Adventure Vorld magazine

3 Time Iditarod Winner Lance Mackey

The Coastal Challenge 2009

Huairasinchi Adventure Raci

Trail Runners for 2009-Part 1

Feeding the Machine

Machu Picchu

- Project Athena
- Navigation Challenge
- Expedition Planning

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> **Cover Photo: Photo by Tim Holmstrom**

This Page: Patagonia Photo by Marcos Ferro Adventure World

editor's note



Florida Coast to Coast

Change is Good!

AWM has launched its new website. For the last year, since our first issue in 2008, we have been operating the publication with a static site. It served its purpose during our early start-up but you were asking for more. So, here it is....

www.adventureworldmagazineonline.com

We promise it is a site that you will want to make it as your homepage or bookmark to visit every day. The content of the site will be everything ADVENTURE! There will be event updates, cool videos, gear reviews, contests and more. However, if you want the full scope of AWM, you will have to subscribe.

We will also be implementing a digital flip version of the magazine. You can preview a past issue in this new format on the front page of the website.

Also, being ever mindful of the economy...you can now get a full year of AWM for less than \$10. We will also be providing a budget minded gear column in every issue. Whether your sport is trail running, mountian biking, backpacking, paddling or traveling...we will provide you high quality gear options without breaking the bank.

Let us know what you think about our new changes!

Clay Abney Editor-in-chief



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

contributors



After diving into debt to take summer school in Ireland during college Jason realized a life of adventure travel was his destiny. Today he has found adventure 25 countries around the world. The back country is where he feels most comfortable however. From sleeping under the stars on an African summit to hiking between villages along the Mediterranean he has been seeking out the path less traveled since he left the nest. Jason spends much of his time testing outdoor gear and writing for outdoor and travel magazines and The Outdoorzy Blog http://blog.outdoorzy.com/



Branndon Bargo is an adventurer, businessman, and documentary filmmaker. He has played rugby in Ireland, semi-professional football in Germany and swam with sharks in the Bahamas. He has bungee jumped in three continents and climbed the highest mountains in the Americas and Europe. Recently he was the Expedition Leader on the Summit to Sea Expedition. The trip included traveling 4,000 miles by bike, from the peak of Mt. McKinley to the beaches of Mexico to scuba dive with great white sharks. A graduate of Texas State University, the National Outdoor Leadership School and the U.S. Skeleton Elite Development Team, Branndon currently lives in Austin, Texas where he is President of Live Adventure LLC. You can find out more about his company at www.live-adventure.com



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Central Coast Adventure Challenge May 16 • Central Coast, CA www.ccadventure.com

Longest Day and Night AR • June 6 S.Catskills, NY • www.nyara.com

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Krista Griesacker Memorial Race August 1 • Hamburg, PA • goalsara.org

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Toyota of Cleveland YMCA Strong AR August 15 • Ocoee, TN www.strongadventurerace.com The Thunder Rolls AR • September 5 Oquawaka, IL • www.thethunderrolls.org

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Wild Adventure Race • September 18 Baiwabik, MN www.wildadventurerace.com

San Juan Island Quest AR September 18 • Bellingham, WA • islandathleticevents.com

Tahoe Big Blue AR • September 19 Lake Tahoe, NV • bigblueadventure.com

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news from the field

Crossing The American Continent By Water

On Sunday April 4th 2009, Alexander Martin departed on his expedition to travel by canoe and foot 5,500 miles from Portland, OR to Portland, ME and the Atlantic Ocean in one seasonal year. The planned route lies entirely within the contiguous United States and traverses many of the country's great and storied rivers as well as many hidden and wild places accessible only by water. All travel will be human powered, either by paddle or portage.

The 6,000 mile route will be attempted over a period of six months and will include over 2,000 miles paddled against the current, 3,500 miles with it, and over 600 miles of portaging. The route began on the incoming tide of the Pacific Ocean and follows the Columbia, Snake, Yellowstone, Missouri, and Ohio Rivers for much - and in most cases all - of their length, before joining Lake Erie, the Erie Canal, the Hudson River and a variety of smaller rivers and lakes to meet the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of the Presumpscot River. "I will withstand the snow and wind of the Cascades in April, battle the power of the Rocky Mountain freshet, cross the continental divide by portaging 100 miles through the Teton Range, and, depending on water levels and the most appropriate route, paddle through downtown Portland, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, Louisville, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Albany as well as Yellowstone National Park, Teton

National Park, fifty National Wildlife Refuges, four Wild and Scenic Rivers, and several National Recreational Areas, just to name a few," says Martin.

If successful, this crossing will be the first of its kind. It will be the first west to east crossing of North America by canoe in a single year and the first crossing of the United States, at its widest point, by nonbicycle human power in a single year. "The achievement of these arbitrary distinctions is not the goal of this project," explains Martin. "My goal is to explore my country and interact with my countrymen and women, raising awareness of river conservation and education efforts of organizations. I will invite the people I meet and those that have only heard or read about the project to pledge a penny or a dime or any amount they choose for each mile I paddle, and direct that money to the organizations whose life work is the protection of these rivers and the education of their importance to the next generation."

Martins' choice to travel across the United States by canoe is a deliberate one. "The connection people feel with their backyard, their local river or town is immense, and the canoe is a ubiquitous object in our country. Therefore the chance of connecting and inspiring people is much higher; they can envision themselves exploring the same places that I will be and in the same way," said Martin. "I hope to inspire young Americans to get outside and explore their local wild places, and as a whole live a more active and healthy lifestyle."

For updates and more information, please visit: http://www.americas-riversexpedition.com/



news from the field

Cairns To Host XPD In 2010

Organizers are excited to announce that Cairns, and the surrounding area of tropical North Queensland, has been chosen to host the 5th edition of XPD. This international expedition adventure race will bring 200+ national and international athletes to Australia from 17-28 May 2010. It will be "as much an expedition as a race".

Race Director Craig Bycroft said "Tropical North Queensland offers the ideal location to host the 5th edition of XPD. We plan to take competitors through the Great Barrier Reef and nearby islands, the rich and diverse rainforests of the wet tropics, over waterfalls and cascades that feed crystal clear rivers, across lakes of the tablelands and through eucalypt woodlands of the Eastern savannah country. We even plan to incorporate some of the iconic legs undertaken in the Eco-Challenge of 97"



XPD is open to mixed, all male or all female teams of four from around the world. The exact course is kept secret until 24hrs before the start. Then with much excitement and anticipation, teams are provided a course booklet and their race maps. The course booklet contains the location of each of the race checkpoints. Once teams start, racing is 24 hours per day; teams choose when and where they will sleep. The winning team is expected to trek, mountain bike and kayak the 700km course in 4-5 days. All other teams will be permitted up to 10 days to complete the expedition without mid-race cut offs. XPD will be challenging for first time racers and experienced teams alike.

As a member of the AR World Series, XPD is a qualifying event for the Adventure Race World Championship (ARWC). The AR World Series is an international circuit of premiere adventure races representing 10 countries creating a 12 month calendar of professional events around the world. The top two teams at each qualifying event receive automatic entry to the ARWC.



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Hone To The Dog

By Amanda Jones

For more than 30 years, "13" has proved to be a rather lucky number for one Alaskan family. In 1978, Dick Mackey won the Iditarod on his 6th try wearing bib number 13. Then in 1983, son Rick takes the title back for the Mackey family on his 6th try wearing bib number 13. Flash forward 24 years, little brother Lance becomes the king of the Mackey family and the Iditarod, you guessed it on his 6th try wearing bib #13! That year, Lance won his first of three straight Iditarod titles. The road to the winner's circle was not an easy one for Lance. Though it might sound like mushing is in his blood, he still overcame unbelievable odds to not only join the ranks of his father and brother, but to surpass them. The Iditarod has been called one of the 'last great races on earth'. It is over 1150 miles of the most gorgeous and treacherous terrain one could imagine. It starts in Anchorage, AK and ends in Nome.

Native Alaskan, Lance Mackey, now calls Fairbanks, AK home. The 38-year-old father and athlete is now a fulltime musher and owns Comeback Kennels with his family. His career in mushing got off to a slow start. In fact, he didn't even realize mushing was a dream for him. "I grew up around dogs, but my dad always left me the bottom of the barrel racing dogs," said Lance, "it was his way of teaching me and my brother Jason responsibility."

As a teen, the highlight of Mackey's racing career was a 4th place finish in the Jr. Iditarod. By the time he was 18, Mackey had gone from 140 dogs to none. He even became a commercial fisherman for a time. After marrying and becoming a father to his wife's three small children, he ended up with 10 dogs before he knew it. Mackey just wasn't sure the title of IDIT champ was in the cards for him. The 10 dogs he had accumulated were actually used to have fun with the kids. "The only racing they were doing was up and down our driveway," said Mackey. Then the mushing bug bit again. "I think the fever had always been there. I was so proud of my dad and brother, they were legends, I was always bragging about them"

In 2001, he couldn't resist the

temptation of the ultimate race any longer. He ran the race with borrowed and "left over" dogs. "I just wanted a belt buckle for completing the race, only 600 people in the world have them," he said. He finished 36 out of 58. But then, he realized if he had finished only 6 places higher, he would have also gotten a portion of the "race purse." He also wanted to make his family proud.

Mackey had a long and trying road still ahead of him on his journey to being an Iditarod champ. In 2002, Mackey was diagnosed with throat cancer. He had surgery that April and then the radiation and recovery process began. As I listened to Mackey's recount of that trying vear I was shocked to hear that he actually raced in 2002. Many would consider just making it to the starting line an accomplishment. But not Mackey, the competitive spirit that had made the other men in his family so successful was alive in him too. He had to pull out in the middle of the race, but not for the reason many would expect. It wasn't fatigue or lack of motivation. "I almost starved to death," he said, "I was still on a feeding

tube at the time, and couldn't keep my liquid food thawed." Here's a guy who amazed this journalist by simply attempting this amazing feat. Yet, for him it was a major disappointment. "It was the lowest moment in my life. I had disappointed so many people." His family and his sponsors were paramount to him. Not your \$5000 sponsors mind you. "I was getting \$500 sponsors at this time." The amount was not the important part of this to Lance. It was the faith they had put in him. By the way, several of those sponsors even dropped him after that race.

When asked about being an inspiration to others (particularly cancer survivors); Again, his humble and hardworking persona shines through and he sees nothing too remarkable about his accomplishment. "I find it odd," he said, "I think I did what most people would do. I had a dog team, a wife and a family counting on me." However, Mackey still realizes the gravity of the situation he survived "I don't think anyone who deals with what I dealt with can help but be grateful for tomorrow and thankful for today."

So, 2003 rolls around and money becomes an issue and keeps him from competing. In 2004, he and his brother, Jason make top 30 finishes and get a much needed boost. 2005 had even more in store for this athlete. I asked if ever he was advised to give this whole racing thing a rest, his doctors thought of this too. "Don't tell me I can't do something." is all he said. That something in Mackey's mind was to be the first person to run the Yukon and Iditarod back to back. That's exactly what he did. He was the 2005 Yukon champ and got a top 7 finish in the Iditarod. That was the first chapter to a very successful racing career for Lance Mackey. To put this in perspective, he is the only musher to win the over 1000 mile races back to back. He did it not once but twice.

He won the Yukon in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008. He gives all of credit to his "team". He attributes his success to his dogs and the support of his family. "The dogs are the #1 reason we are out there," he said: The relationship with your dogs is crucial. I have 100 dogs and treat them all like family. Some mushers are too serious and are in this just as a business. I don't do that."

Mackey says the secret to his success is quite simple. Dedication! "I am out there with my dogs 99% of the time," said Mackey. It is a connection he has cultivated with his dogs and is certainly proud of it.

"We put our heart and souls into this," he said, "My wife is the backbone of Team Mackey."

Then there are the furry family members. And, I quickly learn that "Larry" is a big part of this family affair. He is also known as the "lead dog" around the Mackey clan.

"You hope to find them once in a lifetime, said Mackey,"I didn't realize what I had with Larry until I had had him a couple of years." Larry is nine years old and this was his last year to race. By the way, he did finish the race this year. "A few parts of the race we went at Larry speed. But, our crew is not wimpy," said Mackey. The dogs even get to take a summer break. "I let them lay around all summer, from the first week of April to the first week of August," said Mackey. Mackey also says they are like any athlete and need to heal. But I had to ask, just how do you train dogs in August with no snow? I found out quickly that mushers are a resourceful breed. "I hook them up to ATVs and run on dirt trails to build their muscles," added Mackey.

But back to the race... In 2009, after 9 days, 21 hours, 38 minutes and 46 seconds... Lance Mackey claimed his 3rd Iditarod title. It still gives Lance a boost to hear the excitement in his Dad's voice after a race. "After my third win, my dad was in disbelief," said Mackey. He knew his son had joined an elite few. Dick Mackey now lives in Arizona. "He was the first person I talked to this year," said Mackey, "I tear up thinking about him."

The race and the gear have certainly changed since his dad won the Iditarod back in 1978. "Sleds and gear have very much improved since the 70's," he said, "My dad had a military sleeping bag weighing 20 lbs. Mine is 3-1/2 lbs. And, there were very few dog food companies then." Lance recalls a story from his dad about the time he got stuck in a snow storm. He says his dad had to hunt for moose just to feed the dogs. In comparison, Lance and other mushers now send out 2500 pounds of gear and food to check points weeks ahead of the race.

One other thing Mackey Sr. didn't have, Lance's "must have" piece of gear - his iPod! "Its quiet and desolate out there," he said, "it helps



keep you motivated."

Only 2 other racers, Susan Butcher (1986-88) and Doug Swingley (1999-2001), have won the Iditarod 3 consecutive times. But, it was one of the awards given by the veterinarians after the race that Mackey most treasures. He was given the "Humanitarian Award". For an animal lover like Mackey, this was priceless. "I would trade the truck, the money everything for that award." It means the vets along the racecourse think that Mackey had the best care for his dog team.

One part of the process that is easier for Mackey now is the availability of sponsors to him. He can now focus on training and racing full time. And, it is an expensive game to play "\$100K a year is a conservative amount to spend on a racing team" said Mackey. He puts in \$60-70K a year. He now has another possible award on the horizon, an ESPY. "I have had 3 years of being nominated," he said, "just being nominated is huge even if I don't win."

When asked what words of wisdom he would pass along to future mushers, Mackey responded:

"It's a passionate sport that takes effort. You must be patient, there's no overnight success. You only get out of it what you put in." Lance recalls going without family vacations so that they could put all of their money into their racing dogs.

I couldn't avoid the temptation to compare this Lance to another famous race-winning-cancer-surviving Lance. Wouldn't you know it; I wasn't the first to make this comparison. "We got approached by the Lance Armstrong Foundation to come down to Texas and do a commercial with him." The other details Mackey is not too sure of, "My wife handles that," he said.

In case you are wondering about the next generation of racing Mackeys. Lance's teenaged son, Cain Mackey, is proving this is a family tradition. He just won the Jr. Iditarod. And now, Lance gets to feel the same type of pride his father has felt for him.

But Lance isn't hanging up his racing sled just yet. His goal for 2010? "To get as many happy and healthy dogs to Nome as I can!"

His final words to me were not about himself. "We thank the fans and all of those who support us and the dogs." •

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an IìMG event

Lessons Learned At Huairasinehi

Story by Jacob Thompson • Photos by Robert Espinosa F

"How do you feel? Are you nervous?" asked a reporter at the starting line of the race.

"Nervous? Nah. I would say it is more a feeling of resignation," JJ replied as he looked through the balloon arch at the starting line of the Huairasinchi Adventure Race.

It was our first adventure race and I had lost plenty of sleep in the weeks before thinking about the numbers: 3 days to cover 200 miles, reaching elevations of 14,435 and dropping to just 108 feet in the last 60 miles. A good 45 miles of the race does not fall below 11,500 feet. As the organizers presented the map and introduced the course the night before the race, they promised it would be cold and we would suffer. Oh yeah, we would be skirting an active volcano that was spewing ash over the trail; it happened to be Carnival and we should not be surprised if locals threw water balloons or eggs at us. Don't worry, it's tradition

You gotta love Ecuador.

LIFESTYLE:

Competing in an adventure race

seemed reasonable, considering I have spent the last couple years traveling by bike with my friends, looking for adventures at every turn. Our goal has been to stay off pavement as we ride self-supported from Alaska to Patagonia, following the continental divide. Regularly, we find ourselves off map, dragging our bikes through mud, and asking locals for directions in unfamiliar languages, something like adventure racing, but without checkpoints and jerseys.

We already had a solid team, in good shape, and well acquainted

under highly stressful conditions in just about every climate possible. We are all friends from college with lots of shared adventures and able to settle all important decisions with a civilized game of Ro-Sham-Bo. A great team situation.

Originally our trip was to take about two years, but after settling into the lifestyle we realized the last thing we wanted to do was actually arrive at the tip of South America. Huairasinchi was to be a new twist to our journey, one that would push our limits and force us to do what



we normally avoid ... Rush!

TEAMMATE DOWN:

Unfortunately, just a week before the race and suspiciously around the same time an Austrian supermodel and her sister were beseeching us to be on our support crew, an antibiotic resistant infection surfaced on the foot of the fourth member of our team following a bike crash in the jungle.

We knew it would be impossible to find a replacement for a "teammate" we had been riding with since 2006, but we still wanted to participate in Huairasinchi and sought out somebody to fill-in while our injured friend sat this one out, right next to the model.

On the classifieds section of the race website, I found a guy named Pedro looking for a team. He had competed in past HuairaSinchi events, participated in the GeoChallenge and other bicycle races. His email response claimed that he was a "professional mountain climber and a semiprofessional cyclist." That he was ready for 200 mile course and he had all his obligatory equipment. Cool.

GEAR ACQUISITION:

With our team complete, we then had to acquire our own mountain of equipment. A list of gear which would have been easily rounded up at home, turned out to be a nightmare. We just do not carry climbing harnesses, life jackets, running shoes, GPS, altimeters, figure 8's, locking carabineers, lengths of climbing rope, etc...

"You should be able to rent all the equipment here in Quito,"



explained one of the race directors, understandably much too busy to be sympathetic with the dirtbag cycle tourists that had signed up for the race.

At each rental store I was greeted by a friendly salesperson. "Sure, you can rent locking carabineers, I'll even give you a discount for the race, 2 bucks a day per carabineer." Add up 6 carabineers at 5 days and that would cost us \$60 Or on our traveling budget, about a weeks worth of food.

"And how much does each carabineer cost if I bought them new?"

"12 dollars"

"Uh-huh. Me da un gran promocion -You give me a great deal." I'd



reply caustically.

In between visits to the ATM I would check off each item on the list of obligatory equipment.

JJ realized his flip flops would not cut it for the 62 miles of trekking we had in front of us and found a great pair "fast" brand running shoes for 12 dollars at a Chinese import store. He was stoked.

The last thing on our list was a pair of shoes for me.

"Size 9 is the largest we have. Just try it on." The saleslady encouraged.

"But I wear a size 12?"

"Not important. Try these," She offered, holding up another box.

"What size are those?"

"Size 9"

"Uh-huh"

Apparently, nobody in Quito has feet larger than size 9, and all I was able to find were a pair of tall rubber boots. I lost a bit more sleep that night thinking about 60 miles of trekking in rubber boots.

PEDRO:

The day before the race we met Pedro for the first time. About the same age as us, but looked like a young teenager. His attitude was positive and we all liked him. He had an expensive new neon

green bike that seemed to weigh about as much my wheelset alone.

"Are you ready?" I asked him.

"Yeah. Absolutely." He replied with confidence.

PRE-RACE:

Our support vehicle arrived: a tricked out 2008 Land Rover with a full-roof bike-rack, a deal arranged for us by a race director. We loaded up the vehicle with our bikes and gear; plastered the large Huairasinchi stickers on the side and suddenly looked like we knew what we were doing.

Inside the van, we crammed 8 people into 6 seats for the 4 hour trip to the starting point. We reviewed some tutorials on using a compass, and tapped on the face of the 30 dollar altimeter that we assumed was worthless. Maybe we can just follow the other teams, we naively hypothesized. In reality, we had no idea what we were getting ourselves into.

Yet, as we ate ice cream and goofed around at a rest stop, it did not matter if we knew what we were doing, we were going to have a good time.

RACE DAY:

At the starting line, we waited



calmly for the event to begin, watching all the racers polished up in multi-colored lycra outfits nervously pacing around.

With hindsight, we approaching the event as if it were just another day on our bike tour. There was no conversation about team roles, who was going to navigate or make sure everybody was eating or drinking enough. We just assumed that everybody would handle their scene, like every other day for the past few years. Within hours we would see that this was not going to be like every other day, at all.

As the gun sounded, we quickly began climbing out of town on a cobblestone road. JJ and I pedaled close together keeping a comfortable pace and steadily passing one team after another.

We turned around a bend, passing a guy on his mule and crossed a bridge where a photographer was shooting. "So where is your team?" he asked.

I didn't have to look back to know



No. I don't need to be pulled up" capable our new teammate really

he claimed.

This was the first moment that I understood I was by default, the captain of this team. Ro-Sham-Bo wasn't going to cut it.

"You were pushing your bike," I told him, "Hopefully this will help."

Towing him proved even more difficult than carrying all my supplies for a multi-year bike tour. I found myself looking back to see if he was even pedaling. We still had another 10 kilometers of climbing to the top of the hill, and we stopped at various points trying to switch off towing Pedro, but in the frenzy I'd tied an impossible knot and was stuck tugging him the rest of the way.

I was just barely prepared to carry



was.

After a few minutes of waiting,

we started to get nervous and felt

like bad teammates for not staying

together. A mechanical perhaps?

Adventure World Magazine is a GreenZine



myself across the country and was not prepared to carry another person through this course.

Control Point 1:

At the top of the hill we got our passport stamped and I was able to disconnect Pedro from the tether. He kept up well on the downhill sections.

Like ants emerging from their tunnels after a foot smashes onto their mound, cyclists were scurrying across the hillsides. Apparently, nobody knew exactly where they were going on the maze of roads. I felt ridiculous for ever thinking we could merely follow other teams across the course.

Control Point 2:

We came skidding into a hacienda filled with support vehicles and crew. The Austrian model greeted us at the trailhead and pointed us towards the Land Rover where we dropped off our bikes. Apparently, she was responsible for at least one bike collision while waiting for us to arrive. I forgot to change out of my bike shorts (something we refer to as our diaper without affection) and only managed to take off one glove before we were trekking through cornfields towards the next CP.

Pedro was already falling way behind, shortly into the hike. "Just finding a pace he could keep for 3 days," he assured us.

A cluster of teams was gathered at the end of a road we had been following. Some were considering a gnarly route following the Ecuadorian military team who had taken a compass bearing and bushwacked straight over the mountain towards the CP. Crawling through their jungle tunnel looked hellish and we continued to traverse the mountain, eventually getting back on the original trail.

Control Point 3:

A steep jungle trail heavily eroded by ages of rain and use took us into a dwarf tree forest. Pedro continued to lag more and more, despite our encouragement.

A team passed us with a woman grabbing onto the waist strap of her teammate as they climbed the trail. "Does that help?" I asked her.

"Oh yeah. Very much." She replied, looking down at the strap in awe.

We had not considered having to tow somebody while hiking, but figured out how to rig up a waist strap for him to grab onto. It was as miserable as it sounds, and quickly started hurting my knees, so JJ finished dragging him to the top.

Misty hillsides greeted us and we watched our trail disappear into patches of paramo grasses until we saw another team running by.

After a knee pounding descent on a dirt road we could see the next checkpoint; an open stadium filled with support vehicles. Down a steep trail, we dropped through the thick jungle foliage and later learned that a member of the military team hurt his knee descending this section and was carried out by his teammates.

Control Point 4: (4:30AM)

We had been out for about 10 hours at this point and relaxed for awhile at the transition point.

"He's only carrying 1.5 liters of water!" JJ told me as he watched Pedro's Camelbak get filled up, "We were just out there for 6 hours. He's gotta drink more agua." Extra food and water was added to his pack.

Our next CP with a support crew was about 60 miles away and dusk was coming in only two hours. We were all worried about the initial climb in this stage, afraid that Pedro just could not do it. To make things worse, we made a wrong turn that took us 6 miles off route



and downhill.

"Can somebody carry my backpack?" asked Pedro as he lay down on the concrete after climbing back up to the turnoff we missed.

"Sure, man." Sean said, and attached it to his bike.

We passed a hacienda and reached a turnoff and waited for Pedro as

darkness set in completely, low clouds covered the stars. A haggard looking team pedaled up, from the adventure category that covers half the overall distance. "You see a solo rider down there?" We asked.

"Yeah. He is pushing his bike up." One of the guys said as he crumpled with exhaustion into the thick grass. He got out his headlamp and they continued on. Then Sean started to panic, "My light. I don't have my headlamp, I left it with the other pack."

"Keep looking, maybe they packed it," JJ said calmly.

"Nothing. I don't have it." Sean said finally.

Fortunately, Pedro had a light on his bike and a headlamp he could spare.

Into the night, we would ride a good 30 minutes through the dense mist and fog offering at most 10 feet of visibility, and then we'd hang out waiting for Pedro. No one was really able to tow him anymore.

At some point in the night, we crossed paths with a team on foot, still seeking CP4, brutally lost.

Control Point 5: (10-11PM)

"Be very careful on this next downhill, there is some serious mud." The Control Point volunteer warned us.

All our headlamps veered towards where we imagined the trail to be, but could see only fog. We were sliding all over the place, hitting patches of mud that sucked in half our front wheel. At a turnoff we used our tried and true navigation method, "So which route has more tire tracks?"

As we were inspecting the trail, a huge group of teams arrived and we raced down some smooth switchbacks at high speeds with very little light. Any significant road obstruction could have seriously wiped us out.



We came skidding into the next control point to get our passport stamped.

Control Point 6: (11-Midnight)

We rode along the river and crossed a bridge looking for a virtual checkpoint. Somewhere nearby there was a sign with three words we needed, only it was not precisely located on the map and we were unsure what to do.

The team waited at a bus stop while I pedaled around trying to find the sign further up the river, just in case. I was only able to find belligerent drunks out at that hour, and came back empty-handed. The lack of sleep was catching up. JJ and I were still pretty strong and lucid, but Sean was starting to deteriorate and Pedro was on fumes.

Control Point 7: (12-1 AM)

Our virtual checkpoint was just further up the road and we made our way along a gradually inclined road for what was described by a tienda clerk as a "giant bird" at the base of a rockslide.

Sure enough, on a poorly Adventure World Magazine May 2009 constructed artificial tree sat an 8-10 foot bird, and our next CP was a steep 5 mile climb away.

Pedro rounded a bend, slowly pushing his bike up. "I just vomited," he told us.

"Drink some water, we are almost there." I said. But the truth was, we were not almost there. We still had a pretty significant climb before we met up with our support crew.

Control Point 8: (2.45 AM)

"It is 2:45 A.M." the volunteer at the Tyrolean traverse told us, "the cut off time for the Cotalo CP is 3 AM. And, you have 5 miles of steep switchbacks ahead of you. If you want to continue, we will let you go across, otherwise you might want to radio your support crew."

I looked over at my teammates and watched the effect of the news crush them. As if our report card had been handed back to us with a bright red F. We talked it over and decided we did not want to bother our support crew, and would rather ride it out to the end. We hooked up our bikes to a climbing rig and sent it to the other side of the canyon, and one at a time traversed the line, wishing we had gotten here before sunset to enjoy the view.

Control Point 9: (3:30 AM)

CP 9 was just a few minutes away. There was another chasm to cross. This time it was inside a metal gondola.

Climbing up the switchbacks to the final control point as the sun rose, teams were wiped out along the way, sitting against the embankments with vacant expressions. We had long ago run out of water and snacks, never imagining that a 60-kilometer bike ride could take almost 14 hours.

Throughout the climb, Pedro would vomit at least three times as he pushed his bike all the way to Cotalo. I imagine he was happy that the race was over.

Control Point 10: (6:30 AM)

Our support crew was awake and waiting for us with a feast, including freshly made guacamole, fried potatoes, and quesadillas. They were a bit delirious having not slept through the night, and cheered us up by obnoxiously spraying cheap champagne all over us and excitedly cheering us on. The girls promised a big party for us later.

After getting our passport stamped one last time, I gazed at the 10 holes punched through our card, each representing a sliver of adventure: muddy trails through dwarf forests and pedaling through indigenous villages in the night. Yet, I couldn't help but think about the remaining 13 CPs, conspicuously unpunched, that we were going to miss, including a huge rappel down a cliff in the highlands near Chimborazo Volcano and the kayaking stretch through the jungle.

Huairasinchi literally translates to "the wind's strength" in Kichwa, alluding to the phenomenal challenges that we would encounter in this world-class adventure race. For us, the wind dealt us a hard blow when we lost our teammate days before the competition, and yet another when we discovered his replacement was in no shape for a race of this caliber. Even if we had been able to finish the race. I imagine I would still feel that addictive tug of adventure racing. Somehow you can just never get enough. We discovered a certain beauty and power in that feeling of resignation JJ mentioned at the starting line...ride it out and make the most of it!

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 in Ecuador where they just competed in their first adventure race. For more information about thier journey, visit their site at: www.ridingthespine.com.



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athlete profile

Kristin 'Krissy' Moehl

Location: Seattle, WA

Sports: Trail running, yoga, road cycling, rock climbing, weight lifting (for cross training).

Age: 31

Occupation: Waiter/bartender/barista (the coffee man), inventor.

Athletic Background: I have been running since the 7th grade. When I started working for the Seattle Running Company during college, I finally found a type of running that spoke to me at a deeper level. With the likes of Scott Jurek and Scott McCoubrey showing me the ropes, I quickly fell in love with all that Trail Running has to offer.

Athletic Goals: To be fit for life. I hope to be active and healthy for all of my years.

Athletic Highlights: Wasatch 100 (2004), Grand Slam of Ultrarunning (2005), Hardrock 100 (2007).



Favorite Workout: A long discovery run, exploring a new trail for hours and hours.

What Inspires or Motivates You? Knowing that there is always more.

Favorite Fuel: Avocados, First Endurance Ultragen, Cappuccino flavor.

Favorite Indulgence: Chocolate.

Typical Workout: Nothing typical. I like to keep it varied, lots of running of course, but usually a different route or location, cycling, climbing, yoga, lift weights, elliptical. I just like to move!

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adventure destination

The Road Less Traveled: Machu Picchu Via the Salkantay Trek

Story and Photos By Jason Heflin

By now most of us have formed a life's list of adventure travel destinations we want to visit before we go. That list might live in a Microsoft Word document, on a Facebook page, scribbled on a drink napkin, or just in the recesses of your mind. There are some trips that make the list over and over again such as trekking the Himalaya, seeing the great pyramids of Giza, or climbing Kilimanjaro. One destination that kept rising to the top of my list was Machu Picchu.

History

Roughly fifty years before Christopher Columbus sailed across the ocean blue a great citadel was being built high in the Andes mountains of what is now Peru in South America. The Incans named this peak Machu Picchu, or Old

Peak. It was to be an important locale, not only to the civilization that carved it's stone walls, but for those who were to follow. Machu Picchu is situated on a steep mountain ridge 2,000 feet above the Urubamba river. This landmark lies only fifty miles from Cusco, a major Peruvian city. Yet, unlike most other Incan settlements, it was never discovered or destroyed by the Spanish conquistadors as they invaded. Machu Picchu was instead abandoned. It is not known why the residents of this sacred city left, or where they went. Machu Picchu has remained in remarkably pristine condition throughout the past 600 years.

The great explorer Hiram Bingham re-discovered this place in 1911 and brought the "lost city" to the attention of the world. Today Machu Picchu is open to the public; it is a heavily traveled tourist attraction that is seen by thousands of visitors each year from around the globe.

The Road Less Traveled

Machu Picchu was on my life list. A few years ago I decided I wasn't going to wait on this one. I didn't want to visit this remote sanctuary by tour bus, as is a common practice these days. Many take what is known as the Inca Trail, but I soon learned there is more than one Inca Trail to Machu Picchu. The standard trail leads the trekker through the highlands and up to Machu Picchu in much the same way the Inca visited the city. In my life I tend to choose the road less traveled however. I was told the traditional Inca Trail was very busy



and didn't provide much of a wilderness experience. So, I opted for the Salkantay Trek. This alternate route follows another ancient road the Inca used to connect villages.

The Salkantay Trek is not your average multi-day hike. I chose this route for its difficulty and because it got me so close to some of the high peaks of the Andes along the way. Most journeys typically start in Cusco. This city sprawls throughout a valley which sits at roughly 10,000 feet. From Cusco a bus is taken to the village of Mollepata. At the bus stop we were offered tea and porridge for breakfast, but opted to wait. Once in Mollepata we were taken to a local woman's home. She had several picnic-type tables in a courtvard and fed us well for only a few dollars. Then we were off.

The trek took us up a typical mountain slope in the Andes. Dry and dusty trails snake up the hillsides through low scrub brush. Bandanas were a necessity to keep from swallowing too much of the dust. Once we reached our lunch spot we had our first glimpse of the high peaks. The view of these glacier covered goliaths was breathtaking. That night we camped above 12,000 feet in an abandoned village. In these remote mountains the milky way looks as if it were painted across the sky with a brush. Dense star clusters and bright constellations kept us out of our tents until late.

The next morning we began the toughest part of the trek, the climb to Salkantay Pass. This pass lies at 14,763 feet and tested our lung power as did the hours of switchbacks that took us up to the crest. All the while porters with huge loads on their backs passed the flatlanders as if we were standing still. Once at the pass, however, the view was reward enough for the tough journey. Standing under the glaciers of the massive Salkantay peak and watching chunks of ice break loose in the midday sun would not be soon forgotten.

That afternoon the trail led us down a huge valley and into a jungle climate. Crossing rushing rivers on handmade log bridges and encountering local Peruvians going about their daily business was a great way to see the rural culture. The women braid their silky black hair into long strands down their back. Their clothing is made from bright colors that stand out against the sea of green jungle. The men are dressed in more earthy



tones and typically walk while allowing the women to ride a horse. This area also has a large variety of orchids and rare wildlife species such as the spectacled bear.

That night we camped in a small village clinging to the mountainside. With chickens pecking around our tents, we knew we were in for an early awakening. After the roosters roused us the following morning we continued our journey downward from these high jungles to a valley where we needed to cross a major river at the mining town of Oroya. The river was swollen and full of whitecaps from the summer snowmelt. There was no bridge and the current was too strong to wade across so we took the cable system. Crouching in a small metal basket we clung to our backpacks as we were zipped across the river by hand, using a pulley system. Once across the river it was that person's obligation to pull the next traveler over. The trek then leads into Aguas



Calientes, named so for its natural thermal baths. There we opted to stay in small hotels. We had decided ascend to Machu Picchu from Aguas Calientes using the stone staircase carved by the Inca. The climb put us at the gates just before dawn. Be aware that this can take a few hours, and is a real workout. We took on the grueling climb only to arrive in the parking lot just after the first bus load of tourists disembarked and we had to wait to get in. Still, the sunrise over these ancient stone walls has no equal. Just don't be disappointed if the high jungle fog robs you.



Old Peak

One day is enough to see the entire mountain top as long as you are prepared to do some serious walking. Remember Machu Picchu was a city, and it is fairly large. Take plenty of water, which can be purchased as you enter. The gate guardians are very strict about what can enter Machu Picchu. Only "small" backpacks and bags can be taken in, and no food. We saw a German man get his bag taken while entering, and although you get your items back at the end of the visit, he was not happy to see it taken from him.

Visitors can either take a guided tour, or explore the ruins on their own. We had an excellent guide who enlightened us on the history



and culture of the Inca people who lived here. A good guide can make all the difference. Pictures can be taken in most areas, but there are certain spots where feet may not tread. There are a number of whistle blowing rangers that patrol the ruins. They are more than happy to let you know you've stepped on prohibited soil. Besides the whistle blowers the mountain is home to others. These others have been roaming these hillsides longer than the rangers though. They are the llamas of Machu Picchu. They graze on the grasses here and are just about as loved as the monument itself.

Another popular side excursion while at Machu Picchu is to hike up Huayna Picchu, the picturesque mountain in the background of the typical postcard photo. This can take a few hours though, and there is a controlled number of visitors that can climb it each day. Get in line for Huayna Picchu early in the morning to ensure a trip up. An exposed path leads up the blade-like ridge of the lush mountainside. It takes you through a small cave to an alter. There is no short supply of alters at Machu Picchu, which leads archaeologists to believe this was a place where the Inca practiced sacrifice. It is not recommended to climb Huayna Picchu when conditions are wet. People have fallen to their death from its steep trail.

With all this in mind, keep your eyes, ears, and heart open while you walk these ancient paths. Machu Picchu was a spiritual place for the Inca. Find a small patch of stone or grass, look out over this massive stone citadel, and breathe in one of the most beautiful places on Earth.

Planning Your Trip

Guided trips can be purchased in Cusco or before you leave your home country. Be warned though, prices vary greatly. Do your homework before arriving if you plan to book your trip in country. This could save you quite a bit of money. June through August is the height of the dry season and is the ideal time to visit Peru. There are daily flights to Cusco from Peru's capital of Lima. A train departs regularly for Machu Picchu so you won't have any problem getting to Aguas Calientes to start your visit. To make the most of your trip, study up before arriving. The Lonely Planet Peru guidebook is a great resource. A good map is key to finding the best areas to explore.

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Planning For An Expedition By Branndon Bargo

I remember being a young boy sifting through countless articles of the National Geographic magazine reading about amazing journeys of exploration to untouched places in the world. I could spend hours looking through the maps and pictures imagining myself hanging from the treetops, hiking through the jungles in search of some lost species or in search of a new cure. What I did not think about was the countless hours spent preparing for these expeditions, or the overwhelming stress that the leaders of the expeditions must have felt trying to put such a huge trip together.

With some key strategic planning and preparation you will be ready to go from day hikes or adventure racing sprint distances to multi faceted life changing expeditions and expedition length races. In the coming months I will break down everything that it takes to prepare for and plan your own expedition including choosing a team, logistics of an expedition such as food, equipment and permits, Physical and mental conditioning, sponsorship and media, and lastly taking expeditions for a greater cause.

First, we must know exactly what constitutes an expedition compared to an everyday adventure. A simple dictionary definition of an expedition is a journey or voyage made for a specific purpose. Another more detailed definition would be an adventure that requires permits, dealing with local customs and regulations, medical requirements such as vaccinations, several days of air travel, followed by land travel, and then spending multiple days, weeks or months climbing a mountain, kayaking or sailing an ocean, running a river or reaching the finish line of an expedition race.

In this installment I will discuss choosing the right expedition for you. You may already have a big trip in mind. A childhood dream that you have always wanted to accomplish, but you first have to ask yourself some important questions. First, what is the goal for this expedition? Is your objective to do research, raise money, to climb a mountain, to win a race, or a combination of objectives? Do you have a backup plan in case the objective has to change due to bad weather or a situation with group dynamics? After determining the goals for the trip you must ask yourself a second question, which will be my focus in this article, and that is when choosing the right expedition do you have the skill set to keep yourself out of trouble as well as your team?

If for example you are climbing a mountain do you know how to safely stop yourself from sliding down the mountain by using the self-arrest technique,or if someone falls into a crevasse do you know how to set up an anchor and pulley system to rescue them? If you are taking a white water kayaking trip do you know how to use the Eskimo roll to right yourself, or if you are sea kayaking how to navigate where you are going and still factor in the tides and currents? If vou are caving do vou know how many sources of light you should carry, or how to ascend or descend into the cave, or what gear you should bring with you? The skills you need to know before setting out on an expedition are absolutely necessary. The expedition should be considered the final exam after many hours of studying.

There were times I found myself in bad situations early on in my quest for adventure seeking because my desire and exuberance to be in the outdoors far exceeded my knowledge. I remember one such instance when I was hitchhiking and backpacking around Great Britain. I really wanted to go to a remote area of Scotland so I made my way up to the northern less visited islands to explore the beautiful Isle of Skye. I hitchhiked to the base of one of the more ominous looking mountains on the island. A transplant from Liverpool told me that he enjoyed picking up foreign hitchhikers but since it was Sunday most of the locals were not on the road. He tried to talk me out of the hike because he could see it was getting late, and knew that in Scotland and especially this far north the weather can change quickly for the worse. I told him that I would move fast and ignored his advice.

As I began my climb, I realized this was going to be a tough hike. The mud was horrendous, and was slow going. I thought it would be a good idea to speed things up by dropping my pack off so that I could move faster. I left my pack near a group of rocks and then started to jog to pick up the pace as it was becoming evening and getting dark. I could feel that I was getting closer to the summit, but as I neared the rocky pinnacle of the summit the clouds began to move in, and they did not look friendly. I knew then that it was not to be. I began to descend and quickly realized that I was lost. For the next several hours, I searched for my backpack that contained my food, water, extra layers, and a sleeping bag. I had a very weak headlamp, and had no idea where my gear could be. With no skill or knowledge of my own I stumbled upon my pack and quickly put on extra layers as I was becoming hypothermic, and ate and drank knowing that I lucked out in this situation. Soon after I zipped up my sleeping bag, it began to pour down rain as it so often does in Scotland. I proceeded to get soaked since I did not bring a tent, and after hours of being miserable, and my bag almost floating away with me in it I decided I had had enough and headed down.

I mention this story because if I had not found my pack my situation could have been much worse. Many people suffer hypothermia, heat exhaustion, or even death because they think their fitness, excitement, or some show on the Discovery channel will be enough to get them through. I got myself into this situation because I wanted to climb a mountain, and that is all I knew. I did not have the proper gear, judgment, decision making skills and lacked understanding of what it took to climb a mountain safely. With some necessary knowledge this trip could have been much more enjoyable. Here are some ways in which you can gain experience.

First, begin taking lots of short trips. Take challenging day hikes and trail runs in your local state and national parks. Second, buy outdoor gear and learn how to use it. Third, if you want to take longer trips you will need to be mentored or taught. Research schools and find one that is reputable, and has a safe and long standing record. Fourth, join an outdoor club and begin taking trips and meeting like-minded individuals that can accompany you on longer outings. And lastly, as you begin to build and gain confidence you will feel ready for greater challenges and longer trips.

Though these steps seem to be pretty simple and common knowledge you would be surprised how many people I have seen in the outdoors that have put themselves in dangerous situations because they did not take the time to learn and gain the necessary experience.

Planning for you own expedition is one of the most rewarding things you can do in the outdoors. It will teach you how to become a better leader, a better team member, a better communicator, and develop greater decision- making skills. But it will only come after hard work and commitment. If you follow these tested steps you will soon find yourself in places that children read and dream about.

The Coastal Challenge Rainforest Run

On February 1st, 76 people gathered at the Costa Rican coastal town of Quepos with one thing in common. They were about to cross the start line for the 5th Annual Coastal Challenge (www.TheCoastalChallenge.com).

The Coastal Challenge- Rainforest Run, is a 6 day stage running race set along Costa Rica's tropical Pacific coastline using both the Talamancas, a coastal mountain range in the Southwest corner of the country, and the verdant rainforest as the habitat for 225 kilometers of pure physical and emotional challenge. Each stage is designed to take advantage of the topography, and the stunning beauty of the most rural and undeveloped places in southern Costa Rica.

Of the 76 athletes gathered, some were well known in the endurance racing community like, Scott Jurek, 5 time Winner and course record holder of The Western States 100, or Robyn Benincasa, World Champion Adventure Racer in both the Eco-Challenge and the Raid Gauloises. Some of the athletes were ultra-runners looking to extend their experience over more than a day, and some were IronMan athletes looking for the next big challenge. But all of them would be subject to 6 days of running, hiking, walking and sometimes crawling a route that would require them to climb over 30,300 feet of elevation, cross countless streams and rivers, run on sandy desolate beaches and deal with the heat and humidity of a race only 7 degrees above the equator.

In an effort to give you the best insight available into The Coastal Challenge, we are going to take excerpts from the race's daily blog.

Day 1 - Feb 1- 33.5k- 850m As-



cent- SHAKE RATTLE AND BOIL

A three hour bus ride to the coast of Costa Rica is always a beautiful ride unless you are a nervous racer...

And then the sun came out with the humidity and we started to boil. So boil we did until we reached the thick part of the rainforest.

And then it was up and up and up through overgrown forest with nothing insight but the thin trail and the racer in front of you.

Camp was in a beautiful hidden valley that we had to access via a pull cart to get across a river. Dinner was subdued as many left their energy on the course.

Day 2 –39k- 2250m Ascent- SLIP, SLIDIN, CLIMBIN, AND THE OCEAN

As soon as it was light-- we were off!

We ran down a scenic dirt road and then immediately turned into the jungle and hit a hill that went up for miles -STRAIGHT UP, IN MUD AND MUCK THAT SUCKED THE SHOES RIGHT OFF YOUR FEET.

...our second time station had locals providing fresh coconut juice (they just cut the side off with a machete and handed it to you).

As I sign off, I am enjoying the breeze off the ocean in Dominical, one of Costa Rica's prime surfing spots. Life is good and yes, everyone is very tired but very happy



Day 3- 52.2k, 2450m Ascent -RIVER, CLIMB, BOIL AND BEACH

This race is hard, and I mean real hard.

Scott Jurek is amazed on a daily basis that all of the athletes look fresh each morning as we start yet another stage. Camp was subdued at night and the only thing that was able to raise any energy from the exhausted racers was the offer of free beer and pop from the race directors. Dinner as usual was hot, delicious and eaten greedily.

Day 4- 37.5k 2950m Ascent- HIT THE WALL



We "hit the wall" which is best described as climbing straight up a rain forest covered sky scrapper, or maybe a lot of them, as the entire first climb was 1000 meters (that's 3000 feet) in just 2 kilometers of distance.

Once we topped out and took a much needed breath or ten, we then were met with incredible views of the Telamanca mountain range and the ocean 3000 feet below.

Feb 5 -47.4k -1450m Ascent -IN-CREDIBLY, BEAUTIFULLY LONG!

Our boat driver picking up on the sudden interest in the parrot proceeded to slow down and we quickly spotted white faced monkeys that were eating the fruit off the tree hanging upside down. Then it was the crocodile on the bank laying as still as the log floating just feet away from the boat--until the log revealed itself as yet another crocodile.

Long, Long, Long. This freaking stage hurt it was so long. Miles or

Kilometers it did not matter they just did not seem to go by fast enough.

As always, when the going gets tough good things happen.

Feb 6 -FINAL Day -23.7k – 450m Ascent - The fat lady is SING-ING and DANCING!

It is impossible that the same people who just ran the day before were the same people who showed up at today's starting line.

The start of the race was...wait for it...wait for it...yep, freaking UP HILL!

And yet we soon descended and proceeded to run a river in knee high crystal clear, cool water.

There are finishing styles galore... the runner who jogs the entire race to then sprint the last 10 yards, the runner who sprints the entire race to then jog the last 10 yards, there are those that ignore the cheering crowd, and those who play to the crowd like they are conducting an orchestra of applause.

The post race dinner was on the beach lit by candles in luminary sacks and a roaring log fire. It did not take long for the ever present juices and electrolyte drinks to be supplemented with that wonderful invention by those monastic monks –BEER.

The 6th Annual Coastal Challenge will be hosting "The Route of Fire", a 6 day stage race featuring Costa Rica's Northwestern coast and volcanic regions. Registration is open and limited to the first 95 participants. *THE PERFECTLY BALANCED COMBINATION OF TWO OPPOSING CONCEPTS - CUSHIONING AND AGILITY -IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEM TO SOLVE IN TRAIL RUNNING SHOE DESIGN, THIS IS OUR MOST BALANCED ACHIEVEMENT THUS FAR."

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training

Nutrition: Feeding the Machine

by Cynthia Engel

How often have you gloriously savored a crème filled chocolate covered Krispy Kreme donut or a cheeseburger with fries and a micro brew and said, "THIS is why I workout so much – so I can eat whatever I want! "

Or what about those of you who are convinced you should be on the cover of a fitness magazine given the amount of time, energy and focus you put into working out, but you're still not ok with that one bulge you see every morning in the mirror so you cut back on what you eat because "losing weight is simply a matter of your caloric input being lower than your caloric output"?

Over the course of my life as a multisport athlete, I think I've lived in both of those realities just short of an infinite number of times. And the reality was that I was going nowhere in terms of improving my performance or in terms of reducing body fat- in fact I was gaining more fat the less I ate and the more I trained!

And then I met with sports nutrition expert and world champion adventure racer Cathy Sassin, who taught me through her Intrafitt program (http://www.intrafitt.com/) that feeding your body what it is asking of you is vital for it to honor what you are asking of it. When I chose to trust this process and gave my body the right balance of nutrients it needed to perform at its best, I was astounded at the instant impact (literally!) it had on my performance, my attitude, my energy level throughout the day and my body composition.

Maintaining proper nutrition is as important for an athlete as training and resting is in any lifestyle, regardless of intensity or performance level. And it is probably the most neglected or misunderstood aspect of athletic performance. Our bodies are extraordinarily resilient ecosystems that are constantly seeking homeostasis or balance. When we subject them to the daily demands of playing, working and training, we are constantly throwing them out of balance. And they are constantly finding ways to re-establish that balance so that they can keep doing what we ask of them. In doing so, our bodies make adjustments to the speed that they choose to burn their energy stores (metabolism). They also decide which energy stores (muscle, fat from storage (body fat) or sugar from our muscles, bloodstream or liver) are most efficient to burn given the pattern of what is coming in (food) and what we generally ask them to do for us.

The key is to give your body what it needs consistently so that it can trust you. It wants to know that you will provide it with the pro-

tein, carbs, fat and water it needs to give you the energy you demand throughout the day. When it trusts vou, then it is trusting that it will always have the various energy stores it needs, even in a crisis This allows your mesituation. tabolism to run faster and feeds the protein into your heart and skeletal muscles to grow stronger as you train. Whenever the macronutrients, protein, carbs and fats are in short supply, the body moves into hoarding mode rather than using the fat it has stored for energy.

Knowing how much protein, fat, carbs and water to eat and drink and how often to feed your body are difficult to know. Here are some guidelines I learned from Cathy Sassin and Intrafitt to get started:

• We've all heard this...drink lots of water throughout the day. It's true! That alone can improve your performance instantly!

• Eat breakfast every day. No matter what. And make protein a more prominent part of it. If you are the type that feels nauseous if you eat in the morning, start slowly with easily digestible foods – smoothies with protein powder in them for example – and build up to eating more solid foods in the morning. The food we provide our body first thing in the morning is what establishes the rate at which our body decides it can burn energy and what kind it will burn throughout the day. This is so important!



• Listen to your body – if it sends out an alarm (fatigue, irritability, grumbling stomach, lethargy, forgetfulness...), feed it right away! It's warning you and by the time you actually get these signals, your body is already going into hibernation mode.

• Graze over the course of a day rather than simply eating 3 meals. Try eating 4 or 5 smaller balanced meals instead.

• When you feed your body, always give it a combination of protein, fat and carbs. Fat provides your body with a long term energy source because it breaks it down slowly. Only providing it with carbs will cause your blood sugar levels to jump because of the instant energy it can provide. But without something to balance that out, it will drop just as quickly and you'll be back in hoarding mode again.

• Always have a snack composed of protein, fat and carbs ready for after your workout. And eat it immediately when you finish your workout.

• Eat during any workouts longer than an hour. Feed yourself small portions of a high protein energy bar (I eat ¼ of an energy bar every half hour or so).

• Have high protein/lower sugar energy bars available in your car, in your bag and at work so that if you are caught with no food and your body starts yelling at you, you can feed it something balanced right away rather than going for a high carb or high fat snack.

• Work with a sports nutritionist to dial in the ideal balance of proteins to fats to carbs for your own fitness and performance goals.

While it may initially seem counter-intuitive to eat more to improve both body composition and performance, it makes more sense when we look at it from our body's perspective. Because my body trusts that I will give it what it wants and how it wants it, my metabolism has increased significantly and my body now chooses to burn stored fat sooner. As a result, I have become leaner and my performance has increased dramatically, without having made any changes to my actual workouts. And because my body is now burning its fuel more efficiently, it means that I can still go indulge in a donut, burger, fries or micro brew every once in a while and keep performing at a higher level!
HUNTER SHOTWELL'S CASTLETONER

What's yours?

Maybe you snowshoe. Explore the narrows. Or chance the rapids. However you define your love of the outdoors, we define ours by supporting grassroots conservation efforts to protect North America's wildest places. Hunter Shotwell dedicated his life to Castleton Tower. Surely, you can dedicate an hour to yours.

The Conservation Allance

300 million people. One hour a week. Make it happen.

Project Athena

Imagine a fairy godmother meets The Amazing Race. This story is better than a script Hollywood could have dreamed up! Five female adventure athletes who've survived life-affirming struggles have launched a foundation to grant the wishes of other women who've had medical or traumatic setbacks in their lives. Invoking the name of the Greek goddess of war and wisdom, the group has dubbed its effort "Project Athena."

Project Athena founders say their organization will grant "Athenaships", which are similar to scholarships, that will completely fund and outfit the adventurous wishes of each recipient. Their mission is quite simple. "Someone may want to trek to Everest Base Camp or run a marathon," said co-founder Robin Benincasa, "Through our own experiences, we know the hopelessness survivors battle. It is our intent to honor that by helping these women achieve their life long dreams of an adventure."

Once you've learned more about these amazing and inspiring women who founded Project Athena, you will understand why their selfproclaimed titles are guaranteed to bring a smile, but why they are "jobs" these adventure warriors take seriously.

Robin Benincasa, AKA "Minister of Dreams", has competed in more than 35 expedition-length adventure races. She has claimed top 5 finishes in most of those races, including winning EcoChallenge



Borneo in 2000. Benincasa was diagnosed with severe osteoarthritis in her hip and underwent hip resurfacing surgery in August 2007. She captains co-ed adventure racing team Merrell/Zanfel Adventure and works full time as a San Diego firefighter.

Danelle Ballengee, "Seraphim of Survival", has won world championships in mountain running, snowshoeing and adventure racing over the past decade. She was also part of the winning team for Primal Quest in 2004. In December 2006, Ballengee survived a near death experience after taking a fall while training near Moab, Utah. She spent most of 2007 recovering, but returned to competition and took first place in the women's solo division of the Adventure Xstream adventure race. In August 2008, she began a new adventure - as mom to baby Noah!

Melissa Cleary, "Angel of Hope", was left bed bound for months after a car accident years ago. "I remember telling myself that when I got better, I would never sit still again," said Cleary. Since that vow, she has run more than 40 marathons, including Nepal's Hillary/Tenzing Marathon on Mt. Everest and China's Great Wall Marathon. Despite having Rheumatoid Arthristis, she runs every day. Cleary works with Benincasa as a San Diego firefighter (she drives the engine!).

Louise Cooper, "Chief Inspiration Officer", was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1998. The cancer was so aggressive, experts said it was guaranteed to return. Cooper is going strong and has finished seven Ironman Triathlons, and just as many EcoChallenge adventure races. Now, she plans to climb the highest summit on each of the seven continents. Four down, three to go! Cooper is an elementary school



teach in Southern California.

Florence Debout, "Commissioner of Courage", grew up in France. She was a nationally ranked speed skater and later learned to love the suffering and joy of multisport endurance events. She was diagnosed with cancer not once – but TWICE! Surviving wasn't enough for Debout. In July 2008, she was the first woman to cross the finish line at Barb's Half Ironman Triathlon in Northern California. She now resides in California and is a physical therapist.

The foundation has awarded two Athenaships in its first 6 months. The first was to San Diego firefighter, Lonnie Kitch. She was diagnosed with stage 2 breast cancer in May of 2004. "I went from the fire line to the operating room," said Kitch, "I didn't feel like fighting I just wanted it to go away." But it didn't. After three surgeries in six weeks, four and a half months of Chemotherapy and six weeks of Radiation, Kitch was weak and achey. "During my recovery I had a lot of time to reflect," she said," I thought what would I want to do if I make it through this?" As a firefighter, Kitch had many opportunities to backpack. And, had explored many trails with her husband of 24 years. "One of my dreams is to hike the Grand Canyon," she realized. So, this past September the Athena Project made it happen for Kitch. "I hold the vision of the full moon rising over the grandeur of the canyon in my heart everyday," said Kitch," I am so grateful to all my team members for taking this time out of their lives to experience this journey with me. Their kindness, camaraderie, compassion and caring spirits were remarkable. They are all an inspiration for me to keep moving forward with my health goals." While Kitch says this was life changing for her, she hopes it will be for others too. "This GRAND experience has given me the courage and motivation to change my attitude and my life. I hope to inspire other recipients to take on their own challenge!"

And, Project Athena is just getting started. Next up on the adventure wish recipient list is Kerrie Larson-Kerkman. "My dream is to run the marathon on the Great Wall of China," said Larson-Kerkman. She had spinal fusion three years ago due to a degenerative spinal condition. "I have been in physical therapy for a total of 8 years," she said. Prior to surgery, she had lost enough function in her right leg that a 10 minute walk was grueling. However, she says she will never stop running, "In part because after the surgery my doctor said I wouldn't be able to, and in part because I love it." The Great Wall adventure is slated for May 2009.

Even if you don't have an adventure to live out yourself, you can still become a god or goddess by helping someone else's dream come true. You can join a race or event and raise funds while training for your event. You can join one of the Project Athena expeditions, or you can make a monetary donation online.

100% of public donations to the Project Athena Foundation will be used to help survivors live their athletic dreams. Entry fees, airfare, coaching, specialized equipment and other needs will be met in an attempt to help survivors reach their goals. To find out more go to www.projectathena.org.

Project Athena is curently seeking gods and goddesses for their Mt Whitney Challenge (July 2009) and for the Grand Canyon Rim to Rim (September/October 2009).



Collegiste NATIONALS

Two Great Events at One Venue

May 9, 2009 Burnet, Texas

USARA Sprint Adventure Race National Championship

The USARA is proud to present the 2009 Sprint Adventure Race National Championship. Teams from around the country will battle it out for bragging rights in Burnet, Texas. Two member teams will mountain bike, trail run and paddle their way to victory. Categories will include male, female, coed, coed masters, male masters and Clydesdale.

USARA Collegiate Adventure Race National Championship

The USARA Collegiate Adventure Race National Championship will be held in conjunction with Sprint Nationals. Collegiate competitors will compete for the title of Sprint Collegiate National Champions. Teams of two will mountain bike, trail run and paddle. Categories will include coed & male.

For the second year in a row, the AIX Group will offer an amazing \$3000 sponsorship to the winning collegiate coed team. This sponsorship package will include AIX Team Racing Gear, funds for race fees and travel expenses, and armfulls of gear!! The sponsorship includes equipment from Merrell, Suunto, Sole and Zanfel. The team will also receive free entry into the 2009 USARA 24 Hour Adventure Race National Championship, a \$900 value, and will be crowned the USARA Collegiate Sprint Adventure Race National Champions!

Visit www.usaranationals.com for more details and to get registered today.

www.usaranationals.com

How The Barkley Tamed Me!

By Jon Barker

Where do I start?

After training my head off for several months I got sick with the flu two weeks before the race; I mean in bed for two days, missing work flu - not a cold. Felt worse than Leptospirosis, flu... you get the picture...

So, I'm not blaming my failure totally on that but some weird stuff happened and I think this is classic Barkley stuff: I was still feeling weak and hazy the Saturday before the race and debating bailing on it but couldn't pull the trigger and decided to stress my brain out about the whole thing instead. Now I don't know if the Barkley Gremlins were at work or too much Nyquil mixed with too much Dayquil but I got in a real funk. I have no idea what depression feels like and I hope I never do but this felt awful. I had no sense of taste or smell either.

So come Friday, I was feeling a lot better. Funk 99% gone, still not much taste or smell but feeling fairly strong and spirits were good...

Loop one: moving well. A big bunch of us stuck together (including Andrew Thompson, the AT record holder) through most of it. An old AR pal Greg Eason who had three looped it in the past was there and I stuck with him and he gave me some instruction to the idiosyncrasies of the route while we were moving. I thought it was sinking



in... Towards the end of the fist loop I fall off the pack a little and did the last 5 or 6 miles by myself then a guy called Joe Decker catches up with me (www.joe-decker.com) and we stick together coming in off the first loop. A quick word about the terrain; certainly not criminal but very tough, steep, hands digging into the dirt steep. Rocky



down hills (it had been raining so it was also slick). Even with temps in the 40s, I got very warm and probably a little dehydrated. As a one loop training run/hike it would be a lot of fun and a great sense of accomplishment when you finish but knowing you've got four more of these to do... I didn't think the nav was too difficult, certainly the second half with the really big climbs wasn't bad at all but I underestimated what the dark would do and didn't even think about what "pea soup" fog would do with the dark...

I finished loop one in 9:17 which I was OK with but my legs felt like jello. Certainly the illness had an effect but I really don't think I did enough long, long trainings and overnights and back to back 12 hour hikes which I now think are essential to the success of this thing!

The main group had already headed out on loop 2. And by luck; Joe was heading out the same time as me. He had been up there a week prior and had scouted the course out several times (this, I now know is absolutely essential for any form of success). I figured if I could stick with Joe I might be OK in the dark. Joe lost me within about 10 minutes as he power hiked up the first hill and my legs turned from jello to water... I persevered, got book one and headed to book two knowing there were some "sketchy" areas ahead. The first one cost me about 30 minutes of scratching about through some fierce some briers. The next one cost me about 2-1/2 hours of bush whacking up a murderously steep hill and getting misplaced before stumbling back on the "trail". At this point it had taken me 6 1/2 hours to do what I had done the previous loop in 2-1/2hours and it affected me mentally as I was already physically tired. (Quick side note: I had run a long run of only three hours in my new INOV-8 320's which are a fine shoe BUT not the way to do it. Left foot fine in fact as fine as I can remember feeling during a long run but right foot had 4 or 5 blisters and that had a mental effect on me as well. "How am I going to do another 24+ hours of this?" As you can see, I was already resigned to three loops...). So this was the last bail out point for a long time and I had already realized that I might not make the cut off for the second loop so I took the bail out and guess what?

Yep, got lost again! In the fog, I missed a critical turn off. It also

did not help that the map was not very accurate. There are hundreds of old jeep and 4-wheel trails going all over the place. So I wander around for about 4 hours, swearing, whimpering a bit, cursing the whole world in general and, believe it or not, come right back to where I started the bail out. I was so lucky, I didn't even realize where I was until I "chanced" a side trail and came to one of only two water drops on the whole course! (BTW, did I mention that the fog was so thick you could hardly see your hand in front of your face? How good was the Brunton L3 headlamp in that???).

I decide at this point that I'm going back on the course as I obviously couldn't bail out and I'd just have to do a 20+ hour 2nd loop or, at least, get to the next bail out which should be a lot easier when I see a headlamp approaching. Now I hadn't seen or heard anybody for at last eight hours so I was curious to see who it was. An old timer, John DeWalt appears, the last person to start loop 2. He's the oldest finisher of Hard Rock and has been doing the Barkley since 1988!!! He told me that he scouts for a week before the race EVERY year and knows the place like the back of his hand. So he says, "Follow me" and we promptly get lost again ...

We can't find our way to a simple saddle to hit a simple ridge (well fairly simple during the day with no fog)... After stumbling around for another couple of hours we decide to head back down to the bail out and, thankfully this time, with John's help, we go the correct route and get out. My second loop of only two books took almost 14 hours. My first loop of 11 books only took 9:17. See what the Barkley can do to you if you're not prepared (and even if you are prepared)?

Incidentally, Joe finished loop two but hurt his knee during a fall and quit. Greg completed three loops. If I had been fitter, I might have been with those guys. Most of the other racers in the loop one group quit during or after loop two. Flyin' Brian Robinson was the only racer to attempt 4 & 5 and actually set a new record, finishing in just over 55 hours. He is amazing but also not mortal!

So, did I have fun? For the most part yes. It's a great group of people. The RD is a nut but fun also. The course is not as intimidating now that I am somewhat familiar with it but knowing you have to hit certain points again and again fry you mentally (Testicle Spectacle, Rat Jaw, Big Hell, Danger Dave's Climbing Wall).

Would I do it again? YES, absolutely, if I can get picked again BUT a lot different preparation.

What would I do different? More hills, tons of scouting, don't get sick, more hills, tons of scouting, longer runs, more hills, tons of scouting, much longer runs... Get the picture?

The story above is from the 2008 Barkley. Jon just participated in the 2009 event with less favorable results than in 2008. However, he showed up to run this year's event after having been sick for the 2 weeks prior to the event.



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Adventure World Magazine Navigation Challenge: Round 7

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@adventureworldmag-azine.com True North and Grid North are assumed to be identical on this 1:24K map.

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

Checkpoint	Instruction	Question
Start	Southern most point of Highway 93	What is the UTM of this location?
CP 1	Follow Hwy 93 NNW to the first intersection with a unmade road.	What is the distance between the Start and CP 1 in miles?
CP 2	Follow the unmade road South to its end.	What is at this location?
CP 3	Climb to the peak of Sugarloaf Mountain	What is the elevation at the top of Sugarloaf Mountain?
CP 4	Find the power line pylon that is furthest East in grid square 0704 3987	Give the UTM of this pylon.
CP 5	Follow the road to the center of the Hoover Dam	What is the approximate elevation of the dam road?
CP 6	Travel by the fastest route to UTM 0703080 3988130	What is at this location?
CP 7	Travel from CP 6 directly North until you reach the water.	How many power lines were crossed?
CP 8	Pick up your boats and paddle to the 345 mile marker on the Colorado River.	What is the UTM of this location?
CP 9	Find the highest point on Promontory Point.	What is the bearing from CP 8 to the benchmark on the highest point on Promontory Point?
CP 10	Travel back to the Hoover Dam.	At what mile marker of the CO River is the Dam located?
Finish	Email your answers to: info@adventureworldmagazine.com	



WWW.ARNavSupplies.COM

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 ind it is easy to see how the Adventure racing navigator can benefit from the Basic Roamer© AR. www. BasicRoamerAR.com.







Adventure Racing Rotating Map Holder

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 <u>http://www.arnavsupplies.com/products.html</u> Positioned for easy reading it will make bike navigation much easier. Proven in many races and successfully used in 2006 USARA National Championships.

The Adventure Racing Waterproof Pedometer

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.

Check out the full line of navigation products from AR Navigation Supplies including: Waterproof Map Cases, Racing Compasses, Waterproof Pens, MYTopo Maps, Nav Practice Guides & More!



Trail Runners For 2009-Part 1!

We have been testing trail running shoes for the last 3 months. We received so many submissions that we have decided to split up the field up into 2 issues. Our editor's choices will appear in the next issue along with being posted on our website.



Saucony Xodus

MSRP: \$100

Stability is a must on the trail, and the Xodus delivers. With the Arch-Lock system those of us that need good arch support have it in this lightweight trail runner. Arch-Lock provides a tight fit in the mid section of the foot to hold the arch in place. The Vibram outsole is grips nicely and prevents slippage well on wet surfaces.

www.saucony.com

Brooks Cascadia 4

MSRP: \$100

This versatile trail shoe has a stylish breathable upper for those warmer days on the trail. The outsole has excellent traction that grips both road and rock equally well. The carbon footprint on these kicks is a bit smaller too since the BioMoGo midsole is biodegradable.

www.brooksrunning.com





Merrell CP Paragon

MSRP: \$90

Light and airy are two words that describe the Paragon well. If your foot tends to get warm on the trail, look no further. The Paragon has a mostly mesh upper and breathes like sandal. The front of the outsole has multiple grooves for great traction when working up speed on inclines. At 11.2 ounces you won't be complaining about weight either. www.merrell.com



Nike Air Pegasus 25 ESC

MSRP: \$85

We all remember the Nike Air's of old. Well their still around, and now their kicking up trail dust. The Pegasus 25 ESC holds its own in the back country with water repellence, and a stone shield built into the sole to protect from nasty stone bruises. Not to mention the gusseted tongue keeps out nasty trail debris so you don't need to slow down. www.store.nike.com

La Sportiva Wildcat

MSRP: \$100

The name says it all. From the moment that I removed this shoe from the box and placed it on my foot for the first time...I felt like a nimble jungle cat. The shoe offered excellent traction, great protection in a lightweight shoe and worked well on a variety of terrains from loose soil to hard pack (also performed well with short forays on asphalt when needed to get to the next trailhead).

www.sportiva.com





Pearl Izumi SyncroSeek 3 WRX

MSRP: \$120

The name may be long, but the trail will seem short in these water resistant beauties. The SyncroSeek 3 WRX uses a coated tightly woven material in the upper to keep the elements out. You'll have to do better than stepping a puddle or running in a hard rain to get your feet wet in Pearl Izumi's latest creation. With additional features like a toe bumper and a seamless interior for blister prevention you'll be ready to take these out for more difficult jogs. www.pearlizumi.com



Vasque Blur SL

MSRP: \$100

This is a redesign (upper only) of it predecessors and we really like the enhancements. The Blur provided great support, traction and excellent cushioning. This is one of the only trail shoes that felt good on both road and trail. I can't wait for them to implement the BOA technology into the Blur.

www.vasque.com

Inov-8 Roclite 295

MSRP: \$95

Minimal cushioning is a trait characteristic of all Inov-8 shoes. However, you will be pleased with the instant feedback that you receive from your foot as it allows your foot to contour to the trail giving you better control under foot. This allows you to develop better form on the trail. Whether you are a recreational runner or a seasoned, endurance athlete...these shoes will go the distance. Not to mention that they are lightweight and roomy. www.inov-8.com





Lafuma Akteon OT

MSRP: \$130

I was a little overwhelmed when I first saw this shoe due to its size. However, the shoe actually felt lighter once it was on my foot and was quite pleased with the great fit. I think it is best suited as a light hiker or approach shoe but I see getting many miles out of this shoe in the coming months. www.lafumausa.com



www.tripsforkids.org (415)458-2986 national@tripsforkids.org

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Many kids never leave their own neighborhood to enjoy the beauty of nature. That's why we started Trips for Kids, a national non-profit organization that provides mountain bike rides and environmental education for disadvantaged youth. You can start a Trips for Kids chapter in your area. We'll assist you, at no charge, by supplying bikes and helmets, and support based on 20 years of experience.

Or make a difference by donating money, bikes or equipment (new or used). All donations are tax-deductible.

gear closet

Montrail Masochist

MSRP: \$95

This is an extremely versatile trail shoe that fit like a glove right out of the box. It is flexible, lightweight and feels great on any trail surface. The Gryptonite sole provided excellent traction. In our opinion...this shoe should be called the Anti-Masochist as we found it an extreme pleasure on some very challenging terrain.

www.montrail.com











Patagonia Release

MSRP: \$110

I am excited to see the company's foray into the performance shoe market. The release sports a Vibram outsole with a recycled EVA midsole (not that we did not expect an environmental appraoch as well). We feel that the release is better suited as an approach shoe or a light hiker. However, we hear that Patagonia has more in store for the future of its shoe line which will include trail running specific shoes. www.patagonia.com



Some of our other favorite items for hitting the trail this spring and summer!



Golite DriMove L/S Top

MSRP: \$50 www.golite.com

Mountain Hardwear Refueler Advance Short

MSRP: \$55 www.mountainhardwear.com



Patagonia Alpine Wind Jacket

MSRP: \$100 www.patagonia.com





Gregory Miwok

MSRP: \$99 www.gregorypacks.com



Scavenger Hunt

What You Need:

1 Pen 1 Piece of Paper

How To Play

First you will need a scavenger hunt list. This list should have things that you could find in the area of your hunt. You can do this as a team or as a competition. Once you have the list, each group will be given a certain amount of time to find as many items on the list as possible. After exploring for the things on your list and time is up, meet back together and see how many things you were able to find from the list.

Scavenger Hunt List Example:

- Large pinecone Wishbone stick Feather Skipping stone 4 types of leaves
- Yellow flower Multi colored rock Piece of garbage Bark

Note: Depending on where you have your scavenger hunt, the items you will find can be very different. So think about what you might find in your local area!



The Go Outside mission is to promote an appreciation of the outdoors and healthy lifestyles in children through positive outdoor experiences, physical activity and education.



Kid's Zone



Nomad Kid's Shelter

MSRP: \$82

Erects in less than a minute and packs down to nothing, this handy little shelter provides enough shade for the whole family. Great for a day at the beach, a soccer game or just plain old fun and adventure in the backyard.

www.nomad.info



Skuut

Skuut is a wooden balance bike for kids ages 2-5. There are no training wheels or pedals. It allows children to learn balance and make the transition to a traditional bike much easier. www.skuut.com

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ON THE HORIZON

Coming up in future issues:

Feature Articles:

- Producing Your First Event
 - 'Green' Gear
 - Training and Pregnancy
 - Adventure Destination: Trinidad & Tobago
 - Paddling Special Issue
 - Cross Training Options

Gear Reviews:

- Water Shoes/Sandals
 - Sunglasses
- Socks And More!

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



National Ranking System

Presented by



April 4, 2009

POINTS

TEAM NAME

1.	Vignette	122.00
2.	INERTIA	72.00
3.	Houston Adventure Racing Team	66.00
4.	Werewolves of Austin	51.00
5.	HoustonAdventureRacing.com	51.00
6.	Team Peanut Butter	48.00
7.	Alpine Shop	45.00
8.	Berlin Bike	41.00
9.	Lab Rats	41.00
10.	HART/Houston Adventure Racing Team	38.00



May 4, 2009

TEAM NAME POINTS

1.	Vignette	122.00
2.	Berlin Bike	111.00
3.	Checkpoint Zero/Inov-8	97.00
4.	Shake-A-Leg Miami	79.00
5.	Team Peanut Butter	79.00
6.	INERTIA	72.00
7.	Relentless	67.00
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it happened to me!

Run Aground

Story by Chance Reading

One summer weekend a few years back, I went with my girlfriend to visit her family and spend a relaxing weekend in northern California. They live in a small town east of San Francisco on the delta, an expansive waterway that spider webs in from the coast all the way to Sacramento. These waterways are surrounded by levees and some of the richest farming land in the world. Ships and personal crafts swarm the waterways passing old shipping centers, finding fishing holes and occasionally even wake boarding.

A good family friend, Captain Kurt, came over on Saturday afternoon and offered a quick sailboat ride around the delta before dinner. My girlfriend and I gladly accepted this opportunity to get out on the water. I bounced upstairs, dumped my pockets, grabbed my wallet and was out the door in shorts, a t-shirt and my flip-flops.

A short drive over a draw bridge and a couple of levees brought us to a neat little marina located in a small nest of trees. We parked and headed down to the boat. Although a bit dusty from lack of use, the 21 foot sail boat seemed in overall great shape and we gladly pulled our small ice chest aboard and were off in just minutes.

We motored slowly out of the little cove and into a larger arm of the delta heading back towards town. There was a mild crosswind and the temperature was just starting to cool off the warm day. We zigged and zagged across the wide channel and made steady headway. I relaxed and enjoyed being out on the water, watching a handful of boats head in for the day. The sun was getting lower in the sky and you could already tell the sunset was going to be fantastic.

As we moved across the water in one of our zigs, we held our path a bit long to avoid turning back into a motorboat that was heading our direction. Captain Kurt turned the wheel and loosened the sail, getting ready to turn to our right. The boat, leaning to the left in the wind, started to swing its nose around and then abruptly stopped.

On the delta, silt and sand line thousands of miles of waterways. This nutrient rich bed is what has made Central California one of the richest agricultural locations in the world. Unfortunately, this bed also shifts almost daily which makes it very difficult to keep up with. We were easily 50 yards from shore, but the deep shipping channel was located slightly to our right and our keel was stuck in the mud.

Not panicked, Captain Kurt worked to straighten us out and get us faced towards the deeper part of the channel. The gentle cross winds didn't seem so gentle anymore. The wind kept our sail from swinging over to the right side, which would have allowed us to sail back towards the channel. The harder the winds blew, the more the boat leaned over to the left, which raised the keel and took us into shallower water.

After a few minutes of unsuccessful maneuvering, Captain Kurt jumped into the shallow water to attempt the release the keel. He pulled one of the mast lines in the water with him and used it to pull the boat over, leaning hard to the left. At this point, we were "all hands on deck" and I was manning the wheel for the moment. Our captain then tried to walk the mast around so that we would be facing towards the opposite shore. This seemed like a good plan, but every time the keel came up out of the silt the wind blew the boat closer to shore

I jumped in the water to help out and my girlfriend took the wheel. Captain Kurt again pulled the mast down while I tried to push the boat back to deeper water. Nothing. My girlfriend jumped in and we both pushed against the boat, but the wind was too much. Then our captain reminded us that the delta is affected by the tides and the tide was going out. We were losing water depth by the minute and essentially fighting a losing battle.

As we looked out on the water for what to do next, the sun made its way down behind the tree cov-



ered levees. I was really regretting dumping my pockets before I left the house. My cell phone didn't make the trip and a quick count showed that all three of us had made the same mistake. We managed to flag down a boat in the dusky light, a couple of fisherman heading in for the day. They couldn't get close enough to help, due to the shallow water we were currently standing in, but we asked

them to please call the coast guard who were stationed only a mile or so upstream. They made the call and moved on their way.

We decided to abandon ship. Captain Kurt threw the anchor, just in case, and we gathered our belongings, including a flash light from the "emergency kit" and locked up the boat. The tide was dropping fast and the boat was going to have to spend the night exactly where it was. We turned our attention to the shore and looked towards a quick hike out. There was a thick green layer of trees and low shrubs lining the small beach. On either side of the beach, the growth extended out into the water which would have required a swim to access the far side. We began to pick our way through the foliage and things soon became messy. The sandy beach transitioned to a swampy puzzle of unbelievably dense, overgrown jungle.

Using the weak flashlight on hand, our forward motion was slow at best. My flip flops were now disappearing into knee deep, thick gooey mud, while my hands were working overtime solving the branch puzzle that blocked my path. After about 30 minutes of painstakingly slow progress, hunger, and darkness, full-blown frustration had set in. From the boat, it seemed as though the road was not that far, less than a mile or so. But now surrounded by blackness, our movements became a prisoner to the path of least resistance. Finally, we saw a light and a break in the brush. There was a boat. It was the Coastguard! And they were shining a light directly on our sailboat

We brushed off the fact that we just made a complete circle through the jungle because we thought we were rescued. We waded out in the water to get closer to the large Coastguard boat, yelling our explanation over the loud roar of the engines. We were asked to keep our distance and were told that we would not be able to board the boat. They could not get the large vessel close to shore due to shallow water and protocol did not allow us to swim out to meet them.

After a few moments of disgust, we accepted the fact that we were going to have a make a second attempt at the hike out, hopefully with better aim. Captain Kurt asked the Coastguard to call home and nicely ask his wife to come pick us up. Later, we would have a good laugh because of this phone call. Unbeknownst to me, this was apparently not all that strange of a situation for Captain Kurt, or his wife.

We set a solid, perpendicular path through the jungle this time and made every effort to keep with it. The "path of least resistance" no longer applied. All three of us were completely soaked, starving, bleeding from various branch encounters and starting to feel the rapid temperature drop. Shivering my way along, working to eek out the small amount of light coming from our weak flashlight, I noticed that we were approaching a break in the thick jungle and all I could see was water. My first thought was that we had done another circle in the jungle and I was spending the night on the beached sailboat. But, alas, we realized that we had actually been on an island. Very uncommon for this section of the delta, this island was fairly large and explained our earlier circle back to the sailboat. This time, we saw the road on top of the levee across the way. There was only one way out of this mess.

I put my wallet back in my mouth, where it had been for the last little while in a completely failed attempt to keep the contents somewhat dry. I also figured it would be the only place that I wouldn't lose it to the swamp gods. We did a double take for any boats and proceeded to make the 100 yard swim.

I worked to keep my imagination on positive things, like dinner and a warm blanket, but this was a bit scary. Not only was any moving vessel a real danger, but swimming that far across a current, when cold and tired and in the complete darkness, is not my idea of fun. Although, neither was spending the night on the beached sailboat, so across I swam.

We finally reached the far bank and were again greeted by thick, dense jungle. This was sloped upward to the road at the top of the levee, so we were saved from anymore postholing through swamp mud, which was nice.

About three hours after beaching the sailboat on our nice little predinner, sunset cruise, we pushed the last branch aside and stepped on pavement. We walked down a ways to an old dock where Captain Kurt's lovely wife was parked and waiting for us. She had towels waiting for us and the car's heater was on high. We quickly loaded up and she drove us back to the house. I proceeded to eat the most delicious cold dinner I have ever had. followed by an extra warm shower. I laid my wallet and its contents out to dry and crawled into bed.



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