel™ self-adhesive dressing directly over the blister. As easy to apply as a band-aid, AMK's GlacierGel™ Blister and Burn Dressings contain 50% second generation hydro-gel, which provides a cool environment, immediately relieving the pain of the blister and allowing it to heal rapidly. The GlacierGel™ dressings, which stay in place for up to four days, are waterproof, breathable and transparent, so you can monitor your blister site for any signs of infection.

- If you develop a large blister (the size of a quarter or bigger), drain it using a needle or tip of a knife that has been cleaned with an antiseptic towelette or alcohol wipe. Massage the fluid out of the blister using a fresh antiseptic towelette or soap and water, then apply a GlacierGel™ dressing. Available in a six pack, featuring three small and three large dressings, GlacierGel™ also comes in the Blister Medic™, AMK's total blister treatment and prevention package that includes pre-cut moleskin and anti-septic wipes.
- If you have none of the above, use Duct Tape and tape over the blister or hot spot.



Photos courtesy of Will Ramos Photography

- Once you've dressed your blister, look for signs of infection, such as redness around the wound, swelling, increased pain or cloudy fluid collecting under the dressing. If any of these signs occur, remove the dressing and immediately seek medical help.
- **Improvisational Blister Tip:** Always carry a small tube of super glue. If you're miles from help with a painful blister, drain the fluid using a cleaned knife or pin, then inject with a small dab of super glue into the space you have evacuated. Next press the loose skin overlying the blister back

in place and cover the site with tape. Be forewarned, it'll smart, but if you have none of the above-mentioned solutions, it will do the trick until you can receive proper treatment.

For more wilderness medicine tips, visit www.adventuremedicalkits.com

Frank Meyer, is the co-founder and marketing director of Adventure® Medical Kits. He lives in Bozeman, MT. In June, he attended Primal Quest Montana 2008.



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02.02.08 Dirty Dozen Mtn Bike Race, Bluff Creek Ranch, Warda, TX

03.08.08 Eco Lonestar Adventure Race - Marble Falls, TX

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



Texas State Championship Sprint Race Series

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

09.20.08 Terra Firma Adventure Race, Smithville, TX

10.18.08 24 Hours of Rocky Hill Mtn Bike Race, Smithville, TX



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The Most Spectacular Finish in Odyssey Adventure Racing History

by Ronny Angell and Susanna Greever

Ronny Angell, president, owner of Odyssey Adventure Racing and race director for the Odyssey One Day Adventure Race [ODAR] said, “The finish of the 2008 Odyssey One Day Adventure Race at Camp Bethel in Fincastle, VA was the most spectacular finish I’ve ever witnessed in my 10 year history in Odyssey’s legacy as a racer, volunteer and race director!” As 40 teams toed the starting line of the 19th edition of the ODAR, little did they know they would be a part of such a historical event in Odyssey’s 182 events history - and just maybe within adventure racing history at large.

What racers did know was that they were facing 85+ miles of trekking, mountain biking and paddling with 30,000’ of elevation gain and loss; a course which was said to be beautiful and challenging, yet doable. The race started with a hilly 2 mile trail running prologue which had soloist Brian Mayer of No Handlebars leading the charge with teams Nature Cure (Chris Caul, Toby Angove, Joe Moerschbaecher, and Julia Pollock) and Calleva (Dmitri Kaganovich, Mark Lattanzi, Michelle Lindsay, and Sara Percy) close behind. Racers transitioned to a 16 mile mountain bike leg which took them onto the Glenwood Horse Trail, made up of rolling fire roads and sweet single-track with stunning views of the val-



ley below. The singletrack seemed to give some teams a little trouble but had all thinking about the climb that this would be later on in the race, as teams that made the cutoff time Sunday morning would be facing the terrain again on their way back to the finish.

With checkpoints (CPs) 1, 2 and 3 at the Bearwallow Gap parking area under their belts, teams then transitioned to a 2 mile downhill trek to the town of Buchanan for the river put in at CP 4, which had them starting a 16 mile paddle downstream on the laggard James River to CP 5 – Smith Tracts. Soloist Brian was looking at

taking control of the race as he hit the water first with Nature Cure and Calleva hot on his heels. Both CheckpointZero/ Inov-8 teams and Calleva were hoping the advantage of their double bladed kayak paddles – over that of the provided single blade canoe paddles – would merit the hassle of carrying them the duration of the course, a requirement for teams that chose this option.

The 3 hr paddle was uneventful for most racers, with the exception of soloist Matt Poole losing his paddle after “finding” a hidden rock in the river (really making him up the creek without a paddle, or would

Photo courtesy of Peter Jolles

that be down river...?), and a couple of teams that overshot the river take out, including the Misfits, (Grant McCullough, Innes Wright, Markus Hecker, Lawrence Jones), with sense of humor intact. Multiple teams offered to help Poole, who graciously refused. "I was bound and determined to make that cutoff and was doggie-paddling when George Meyers came along and wouldn't take no for an answer." Meyers towed Poole a good ways downstream. Meanwhile, soloist Anthony Lee was extending his tour of the James, overshooting the takeout by miles, and making his trip down the river a 24 mile expedition that took him into the night and down to the infamous Balcony Falls. Back in the front of the pack, Team Nature Cure passed No Handlebars on the water and started to flex their muscle as they began the next leg of the race. Unable to gain any ground on the leaders, Calleva and the Checkpoint Zero/Inov-8 teams' strategy of the use of personal paddles didn't pay off enough to bridge the gap.

The next CPs, 6-12, entailed a painful 16 mile trek through Skillern, Wilson and Pine Ridge mountains, with lots of elevation gain, briars, blown down trees and bushwhacking. When teams made it to the finish bearing their sexy scratched and bleeding legs - that only a fellow adventure racer could love and appreciate - they relayed with knowing looks, "These were complements of CP 6." Angell did later state that the trek to CP 6 during the pre-running of the course was one of the worst bushwhacks he had done is his history of adventure racing. CPs 9, 10, and 11 were optional with a 10 point value each, significant as the accrued points factored into the final rankings. During the race brief, teams were told that if they didn't make



it to CP 8 by 0300 on Sunday, they should skip the optional CPs and head directly to bike pickup at CP 12, aptly named Solitude Rd., in order to better their chances of finishing the race officially. No less than 6 mixed groups of soloists and teams ended up working together to find all of these CPs under the sliver of a crescent moon.

At CP12, Nature Cure had a 1.5 hour

lead over the next team that got the optional points. Checkpoint Zero/Inov-8 II (Peter Jolles, Paul Humphreys, Daniel Jesse, and Julia Radmann) were able to utilize Peter's night navigation savvy to pass Calleva in the dark. The first CP0 team had to drop after the coup in McAdam's intestines proved too much to enable him to race on. Both teams had quite the grab bag of AR goodies: a yellowjacket nest, broken derailleur, en-

dos, and illness. Just another day at the AR office!

The next 24 miles of mountain biking back through the Town of Buchanan and to Bearwallow only helped Nature Cure extend their lead heading into the final portion of the race, a 12 mile, optional orienteering section at Camp Bethel comprised of 20 locations, worth 1 point each, that teams could acquire on foot and/or by bike. Checkpoint Zero/Inov-8 II's chances of catching the leaders diminished as bike problems hindered their progress. Calleva was able to take advantage of their misfortune and move into 2nd overall. As the lead teams headed in the darkness of the O-course, by whichever means they saw fit, only the final hours of the race waited to reveal the winner of the 2008 Odyssey One Day Adventure Race.

The 12,000' of elevation gain, 76 + miles of the mandatory course, and the wafting odors of BBQ and Roanoke's Famous Texas Tavern Chile proved to be quite enough for teams that decided to exercise their right to opt out of the O course and stay right there at the finish to chow down.

With less than an hour left in the race and the fastest team being on the O-course for more than 8 hrs, the anticipation in the air was palpable. Who would take the win? Angell, race director, was standing at the finish line as he saw Calleva riding in on their bikes. And as the crowd was cheering, he caught movement out of the corner of his eye: Nature Cure coming in on foot from the opposite direction! Neither team, being hidden by some woods and a building, was able to see the others' reach for the finish. With all of the hoopin' and hollarin', both teams broke into

a sprint, knowing not what would reveal itself from around the corner. Both teams darted toward the finish line with a near collision of bikes and bodies and a cacophony of screams and laughter, "How many points?! How many points did you get?" they asked one another as they barreled towards headquarters to get their passports signed, signifying their official finish. 8 sets of shoulders simultaneously tried to cram into one doorway and 2 pieces of Tyvek, crumpled, dirty, and reeking of eau de adventure racer were thrust through the door into Susanna's hands. The official answer: 19 out of 20 possible points for Calleva and...19 orienteering points for Nature Cure. "Good googly moogly!" she blogged afterwards. "That was fantastic!" Beautiful we think. Simply beautiful.

Afterwards, both teams were ruminating about what decisions during the 23 hours of racing could have broken the tie. Was it that last pit stop before coming back in? Was it chatting up the locals? Was it being momentarily bedazzled by the alien

spaceship that turned out to be a toy swimming pool? As Joy would say, "Hard tellin', not knowin'!"

Angell and his Odyssey staff thoroughly enjoyed witnessing such a finish and are looking forward to the 20th edition in 2009, which they hope will surpass this edition in compliments from racers on the beauty and challenge of the course. Afterwards, Nature Cure's Chris Caul, course director for Primal Quest Montana, stated "That was the most challenging orienteering course I have ever done. We will remember this race for a long time." Angell simply offered a sinister grin and a sincere thank you in reply.

Ronny is the President/Owner of Odyssey Adventure Racing where he still serves as an instructor for the OAR Academy.

Susanna serves as the Director of Competitor Relations for Odyssey Adventure Racing.



Photo courtesy of Peter Jolles

Houston Urban Adventure Race

Texas State Championship Sprint Adventure Race Series

Market Square Plaza, Houston, TX • July 12

By Kathy Hudson

It was a typical day in Houston, hot and humid, but there was nothing typical about the race that just took place this past Saturday. The buildings of downtown Houston offered little shade for the adventure racers as they ran and biked their way around downtown Houston, in search of 10 checkpoints they collected on their way to finishing the race. Not surprising, a local team won the race. But very surprising, the local team just happened to be an all female team - a first in the history of Terra Firma's 11-year adventure racing schedule held across the state of Texas. In a field of 73 teams, Ashley Edwards and Tara Kelly, under the team name "Last Virgins in Houston", emerged to not only take the first place award for the females, but the First Place Overall in a scorching time of 1:42:24.

The race started by giving the racers instructions to run from Market Square Plaza to Allen's Landing, only a few blocks away where they would find their 5-Star maps and a clue sheet that would give them instructions for finding 10 checkpoints. From there, the racers ran on foot to the first checkpoint (PC1) at Sesquicentennial Park, at the base of the stairs by the bayou. It was at this point that the race lead changed. The leading male team didn't study their clue sheet long enough, and in their haste,

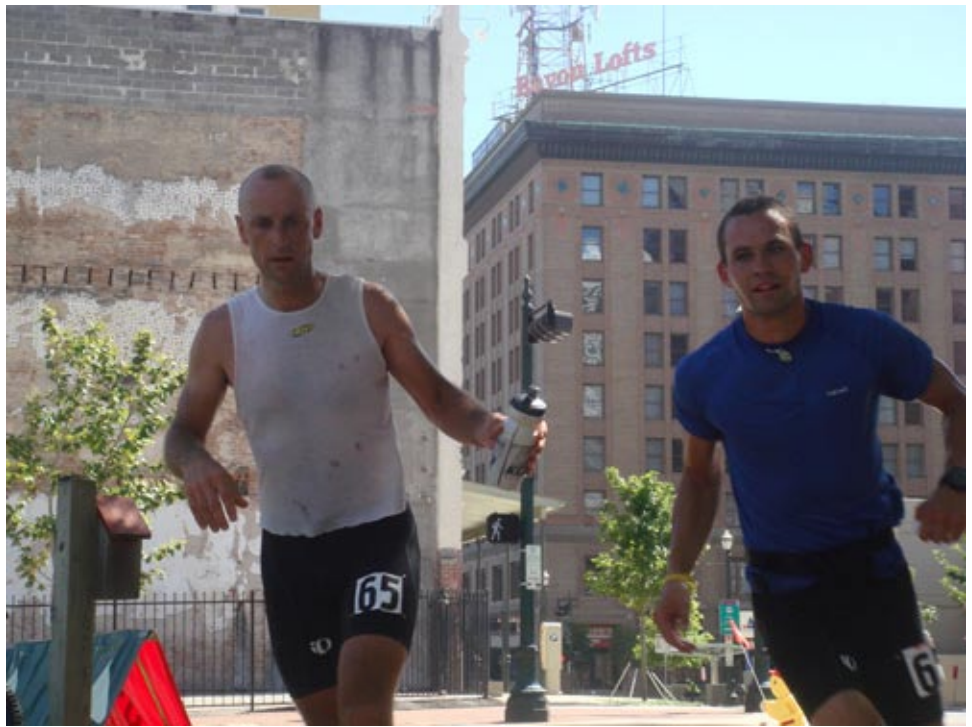


ran back to market square plaza to get their bikes. The instructions, however, said to continue on the bayou to the Sabine Street Bridge, where another checkpoint (PC2) was waiting at the top of a long staircase. The rules stated the racers must run along the path on the bayou, rather than use any city streets, so the teams that forgot to read their instructions thoroughly and were caught approaching from the street, thus bypassing the stairs, were forced to run back to the bottom along the bayou and come up the stairs. In the chaos of the start, and several teams running the wrong direction and going back to market square plaza, the "Last Virgins in Houston" moved into the lead. Combine their map reading

skills and their fitness, and they are tough to beat.

We all watched and cheered as the female team arrived to grab their bikes and head off for PC4 in 1st place, located several miles away at Spotts Park. Some teams rode the trail along the bayou, dodging a local frisbee golf game, while others took the city streets. When the teams arrived at Spotts Park, they encountered their first "mystery event" where they were instructed to drop their bikes and then identify a series of 3 snakes at the bottom of a steep hill. Sounds easy enough, but they had to make 3 trips up and down the hill to look at a snake on a sheet of paper, then race up the hill to pick the snake

out of a lineup of 20 snakes, and if they guessed right, they received their punch for PC4, 5, & 6 respectively. However, the penalty for a bad guess was to run back down the hill and take another look and then back up to properly identify the snake. Then it was off to Memorial Park, where racers were instructed to drop their bikes and ran 1.5 miles through the nice, shaded trails, before returning the 6+ miles (depending on their route choice) back to Market Square Plaza. Several major roads were off limits to the racers, but sidewalks and bike paths were ok. Ashley and Tara debated which route to take as they ran; it paid off.



The excitement mounted as the women's team appeared back in transition first. However, there was more fun to follow. They received new instructions to run to "mystery event #2", the jellybean flick/catch. One teammate had to shoot their jelly bean out of a plastic spoon about 10 yards and the other teammate had to catch the bean in a plastic cup, without crossing over the line. You had to stay there until you completed the sometimes easy, sometimes hard task. Several teams got it on the first try, while others took 2-3 or even more to get the bouncing bean to stay in the cup. Then, it was off on foot to the Aquarium, several blocks away, where they had instructions to find the waterfall on the outside of the building. Here they had to jump in the pool of water, go under the waterfall (which was roped off so that they couldn't go around it), get their checkpoint, then race back to the finish, dripping wet, to be the first female team in Terra Firma history to win the Overall race!

Many happy smiles and cheers followed, as well as the men's team, MOAT, within less than 2 minutes. They had made up a lot of time after their initial clue sheet reading mishap, but with the extra initial mileage they traveled out of their way, they just didn't have enough "real estate" to catch the women before the finish.

Many local racers came out, including 14 teams from Houston Fit AR and 18 teams from HoustonAdventureRacing.com. These teams battle it out all year during the series to earn points toward the State Championship title for Teams/Clubs. HoustonAdventureRacing.com took back over the Team/Club Championship lead at this race, and we'll have to wait until the series final in Glen Rose in two weeks (July 26th) to see the winner! The final race of the series will be a well-balanced off-road course with a great paddling section on the Brazos River, and then includes a live band and post race bar-b-q. It will be typical Texas racing at the beau-

tiful Wyatt 3R ranch.

For more info on the sport or this race, or for full results, see www.TerraFiramPromo.com

Kathy is a former professional mountain bike competitor having competed on both the NORBA National and World Cup circuits. After several top 10 finishes, including a Bronze medal at the Master's World Championships, Kathy retired and began running & riding just for fun. She currently runs Terra Firma with her husband Scott.

Continued from page 15

a lot overseas (with Pascale often as a support crew) and we could see the good and bad in other races. But, what really makes any event unique is the personality of the event director that comes out in the event itself.

With Southern Traverse, we have been able to offer a truly unique Kiwi backcountry experience. In the early days, we used very remote country and had the competitors totally relying on their own skills to 'survive' and also to race.

In the local area we have had a women's triathlon for fourteen years. This is one of the leading events solely for women and this has great appeal to many locals. The Peak to Peak is unique in that it uses skis as the first form of movement.

AWM: Do you still participate in adventure races? What was the last adventure race you participated in? What was your first adventure race that you participated in? How well did you do?

I have not raced in an adventure race for a while (Pascale kept telling me that I aged 10 years each time I raced). I think that the last race was the Elf in Brazil. However, if the opportunity came up to race a staged event, or a 24-hour race, then I think that I would take it (given that it fit into my timetable). But then, what is your definition of an adventure race? I have raced a multi-sport race here in New Zealand since then, but we don't call these adventure races (the Gold-Rush).

I raced in the first Eco Challenge (3rd), and then went on to do the Maine - Extreme Games version (2nd), Australia (4th), and British Columbia (7th); also the Raid in Africa (2nd), Mild Seven China (3rd / 7th), Elf Brazil (team did not finish), EMA Brazil (2nd), plus multi-sport events in Australia.

AWM: If you could participate in one of your adventure races, which one would you choose and why?

If I had to choose one, then I would go for the race in Canterbury. It had a high ski field start, some bush travel, an abseil down the face of a small waterfall, small farm road mountain bike, lake and then river travel (by double kayak), gravel road mountain bike to access a high mountain stage with two glaciers and an abseil down the snout of the last one, to descend to a tough rafting white waters section, followed by a fantastic mountain bike ride through backcountry farm roads, and a climb over a ski field/mountain range and small creek lake paddle to finish on Lake Tekapo.

Geoff Hunt runs Southern Traverse Ltd and the Adventure Racing World Championship.

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Adventure Racing Navigation Part 4: The Racing Compass

by Mark Manning

Welcome to the fourth in the monthly series of navigation articles from AR Navigation Supplies, Inc.

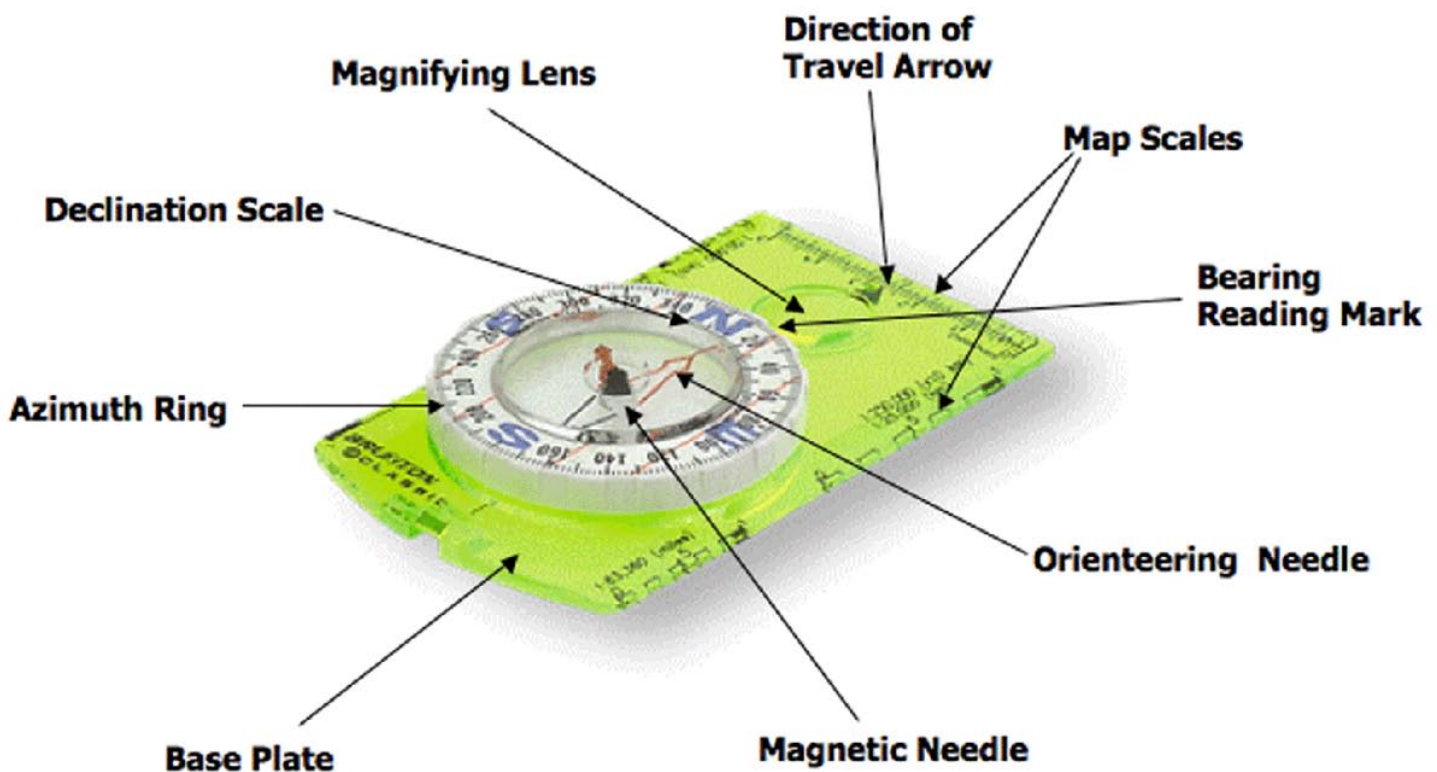
There are few things you carry during a race that are more important than a good compass, especially if you're likely to get off trail. But how do you decide which one to use? This month we're going to look at the different types of compasses that are available and cover some of the features to look for.

We'll start by identifying the parts of a compass and the functions of the different components.

Azimuth Ring: The azimuth ring is marked with 360 degree increments and can be rotated to align the increments with the bearing mark. The term bearing is often used instead of Azimuth.

Declination Scale: The declination scale allows both East and West declination adjustment to account for the difference between true north and magnetic north for the region you are racing in.

Magnifying Lens: This is always a handy feature of a base plate compass especially for reading the fine map detail.



Magnetic Needle: This is the needle that will point towards Magnetic North.

Base Plate: The base plate is used to hold the compass and point the direction of travel arrow at a target object or in the direction you want to travel.

Direction of Travel Arrow: This is a very important part of the base plate compass. This is the arrow that you will point at a target object when taking a bearing and is the arrow will point the direction you will travel in when following a bearing to a destination.

Map Scales: Some base plate compasses will have map measuring scales or UTM grids printed on them.

Bearing Mark: This is a continuation of the direction of travel arrow that can be aligned with the markings on the Azimuth Ring.

Orienteering Needle: The orienteering needle rotates with the Azimuth Ring and allows you to accurately align the Azimuth Ring with the Magnetic Needle.

There are many different types of compasses available for the adventure racing navigator and some are more suitable for the sport than others. I'll break them into 3 basic categories and take a look at some of their features and benefits.

Basic compasses. These are very simple needles in a housing that at best show degrees and sometimes only have north marked. They have no declination adjustment and will only indicate the direction of Magnetic North.



Surveying Compasses. The surveying compass can normally be identified by the mirrored lid, which opens to reveal the compass bezel. The mirror will have a vertical slot down the center that can be used to sight on the target object. You can take a very accurate bearing by using the mirror to view the compass bezel, while aligning the magnetic needle with the orienteering arrow. The mirror allows you to look at the needle while keeping the compass sighted on the target. These are the most accurate sighting compasses but you sacrifice a little weight when carrying one of these.



Racing Compasses. The racing compass is a multi function tool that will have many additional features included on the base plate and bezel. Some of these features include UTM plotting tools, map measuring tools for different map scales and other useful features to help with navigation. Some even have separate map tools to help with other navigation challenges.

Here are some features to look for when selecting a compass for adventure racing.

Must have a very fast needle. One of the most important things to look for in a racing compass is a very fast and stable needle. The faster and more stable the needle is, the easier it will be to follow a bearing while on the move.

Must be lightweight. The compass should also be lightweight. As a navigator you are already loaded down with the map and trust of the team. There is no need to carry additional weight with a heavy compass swinging around your neck.

Must have a declination adjustment. Declination adjustment is a feature that we briefly discussed in the April issue of AWM. Declination adjustment should be built into the rotating bezel. This will allow you to set the correct declination for the region you're racing in so as you don't have to calculate the conversion in your head. This is especially important when you're tired and your brain is oxygen starved from the high pace of the race or a number of days without sleep.

The numbers must be easy to read. The azimuth ring should be clearly marked in 1 degree increments to

Continued on page 54

This topographic map depicts the Matrimony Spring area in the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River. The Colorado River flows through the center of the map, with steep, rocky canyon walls on either side. Key features include Matrimony Spring, Kings Bottom Spring, and various trails and roads. The map is overlaid with a grid showing coordinates (e.g., 22, 23, 24, 25 on the horizontal axis and 4270, 4272, 4274, 4276 on the vertical axis).

Adventure World Magazine Navigation Challenge: Round 4

Try your navigation skills from the comfort of our own home with this online navigation contest. Answer all the CP questions in order by following the instructions below. E-Mail your answers to info@adventureworldmagazine.com True North and Grid North are assumed to be identical on this 1:24K map.

This month your team is in Moab Utah for the fourth round of the Adventure World Magazine Navigation Challenge, brought to you by www.ARNavSupplies.com and the Basic Roamer AR.

Checkpoint	Instruction	Question
Start	Find the building at UTM 0624955 4270885 and travel directly North to the end of the street.	What is the elevation of the building?
CP 1	From the end of the street take a bearing of 46 deg True North for 0.25 mile.	What man made object is at this location?
CP 2	From CP 1 Take a bearing of 322 deg for 0.86 mile.	What useful feature is at this location?
CP 3	Travel across country to the South end of the bridge in UTM square 0623 4273.	What bearing from True North does the bridge follow?
CP 4	Pick up your kayak and paddle downstream for 2.45 miles and take the kayak out on the Eastern Shore.	What crosses the river at this location?
CP 5	Cross the river to the road at elevation 3969.	What is the width of the river in meters under the Transmission line?
CP 6	Travel South on the road for 1.1 miles.	What is the elevation at this point?
CP 7	Using your climbing gear climb to the Natural Arch.	How many feet were climbed from CP 6 to CP 7?
CP 8	From CP 7 travel on a bearing of 357 deg for 450 meters.	What is the elevation of the tower at this location?
CP 9	Travel across the Poison Spider Mesa via the flattest route possible to UTM 0622900 4270790.	How many contour lines are crossed on the straightest route?
CP 10	Rappel down to the river and paddleboard downstream to Kings Bottom Spring.	What is the UTM of Kings Bottom Spring?
Finish	Email your answers to: info@adventureworldmagazine.com	

Iliotibial Band Friction Syndrome (ITBFS)

Outdoor sports can provide for many unique injuries and situations that can compromise performance and enjoyment. In these articles, I will provide you with treatments and preventative measures for injuries typically seen in these sports. For some of you this material will build on existing knowledge from previous injuries. For the rest of you, if you implement some of the suggestions outlined here, it may be the difference between pain-free sessions and one ruined by suffering through difficult injuries.

With the end of summer approaching, several of you have already been training and racing through the outdoors for months now. Many racing seasons are coming to end soon with a lot of athletes trying to fit in a few more races or outdoor sessions before the winter months. This can provide the basis for quite a few overuse injuries?

So, in this christening article we will address one of the more common and debilitating choices – Iliotibial Band friction syndrome (ITBFS). Many outdoor sports can have a high rate of ITB involvement due to its function in a variety of movements. The ITB is a thick piece of fascia originating from the anterior, lateral portion of the pelvis, over the lateral hip and inserts just below the knee. Its role is to help stabilize the knee and lower extremity from any valgus or in-

ward stress as during running and cycling.

ITBFS can occur from a single event or over time in the form of an overuse injury. Due to its anatomical position, the band rubs over the outside of the femur every time you flex and extend your knee. This makes it susceptible to injuries from sports that require a great deal of knee motion such as running and cycling. Foot and hip mechanics also play a role as too much foot pronation allows the knee to deviate inward during running or cycling and placing more stress on the ITB. A weak hip will allow the opposite hip to drop during these same motions which again places more load on the ITB. As you can see, there are many factors that play a role in the cause of ITB friction syndrome.

Symptoms commonly seen are: pain, swelling and tightness on the outside of the knee, a thickening of the fascia especially over the portion of the band that runs across the femur and a general tightness along the ITB.

This type of injury usually responds very well to conservative treatment but other factors must also be considered once pain and swelling have diminished. During the acute phase of the injury, rest, ice and gently stretch the involved limb (pic 1 & 2). If this sudden onset

is from a significantly strenuous or long outing, this treatment should be adequate. Cases that are chronic or reoccurring may require an assessment of ones hip strength, foot and running mechanics, bike fit and cycling technique, and training methods to determine which one of the many factors are contributing to the problem. A person's morphology or build may also be a causative factor. This reoccurring or chronic condition would do best with more aggressive stretching and soft tissue mobilization to the affected areas (pic 3).

Because of the correlation between poor hip strength and ITBFS, there is a need to include hip strengthening as a preventative measure (pic.4). A medical doctor or Physical Therapist should assess your hip strength as well as your foot and running mechanics. Cycling mechanics and bike fit should also be looked at, paying special attention to the person's foot-shoe-pedal interface. Changes to your position may also be indicated in the short term to allow the injury to improve while allowing you to continue to ride.

Other considerations as mentioned above include training surfaces. Consider gradually and systematically introducing different training surfaces into your regimen. Your body may be more susceptible or sensitive to changes in terrain.



Picture 1

Standing ITB Stretch

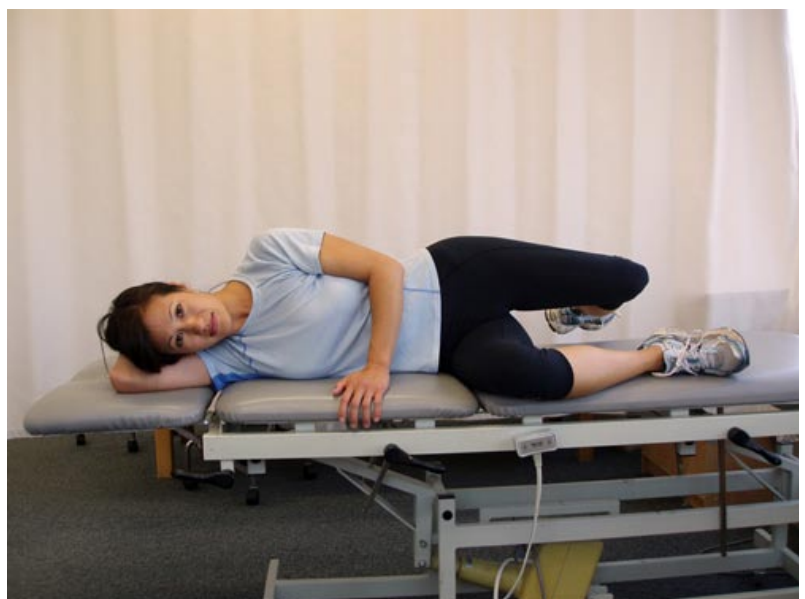
- Cross the leg of the involved side behind the noninvolved limb.
- Gently move your hips towards the painful or tight side until a moderate stretch is felt.
- Perform 3-5 repetitions of 30 seconds. Maintain a moderate amount of stretch.

Picture 2

Obers Stretch

Position yourself in a sidelying position, as shown.

- Keep the affected leg inline with the rest of your body, knee bent.
- Gently drop your knee towards the table until a moderate stretch is felt.
- Perform 3-5 repetitions of 30 seconds.
 - Someone may assist by providing more downward pressure.





Picture 3

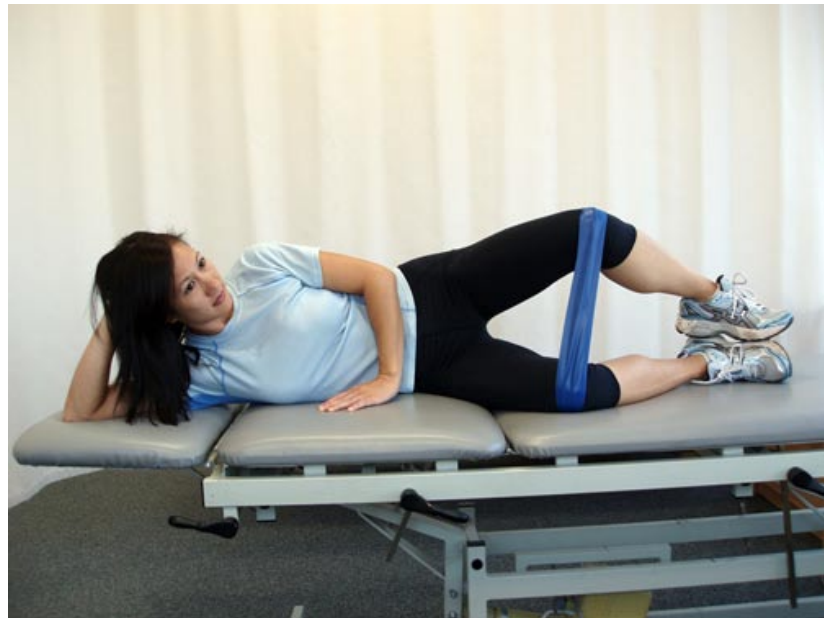
Foam Roller ITB Stretch

- Position yourself on the foam roller as shown. Roll along the length of the ITB.
- This exercise generally does not feel good but that usually means it needs to be done.
- Start with 2-3 minutes working up to over 5 minutes.

Picture 4

Clams Stretch

- You will need a piece of theraband or tubing for this exercise.
- In a side lying position, wrap the band or tubing around your knees, keep your feet together and open up you legs like a clam.
- Perform 3-4 sets of 15-20 repetitions.
- You should feel the burning sensation into the glut area.



David Perez, PT, DPT, CSCS is a Doctor of Physical Therapy and owner of Peak Orthopedic Physical Therapy in the California Bay Area; a private practice specializing in meeting the demands of athletes and specialty patients. He is a USA Cycling and USA Triathlon Certified Coach as well as an NSCA Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist. He spends much of his own time recovering from injuries and helping other athletes return to their sports.

Adventure Racing Navigation

Part 4: The Racing Compass

continued from page 48

allow accurate measurement of bearings. Some compasses have a small magnifier built into the base plate to make this easier.

Global Compass Zones

Compasses are designed and manufactured for 5 global zones ranging from Zone 1 in the northern hemisphere to Zone 5 for Australia, New Zealand and the Southern Oceans. The needle of a compass needs to be balanced for the magnetic field in the region that it's being used. If you use a compass balanced for Zone 1 in another region you may get false readings or a needle that sticks within the vial. There are compasses available that will accommodate multiple zones using a Global Needle. If you are traveling to race in another part of the world you can either get a compass with a global needle or plan on buying a compass locally when you arrive in the host country.

Compass Care

With experience I've found that compasses are easily lost and should be securely attached to you or your pack. I've found a couple of compasses lying on the trail during races either dropped by a careless navigator or thrown in frustration, I know it wasn't just left there for later. They should also be easily accessible so as you'll use it often to confirm which trail to take or which direction will lead you to your next CP. There

is no point in carrying a compass if you're not going to use it regularly. An easy way to make the compass always available but not swinging around while you're running is to use a small cell phone style pouch that is designed to attach to the strap of a pack and use this to keep the compass secure.

Something to avoid is leaving the compass in a very hot place or in direct sunlight for too long. The oil inside the vial, that is used to dampen the movement of the needle, can reach a high enough temperature that it expands and causes permanent damage to the vial. If this happens you'll see a large bubble appear in the vial that will interfere with the compass needle and make aligning the needle with the orienteering arrow very difficult. This happened to me recently when I left a spare compass in a TA gearbox. The temperature inside the box became so hot during the day that the compass vial distorted and would no longer rotate in the base plate. A huge bubble had also formed in the vial.

Sometimes a small bubble may appear in the compass vial if the temperature drops very low. The bubble forms when the fluid inside the vial contracts at a different rate than the housing. This is quite normal and the bubbles should disappear once everything warms up.

More information on navigation can be found at www.ARNavSupplies.com

Mark Manning. AR Navigation Supplies, Inc. 2008

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The Basic Roamer© AR

As the Official Navigation Tool of the USARA, the design of the Basic Roamer© AR has been carefully considered for US Adventure Racing and has over 20 major features. Originally developed for rallying in Europe this tool is now customized and available for the US Adventure Racer. Rally navigators must make split second navigation decisions at very high speed and any errors can be very costly to crew, car and team. With these challenges in mind it is easy to see how the Adventure racing navigator can benefit from the Basic Roamer© AR. www.BasicRoamerAR.com.



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A lightweight, rotating design with a quick release mounting bracket the rotating map holder is designed to fit almost any bike, it is built strong enough to withstand the rigors of any adventure race or bicycle orienteering event. The solid construction will not flex or flap on rough roads and will hold most flexible map covers or just the map itself <http://www.arnavsupplies.com/products.html>. Positioned for easy reading it will make bike navigation much easier. Proven in many races and successfully used in 2006 USARA National Championships.

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Now you don't have to guess or time your travel to the next CP, you can know exactly how far you've gone. Most pedometers fail completely when they get near water. We've developed one that actually works when wet. It even survived the full course at Primal Quest.

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adventure destination



Choose Your Own Adventure: North Lake Tahoe

by Melissa Ritti

Imagine a lake that is surrounded by the Sierra Nevada Mountains, whose clarity resembles Caribbean waters and where the lifestyle supports every adventure sport imaginable. You have entered the region of Lake Tahoe.

Lake Tahoe is the one of the most desirable vacation destinations in the world. A variety of activities present themselves with each changing season in this paradise appropriately called “the Lake in the Sky”. During the winter season, tourists frequent the area’s 7 premier ski mountains including Squaw Valley where the 1960 winter Olympics were held. In the summer, Lake Tahoe is renowned for its watersports, mountain biking, hiking and backpacking among other activities.

Although Tahoe has countless hidden treasures some of the locals-favorites listed below will ensure an unforgettable adventure for anyone.

Maps:

- **Lake Tahoe Trail Map:** Relief Contour Map with Mountain Biking, Hiking & X-C Skiing Trail Descriptions
This map is bullet-proof, waterproof and will never rip. The map has excellent routes for hiking and mountain biking and incredible topography. It includes Truckee, Tahoe Basin, Desolation Wilderness, Granite Chief Wilderness, Hope Valley and the Mount Rose Wilderness. Find the map at the Backcountry for \$9.99. Location: 11400 Donner Pass Road, Truckee, CA, 96161. 530-582-0909 or 690 North Lake Boulevard, Tahoe City, CA, 96145. 530-581-5861
- **Lake Tahoe Water Trail Guide/Map:** This guide allows you to plan a custom paddle trip around the 72 miles of Lake Tahoe’s shoreline. It lists access points, resting places, campgrounds, lodging, points of interest and much more. Find the map at www.adventuremaps.net.

Photo courtesy of North Lake Tahoe/Tom Zikas

Where to Stay:

Cedar House Sport Hotel:

The Cedar House is small with only 42 rooms. Each room has a European style with flat screen televisions and down comforters imported from Germany. If you don't feel like planning your own adventure the Cedar House will do it for you. They will book ski vacations, rafting trips, hiking, biking – whatever your pleasure. Expensive: \$200+/night. 10918 Brockway Road, Truckee, CA, 96161. 530-582-5655.

Cottage Inn at Lake Tahoe:

Consists of newly remodeled cottages that are situated right a few steps from the lake. Each cottage has it's own theme and style. This place really is the “most charming place in Lake Tahoe”. There are No children allowed. Expensive: \$180+/night. Location: 1690 West Lake Boulevard, Tahoe City, CA, 96145. 530-581-4073.

Mourelatos Lakeshore Resort:

Mourelatos truly is a resort. You practically don't ever have to venture outside of the property. There are 32 studios that are placed almost directly on their own private beach where they have kayaks for your use. Each studio is spacious and was engineered to have a view of the lake and come equipped with a patio. There is a great communal area with two hot-tubs. Moderate / Expensive: \$150 - \$400/night (rates vary tremendously throughout the year). Location: 6834 North Lake Boulevard, Tahoe Vista, CA, 96148. 530-546-9500.

Hampton Inn & Suites:

Newly built so everything is brand



Photo courtesy of North Lake Tahoe/Tom Zikas

new and clean. Moderate: \$150/night. 11951 State Highway 267, Truckee, CA, 96161. 888-587-1197.

Tahoe Biltmore Hotel and Casino:

If you do not mind the smell of smoke and sound of gambling this is the place to stay. At least the rooms are clean. Locals tend to

stay here after enjoying a concert at the Crystal Bay Casino located directly across the street. If you want a late night snack they have a restaurant open 24/7. Inexpensive: \$65+/night. Location: 5 Highway 28, Crystal Bay, NV, 89402 (State-line). 775-831-0660.

Camping:

- Donner Memorial State Park:

150 campsites, picnic tables, restrooms, beach and hiking trails. Location: Highway 80, Truckee, CA, 96161. 530-582-7892.

- Granite flat Campground:

70 tent and RV campsites, no showers, drinking water or flush toilets (only pits). Location: Highway 89 (between Truckee and Squaw). 530-587-3558.

- Tahoe State Recreation Area:

31 tent and RV campsites, toilets, showers, fishing sites, laundry and stores. Location: Tahoe City, CA, 96145. 530-583-3074.

Mountain Biking:

Northstar-at-Tahoe Mountain Bike Park:

With more than 100 trails, Northstar is the largest mountain bike park in Northern California. You can ride two chairlifts with your bike up to the upper mountain and enjoy a variety of downhill trails ranging from easy to intermediate. Rentals are available at Plaza Bike Shop in the Village at Northstar. 530-562-2268. Helmets are required. Location: Northstar is located off of Highway 267.



Tahoe Rim Trail (TRT):

The TRT is an interconnected trail that loops around Lake Tahoe. In the North Shore area, the TRT provides great riding from Brockway Summit to Tahoe City south down the west shore. There are many classic routes that include parts of the TRT and other North Shore trails. All the bike shops have maps and knowledgeable staff who can point you in the right direction for a ride of your liking. Some parts of the TRT only allow bikes on even numbered days of the month. For More Information call the Tahoe Rim Trail Association: 775-298-0012.

Flume Trail:

The Flume Trail is an epic and classic ride that everyone should do at least once. This area has plenty of trails that will provide you with an adventure from one to several hours. While riding this trail you will see some incredible views of Lake Tahoe and the surrounding basin. The trail becomes extremely busy on the weekends so you might want save this one for a mid-week ride. A shuttle service runs every hour. Cost is \$12.50 with bike. For more information call: 775-749-5349.

Hole in the Ground:

Hole in the Ground is a 17 mile technical ride. This trail includes everything that an advanced rider could want from technical downhills, to steep climbs to a smooth single track. Location: park at either the Soda Springs exit or at the top of Boreal Ridge Road.

Hiking:

Whether you are in the mood to hike through a meadow of wildflowers or scale up to a ridge line, Tahoe has a hike for everyone.

Shirley Canyon Trail:

The Shirley Canyon hike is one of the more beautiful ones that you can find in Tahoe. On your ascent to Shirley Lake you will pass a variety of wildflowers and waterfalls. When you reach Shirley Lake you can either head back down the same way you came or you can take the Squaw Valley Cable Car to the bottom. Dogs are allowed on this trail. Moderate 4 mile hike. Location: the trail head is just behind the fire station in the Squaw Valley parking lot.

Warren Lake Trail:

The Warren Lake hike is long and difficult but well worth it. The

hike takes you through lush forests, wildflower meadows, multiple creeks and eventually deposits you at Warren Lake. There are a lot of intense inclines and descents so bring a ton of water and make sure that you have good tread on the bottom of your hiking boots. At Warren Lake you can camp, fish or rock climb. Depending on the season, there could be a ton of mosquitos Strenuous 8 mile hike. Location: Take Castle Peak/Boreal Ridge Road Exit. On the south side of the highway there is a sign that reads Tahoe National Forest / PCT. Approximately 1 mile past the Pacific Crest trail/Summit Lake trail intersection is the start of the

Warren Lake Trail.

Five Lakes Trail:

The Five Lakes hike begins with an immediate climb through a dusty section of the trail and then begins to switchback. You can then see views of Alpine Meadows and the trail becomes filled with granite and green vegetation. The trail brings you to the first of five lakes where you have the option to relax or continue on. The Five Lakes Basin is under restoration so camping is prohibited within 600 feet. Moderate 5 mile hike. Location: Turn onto Alpine Meadows Road and drive 2.1 miles until you see the trail head on the right.

Paddling:

You commonly hear locals say, “the best way to experience Lake Tahoe is from the lake” and there are plenty of options to ensure that happens.

Lake Tahoe offers a large range of paddling adventures. You can set up for an overnight and follow the Water Trail, a guided 72 miles of the lake’s shoreline. You can head out for a scenic tour along the East Shore and experience it’s pristine beauty featuring white sand, granite boulders and clear blue water. Put in almost anywhere for a great time on the lake. There are a ton of companies that provide rentals, tours and lessons for your paddling needs:



Photo courtesy of BigBlueAdventure.com

Tahoe City Kayak:

Location: 521 North Lake Boulevard, Tahoe City, CA, 96145. 530-541-4336

Tahoe Adventure Company:

Contact: 530-913-9212

Tahoe Paddle and Oar:

Location: 8299 North Lake Boulevard, Kings Beach, CA, 96143. 530-581-3029

The Truckee River, which is the only outflow of Lake Tahoe, also offers a range of paddling and floating options. Early in the year, the snow-melt helps to fuel quality white water excursions from the lake to Reno 40 miles downstream. Later in the year, you will find many folks floating leisurely down the Truckee River from Tahoe City to the River Ranch. There are a few companies that provide rentals and guided tours:

Tahoe Whitewater Tours:

Location: 303 Alpine Meadows Road, Tahoe City, CA, 96145. 530-581-2441.

Truckee River Rafting:

Location: 186 River Road, Tahoe City, CA, 96145. 530-577-7238.

Tributary Whitewater Tours:

Location: 20480 Woodbury Drive, Grass Valley, CA, 95949. 530-346-6812.



Dining:

Garwood's:

Sit out on their deck that overlooks Lake Tahoe and watch the boats sail in while enjoying their signature "Wet Woody". Beware – they top this fruity drink off with a shot of Bacardi 101. The food served at Garwood's is high-scale American cuisine. Try the clams for an appetizer. Wednesday nights are "Wet Woody Wednesdays" with \$4.75 Wet Woodys and live music. Expensive: \$30-50. Location: 5000 North Lake Tahoe Boulevard, Carnelian Bay, CA, 96140. 530-546-3366.

Big Wave Burrito:

If you just got done a mountain bike ride or hike at Northstar-at-Tahoe join friends for some huge burritos and beers. Everyday they have "20 at 4:20". At 4:20 for 20 minutes Pabst Blue Ribbon Beers are \$1. Inexpensive for the size of the burritos. Location: the Village at Northstar.

Front Street Pizza:

If you are from the east coast Front Street Pizza will make you feel right at home. The slices are huge, thin and delicious. Front Street is small inside but they have an outdoor patio that overlooks the Truckee river. Inexpensive. Location: right across from the Chevron station in Tahoe City off of Highway 89. 530-583-3770.

Mamasake:

Mamasake is packed during the winter season with people coming off of the mountain but less crowded in the summer. They serve up some incredible sushi. The fish is always fresh and the rolls are creative. Starting at 3:00pm you can get a beer (Budweiser in a can) and a hand roll for \$5. Expensive (you never end up just getting a beer and a hand roll). Location: Village at Squaw Valley. 530-584-0114.

Local Events of Interest

Tahoe Sierra Century Bike Ride

www.thevillageatsquawvalley.com

September 20. 8:00am to 6:00pm
30,60, & 100 mile scenic bike ride
starts and finishes in the Village at
Squaw Valley.

Tahoe Big Blue Adventure Race

www.bigblueadventure.com

September 20. 8:00am start

This race is a celebration of the natu-
ral environment of the North Shore.

The race will start and end at North-
star-at-Tahoe. The race is designed
to last between 8-12 hours



Tahoe Big Blue Sprint Adventure Race

www.bigblueadventure.com September 20. 11:00am start

Ideal for the beginner adventure racer. The race will start and end at Northstar-at-Tahoe. This race is designed to last between 2-4 hours.

Emerald Bay Trail Run

www.bigblueadventure.com September 21. 9:00am start

This run starts at Eagle Point and takes you past Emerald Bay to Lester Beach. The event will end at 2:00pm.



How To Get There?

North Lake Tahoe is easily accessible by two major international airports and one small airport with a commercial hangar. Whether you fly into Reno/Tahoe International, Sacramento International or Truckee-Tahoe Airport, your arrival and departure are sure to be seamless, allowing you to forget the trip and concentrate on the vacation. If you're planning to explore the Bay Area while you're here, North Lake Tahoe is just an easy drive up I-80 from either San Francisco International Airport or Oakland International Airport.

Photos on this page courtesy of BigBlueAdventure.com

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MSRP \$169.99

Features:

- Accepts up to 2GB SD flash card. 2GB card will hold more than 3,500 photos or up to 56 minutes of continuous video (30 frames per second).
- Waterproof Housing

Editor's Notes: This is the same camera used at Primal Quest Montana. We have a writer leaving to finish his bike ride from Panama to Tierra del Fuego. He will be utilizing the GoPro camera for his journey and we will have a more concise review upon his return.

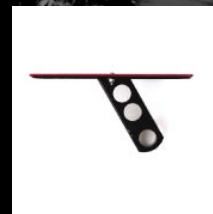
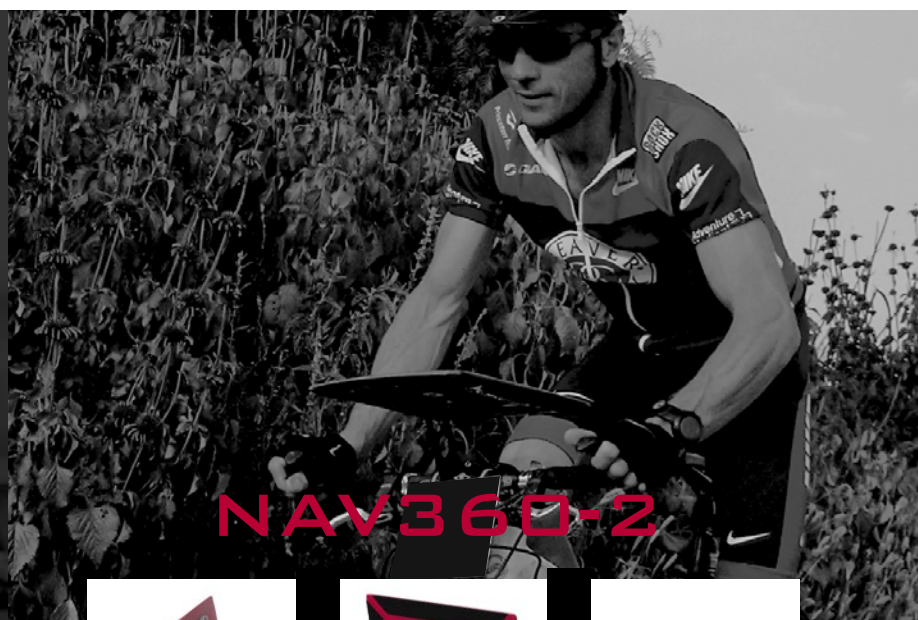
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- Ian Adamson: seven time adventure race world champion

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



Hydropel

MSRP \$18.95

Features:

- Comes in 2.0 oz tube
- Active ingredient - Dimethicone 30%

Editor's Notes: This product is produced by Genesis Pharmaceutical. We have used this product in everything from 5K runs to 3+ day adventure races. When I have applied the product frequently during events, I have never once had an issue with blisters or chaffing. Hydropel is in my Gear Box at every event.

• **website under construction**



Patagonia Critical Mass Bag

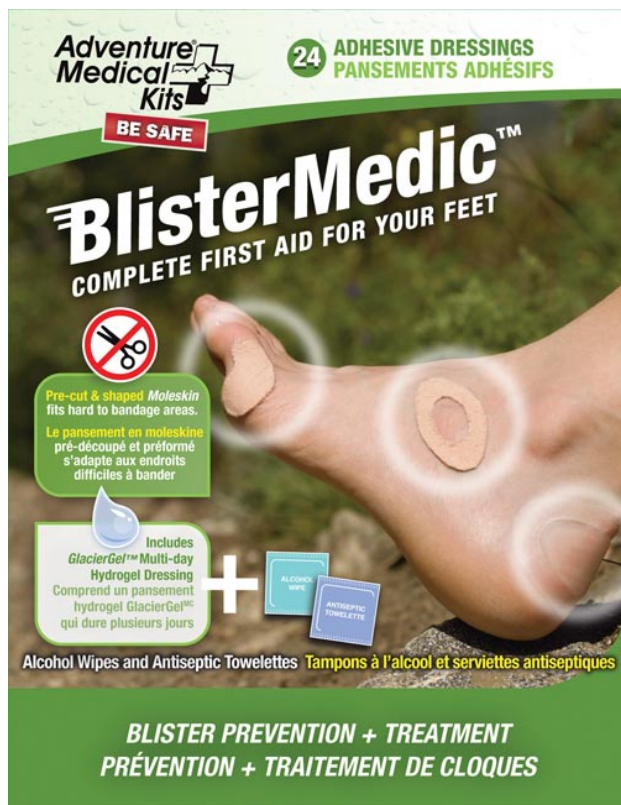
MSRP \$120

Features:

- Made from 1,200-denier polyester (100% recycled) with a polyurethane coating and DWR (durable water repellent) finish.
- 2800 cubic inches (21 X 16 X 6.5)
- Padded computer sleeve holds 17-inch or smaller laptop.

Editor's Notes: No one wants to go to work, but if you must, this is the bag for all of your business and recreational planning. We have traveled with this carrying laptops, water bottles, clothing changes, shoes and still had room left over for whatever else we needed. The only danger with using this bag is that you are apt to overpack. This is a staple for our staff for office and field.

www.patagonia.com



Adventure Medical Kits **Blister Medic**

MSRP \$10

Includes:

- 13 pre-cut moleskin of various sizes and shapes
- 1 large and 1 small Glacier Gel Oval Dressing
- 15 alcohol/antiseptic wipes

Editor's Notes: For more information, check out the article in this issue - Battling Blisters: The Bane of Every Adventure Racer's Existence.

www.adventuremedicalkits.com

Bigger Nuun

MSRP \$23.90 (two pack)

Features:

- Makes 24 32-oz drinks
- Comes in 2 Flavors - Orange Ginger and Lemon + Lime

Editor's Notes: We have long used Nuun while training and racing but were excited when Nuun came out with the Bigger Nuun. It made such a difference when using in 3-liter hydration bladders.



www.nuun.com

gear closet

Patagonia **Stretch Element Jacket**

MSRP \$450

Features:

- H2No® waterproof/breathable, 3-layer stretch woven shell
- 19.4 oz (550g)
- Stitch-free construction and 3-way adjustable hood

Editor's Notes: When we received this jacket in early 2008, we had very little opportunity to test along the Gulf Coast as our very brief winter was coming to an end. However, we jumped at the opportunity when we were able to include this on our packing list to go to Montana for Primal Quest. It performed remarkably, and we look forward to using it on the slopes this winter.



www.patagonia.com

Balance **Pure Fruit and Nut Energy Bar**

MSRP \$1.59

Features:

- Gluten free
- New in 2008
- Good source of protein (9 grams per bar)
- 2 Flavors - Cherry Pecan and Chocolate Cashew



www.balance.com

ZANFEL

Dual-action Zanafel is the only product clinically shown to remove urushiol, the toxin found in poison ivy, oak and sumac, from the skin ANYTIME during outbreak while relieving the itching within 30 seconds.

**GOT POISON IVY?
GET ZANFEL
IT WORKS!**



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or call 1-800-401-4002.

gear closet



Yakima Swing Daddy

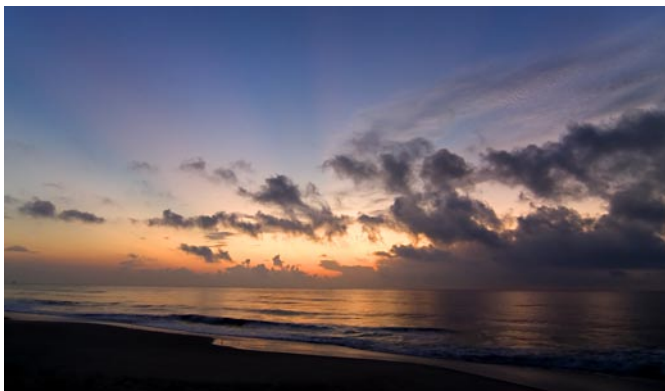
MSRP \$439

Features:

- TriggerFinger™ release enables arms to fold down when not in use
- 4 bike capacity
- Fits 2" hitch receivers only
- Integrated bottle opener

Editor's Notes: After having had the BackSwing prior to the SwingDaddy, I was pleasantly surprised at the enhancements to the updated model. It still carries 4 bikes, swings out to allow our team to load our gear, allows glass to open while in place but you don't clothesline yourself everytime you come around the car (especially when loading boats. The arm release was a nice touch and the integrated locking mechanism located both on the receiver and built in cable for locking bikes to rack.

www.yakima.com



ON THE HORIZON

Coming up in future issues:

Feature Articles:

- Patagonia Expedition AR
- Shrink It and Pink It?
- Continental Divide Bike Race
 - Yukon River Quest
- Adventure Sports on a Budget
 - The Barkley

Gear Reviews:

- Socks • Paddles
- Hydration Packs
- Rain Jackets • And More!

If you have anything that you would like to read about or just have suggestions or comments...email us at info@adventuresportsmagazine.com



National Ranking System

Presented by



September 1, 2008

TEAM NAME	POINTS
1. Eastern Mountain Sports	376.00
2. M.O.A.T./Peak.com	265.00
3. Werewolves of Austin	205.00
4. HoustonAdventureRacing.com	184.00
5. Vignette	180.00
6. WEDALI	174.00
7. GOALS ARA	169.00
8. Checkpoint Zero/Inov-8	162.00
9. Outcast / USA Fit AR	150.00
10. Snickers Marathon	135.00

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are no longer a challenge.
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*Robyn Benincasa, adventure race champion and Zanafel user.
Captain Team Merrell/Zanafel*

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The Big Bad Wolf?

Photos and story by Jacob Thompson



The headline of the Alaskan newspaper read, “Woman recovering after wolf attack.” My riding partners and I read the article and laughed nervously as it mentioned the attack occurred on the Dalton Highway - the very road we intended to ride - and then continued on with more frightening and morbid details of previous wolf encounters. This spun around in our minds as we began our journey from Deadhorse Airport. Our ultimate goal was Tierra del Fuego, but first: hundreds of miles of Alaskan wilderness. We couldn’t help but laugh in apprehensive excitement when we pedaled past a sign that said, “Next Services 240 miles.”

Life under the endless sun provided ample challenges. From the seventy plus pounds of gear loaded on our Xtracycles, to the giant mosquitos and healthy variety of large dangerous animals, the challenges of the Alaskan “haul” road were many.

On our third day, we stopped on the roadside to talk to some graduate students with a telescope. Through the lens we watched a wolf tearing the flesh from a moose carcass. “You know,” one student said, with what appeared to me as a sinister smirk. “Their jaws are twice as powerful as a German Shepherd’s. They crush bones and eat the soft marrow, leaving little waste.”

Apparently delighted by the nerve-racking effect of his words on us, as we straddled our bikes, he added, “They weigh up to 175 pounds and can maintain speeds of twenty-five miles per hour for several miles, with bursts up to forty-five miles per hour.”

For the next few days, I was haunted by scenes from that round glass ocular. I scanned the roadside with extra caution, thinking about my own soft marrow and those powerful jaws.

After a particularly arduous day of riding under an interminable sunset towards that point on the horizon that equals exhaustion, a white pickup truck crowded with oil workers stopped to warn us that they had just seen a wolf about one hundred yards south of the Arctic Circle Campground (where the woman was attacked). They added that it reportedly chased a motorcycle and even approached a crowd of eighteen tourists as they stepped out of their bus.

My life-force was drained and my legs were begging me to set-up camp, wolf or no wolf. But then I remembered a story about a college student camping in British Columbia who was awakened by something tugging on his sleeping bag. Opening his eyes, he was face to face with a wolf that began chomping its inch long incisors into his head, opening wounds that required over fifty stitches to mend.

Illustration courtesy of Alyson Moyer

Paranoia overcame fatigue and we decided to keep going... only to round a corner and see that we would have to ascend "Beaver's Slide," a four mile hill with a crushing nine-percent grade. I was sure it touched the sky. For the next hour, we painfully zigzagged our depleted selves up the hill, cursing the wolf for taking our well earned campsite at the bottom.

Miraculously, my legs still seemed to function the next day and my spirits were high as I pedaled rhyth-

turned again to see that the animal was a wolf - and it appeared to be chasing me.

After muttering some frightful profanities, I stood up and picked up the pace. Adrenaline coursed through my veins, transforming me into a frightened animal running for survival. Since arriving in Alaska, we'd repeatedly heard that the worst thing to do is run from a predator, which sounds easy enough - unless you are running from it before you even know you

myself being able to act with more precision in times of dire need, but, now that my need was in fact quite dire, I found myself struggling to operate the bike at speed while also handling the spray. I could hear the wolf's paws pounding against the gravel, closing in. It was going to catch me.

Throughout the chase, the distant truck had continued approaching. At the last moment, I looked back to see the trucker suddenly smash the wolf, then skillfully swerve to



mically through the Alaskan Wilderness. Elated to have escaped the dangers of the wolf, I immersed myself in the landscape. A caribou relaxed on a hillside of fireweed that covered the earth in crimson red, as if to paint a reflection of the fire that had preceded it.

Then I heard the sound of a distant trucker. Looking back to gauge the distance of the vehicle, I thought I saw an animal. Wondering if my mind was playing tricks on me, I

are being chased!

My mind filled with images of the wolf in full stride, as if I were watching a wildlife film of the slow motion chase of a predator on the plains of Africa. Only here, I was the prey. I pedaled even harder.

Looking over my shoulder, I could see its fangs and cold eyes and I began fumbling for my bear repellent, impossibly buried in my handlebar bag. I always imagined

avoid hitting me. I waved a thankful wave, but he never even slowed down. I had never pictured my guardian angel wearing a trucker's hat, but I was now a believer.

I walked back to see the wolf lying on the ground, but it was hardly lifeless, even though it had suffered mortal wounds. Breathing hard and thrashing around, it still posed a potential threat. To further subdue the wolf and end it's suffering, I first tried to kill it with a rock but,

amazed by its resilience, turned to my camping knife. My friends pedaled up to see me standing over the dying wolf with a bloody knife in my hand.

Throughout the trip we had eased the tension of our fear of wolves by joking about having to slit their throats, as if their presence represented only a minor nuisance. Now, my friends looked down at the wolf and up at me expectantly, everyone too stunned to speak. We'd never imagined it would actually happen.

Sean spoke first, "Are you kidding me?"

Our collective shock now broken, I took the opportunity to embellish the story a bit. "It was chasing me, so I grabbed my knife, put the blade between my teeth, and got ready to jump on it."

"Riiight," Goat, my uniquely named riding companion, said doubtfully, used to my sarcasm.



"But a semi-truck hit it before I could," I added dryly.

I looked down at the emaciated animal and realized it wasn't exactly the 150-pound, blood-stained, man-eating beast that had haunted my dreams. But that did nothing to lessen the terror I had felt minutes before.

After it released its last painful breath, we dragged it to the side of the highway, got back on our bikes, and continued our journey. Within 400 miles of our tour, I'd already been chased by a wolf and we still had at least 16,000 miles to go.

I can only imagine what's in store for us in South America.



Jacob Thompson is a freelance writer. He and his friends, Sean and Goat (along with some guest riders), are out to ride the spine of the Western Hemisphere from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. They are currently planning to resume their bike adventure on September 16, 2008 in Panama on their way south. for more information about their journey, visit their site at: www.ridingthespine.com.