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This Page: Day 5 - Wenger Patagonian Expedition Race Photo by Tony Hoare

editor's note



Celebrating our Environment

Happy 40th Anniversary to Earth Day!

When we started Adventure World online in 2008, we knew that we were on to something great and were dedicated to preserving our natural environment by producing the publication digitally. Our old growth forests are still being destroyed for more wood/paper, a sea of plastic that is larger than most states is floating in our oceans, we are still largely dependent on oil as our primary energy source, and the list goes on.

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Reduce your impact on our planet by commiting to changes in your daily life to make our planet a better place for all that live here!

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

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contributors



Harper is captain and navigator of Team Running Free, an Ontario-based adventure racing team that races locally and around the US/Canada. This year they are focused on defending their FAC Canadian Championship title, Wilderness Traverse 24 and Untamed New England. Harper is a biostatistician when he's not running around in the woods.



Dave Romilly is a 31 year old Civil Engineer who resides in Kensington, NH with his wife and two cats. Dave and fellow teammates started GRANITE AR about 1.5 years ago and built the team around a strong desire to explore the expansive woods of New Hampshire.



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February 2010

TEAM NAME

POINTS

1.	HoustonAdventureRacing/Hammer	105.00
2.	Trakkers	79.00
3.	iM.O.A.T.	55.00
4.	Team Kuat	44.00
5.	Bikes Plus - Little Rock	41.00
6.	HFAR Knights (of Ni)	41.00
7.	TexasAdventureRacing.com II	35.00
8.	Werewolves of Austin	29.00
9.	DFW Hounds	29.00
0.	TooCoolRacing.com	26.00

March 2010

1.	HoustonAdventureRacing/Hammer	105.00
2.	Trakkers	97.00
3.	Berlin Bike	95.00
4.	HFAR Knights (of Ni)	82.00
5.	Eastern Mountain Sports	69.00
6.	Werewolves of Austin	67.00
7.	ARMD (Adventure Racing Maryland)	61.00
8.	iM.O.A.T.	55.00
9.	Vignette	44.00
10.	Team Kuat	44.00

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Remembering John Walker

We mourn the loss of a great competitor and good friend, John Walker. In December, John lost the final battle in his ongoing war with cancer. John is survived by his wife Vanessa. John was one of the pioneers of American Adventure Racing. John served on the USARA board, was a competitive adventure racer & duathlete. I could write pages about John, but thought it would be more appropriate to have his friends share some of their favorite memories of times spent with John.

I'm going to start with a mostly non adventure racing story about John. We were at the USARA Nationals in Missouri and were eating breakfast together. I went to get some breakfast from the buffet and left John at the table with my 1 year old daughter who had taken a real liking to him. When I returned John had Izzy's high chair pulled really close to him and his face was right down there by my daughters face. I asked, what are you doing John? His reply was I'm trying to teach your daughter how to wink. We all laughed and did not think much about it at the time. Over the next few days we quickly realized that when my usually smiley 1 year old daughter tried to wink at someone, what happened was a very serious scowling face. I teased John and told him he should go into the child care business because there are just not enough scowling kids these days and he had perfected the method in a few short minutes. We all had a lot of laughs and thankfully little Izzy outgrew the Walker scowl fairly quickly.

I had met John in the early days



of American adventure racing. Although we lived a few states apart, each year we raced against each other at the USARA sprint national championships in Florida. John became part of the USARA board and was a big part of shaping adventure racing in the US. Our friendship grew over the years and we got to know John's wife, V a little too. I will always remember John as a loyal, positive, and enthusiastic ad-

venturer. Towards the end John & I had several talks and it gives me great comfort to know John was a strong & faithful Christian. We'll miss you Johnny, Godspeed. *-Troy Farrar*

This race was a few weeks before the Duathlon National Championships, and it was held on a steamy hot and humid Wednesday night in Coconut Grove. We planned on meeting up at the starting line, and when the gun went off John, Javier, and I ran together for the first three or four miles. We ran in a tight little group and were just chatting away and sharing the lead. I remember thinking to myself that John was running really well despite claims that he had not been training a ton that winter. Eventually, if I recall correctly, on the way back up the slightly uphill Old Highway we separated a bit but all finished in about the same time in the end.

Duathlon Nationals, Richmond, Virginia.

John was my roommate and the hero of the weekend. John raced on both Saturday and Sunday, and his spirit was inexhaustible. I was tired from walking around in the heat on Saturday before Sunday's race and John was his usual mellow can-do self. We walked to dinner and all had a fun time. There was a lot of stress in the air due to the high temperatures but John didn't seem to worry. The day of the race, it was crazy hot, John impressed us all by having a good race after having raced the day before and despite the extreme conditions. I am pretty sure he beat me that day, it was so tough. Looking back it is hard to believe he raced twice, and lugged two bicycles around all weekend and didn't let any of the logistics hold him back from having fun and racing well. There are all kind of guys that race and John was the type who took everything in stride, didn't let obstacles bring him down, and always performed well.

When I think about John I think of a few things: I admired his dedication to helping his niece improve her running, he was a great sport and fun competitor, his calm tone and the way he carried himself, his varied interests in both sports and in career, and his slightly mischievous smile and hilarious laughter.

The punchline is this - John was a great guy, and I am so glad that we all got to know each other and laugh. That all started at the qualifying race in Sharks Classic and that friendship took us all the way to Italy. -Joe G.

I met John when he approached me about becoming a third partner in our company Adventurous Concepts. He was excited about the sport of adventure racing and wanted to be part of its development in South Florida. John brought a lot of valuable knowledge to our young company and was an extremely smart and friendly person with a great passion for this new sport.

We used to scratch a line in the dirt as our finish line but then John came along and had bigger ideas. He brought in sponsors, created our website, increased the number of racers attending and made sure we had an actual "finish line" for racers to cross under. He brought class to our simple events.

John was a competitor as well as a business partner. He and his team would compete as Team Adventurous Concepts for many years. I think people always suspected that he might have "inside information" about the race courses. John made sure he was separated from the race details and course designs. This became quite evident to all the other racers when Team Adventurous Concepts, who were fairly competitive, finished in last place in more than a few of our races. It took a long time for them to lose the name "Lost Concepts" that other teams jokingly renamed them.

John was an energetic, hard-working, honorable, and generous partner and friend. All adventure racers benefited from his efforts. I will miss him as will the adventure racing community that knew him. *-Jim Molaschi*

FC2C will be held in memory of John Walker, one of the founding members of the Florida Coast to Coast Adventure Race, who passed away recently from Colon Cancer. John was a key catalyst in developing the sport of Adventure Racing in Florida and one who espoused integrity, optimism, and commitment. In his honor, AC will contribute to the John A. Walker Memorial Foundation, Inc for every team that participates. *-Elias Jimenez*.

I began racing with John Walker as a part of Team Adventurous Concepts back in 2000. Over several years of excruciatingly long paddles, painful blisters and sleep deprivation, we as teammates developed a friendship that extended beyond racing. John's animated personality provided endless entertainment during long races and training sessions, while his motivation and legendary speed made him the driving force behind our team. While John was intensely competitive, he never expressed anger or blame towards any of his teammates when we fell behind or got lost, which unfortunately happened often (hence our self-imposed nickname of "Lost Concepts'). Instead. John used humor to alleviate the frustration of setbacks and



the disappointment of loss. He did this both on the race course and off. And John, ever the example of humility, was often the subject of his own humor. For instance, he was not afraid to tell anyone how he made my husband, Jamie, carry him through a wet bog, refusing to get his last pair of dry socks wet. Later that day, however, it was John who sacrificed his socks by making multiple trips into an alligator infested canal to wet our hats after he noticed we were suffering from heat exhaustion. We ended up pulling out of that race, and while I am sure John was disappointed, he never showed it. John always acted as if the stories of heroics and mishaps gained from these races meant more to him than any medal or ribbon. I think that says a lot about someone with such an astonishing list of achievements. There wasn't anything John couldn't accomplish that he put his mind to. That is why I am certain that had John's cancer had been diagnosed earlier and he had been given a fair fight, he would have won that battle. He fought the battle anyhow, regardless of the odds given to him, with the same determination, toughness and humor we knew and loved. I have learned a lot about character from John Walker, and I consider it an honor to have been his teammate and friend. *-Kerri Scolardi*

John Walker was more than just a friend to me, he was a brother. We grew close, along with our other 3 teammates, through years of adventure racing together on Team Adventurous Concepts. Adventure racing is a unique sport in that you tend to form very tight bonds with your teammates. You get to know each other very well through the long hours you spend together, through the highs and lows you experience together, through problem-solving together, and, best of all, laughing together. John was our funniest member and would always have us laughing with his stories. He was also our most talented athlete although he would be too modest to ever acknowledge that fact. Because he was so strong, I always knew that I could count on John for support when I was feeling weak or encouragement when I was feeling low. This was not only true in races but in life as well. I have so many happy memories of John, however, one of my favorites isn't from racing at all. It's from a trip he, my husband and I took to Tsali, North Carolina to train. On our way into the park one morning we spotted an extremely weak and emaciated stray dog wondering by the road. John pulled over and I called out to her. She ran right over to us smelling like a skunk. Without a moment's hesitation, he put her in his brand new Tahoe SUV and drove her to the local animal shelter. Later, when my husband and I decided to keep her, he drove her, bathed but still very stinky, all the way back to Florida with us. This is just one example of his very big heart.

When our adventure racing days came to an end, all 5 of our team members remained close. We celebrated holidays, birthdays, vacations, weddings and births together. We truly enjoyed each other's company and cared about one another. On December 14th, 2009 Team Adventurous Concepts lost its greatest member, my "brother", John Walker. Words cannot express how much I miss him and the size of the hole he left in my heart. However, I have ten years of incredible memories that I'll treasure forever. And John left us one last gift, his wonderful wife Vanessa. She is now our honorary 5th teammate... always will be. I miss you Johnnie.

-Allison Fontana

John & I became teammates right from the start of our adventure racing days. We didn't know each other at the time but we were both looking to put a team together. We quickly became good friends, racing and training each week, and our team eventually grew to include 5 members: John, Allison, Kerri, Jamie and myself.

John became our most talented teammate and excelled in running and biking way beyond the rest of us. If you knew John you knew he was super competitive and always wanted to win, yet he was very modest about his skills and accomplishments. He always kept the team moving together, doing whatever it took to get ahead even if that meant arguing about something just to keep us awake. As John would say "real adventure racers don't sleep in the first 24 hours of a race". He also kept the team laughing with his quick-witted one-liners and his animated story telling. We knew to keep our distance during one of his stories to avoid getting hit by his flailing hands or frightened by the loud smack of some sort that he always included.

One of my favorite racing quotes from John, which he usually said during the paddling sections because I was hounding him to keep moving, was "I'm doing the best that I can". This was always true of John. You could count on it. He attacked whatever task was at hand, whether it was at work or at play, and he always gave it his all.

Over the years our team became family and we have adventure racing to thank for that. All the road trips together, the preparing for races, the meals after the races... that's what made it fun to be together. John, I'm proud to have known you, to have raced with you, and most of all, to have been your friend.

-Mike Fontana

His friends and I established the John A. Walker Memorial Foundation, in December 2009, the week of his passing. It just felt wrong to have someone so young, so athletic, and so healthy slip away without telling the world what a treasure was lost. Beyond the sudden death of a 44 year-old athlete was the stunning speed in which he departed (December 14th), only 15 weeks after diagnosis, and more shockingly, only 19 weeks after coming in 3rd overall in his last triathlon, August 8th, 2009.

We believe his athleticism allowed his body to fight until the final stages. His body, such a well honed machine, had been trained to withstand 80 mile rides and 30 mile runs per week in the hot July weather in sunny South Florida as he trained for the October, Chicago Marathon. I began to believe the disease moves faster in an athlete of this caliber because his metabolism was operating at maximum, and cancer spreads faster than one's own metabolic rate. I began asking his oncologist if this could be the reason it spread so quickly and thought about Lance's four organ metastasis even before it had been discovered.

Dr. Caio Rocha-Lima of the prestigious UM Sylvester Cancer agreed to conduct research on the "metabolic rate of athletes with cancer." He and I believe the disease may behave differently in someone with a supercharged metabolism. I asked "how much would it take to conduct a study?", and the answer I received was shockingly low. "What we do need, are athletes with cancer, people in incredible shape to join this study," Dr. Rocha-Lima said.

We would like those of you who are suffering with cancer, or know an athlete with a similar, advanced stage diagnosis, to contact us at www.johnawalkerfoundation.com. The doctor would need to study your scans and progress through treatment. There will not necessarily be additional test or samples of any kind taken, just interaction with your doctor and a chart of the progression of your disease. We need 150 participants. I believe, as his caregiver and wife, John's disease was moving more rapidly because his metabolism aided it. If we slow down a person's metabolism while they undergo treatment, perhaps we can give their immune system enough chance to overwhelm the cancer or become more receptive to the treatments.

We plan to use funds from the John A. Walker Memorial Foundation in research of this type, and also to inspire physical fitness for adults. Please log onto to donate to a worthy cause.

Thank you, Vanessa Walker (John's wife)

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Adventure Sports Interview

An interview with The Dean of Extreme.

By Theressa Svobada

Doug Crytzer redefined his life. Now he's asking you (& your kids!) to redefine your own.

A marked event came in Doug Crytzer's career as an adventure racer when a he was interviewing for Extreme Wilderness Sports channel. A reporter cast him with a title he's lived up to: The Dean of Extreme. Now, running his own adventure racing camp for children, Crytzer has learned quickly there is no such thing as modest ambition. If you ever met Doug, you'd realize his ambition is contagious.

An experienced adventure racer and coach, Doug is setting a model with his first enterprise, American Adventure Sports, based in Western Pennsylvania. Pioneering his vision for a healthier family, The Dean is asking us all to live it, love it and share it with our kids. The it, being the message of healthful living, and putting it in the core of our family values. After years of successful experimenting through AAS adult and youth outdoor fitness camps, the "Dean of Extreme" is ready to tell all of us at the starting line how to navigate our way through the hurdles of life by knowing how to get to the finish. As with all adventure races, it's not an easy one, but the families that choose to stand in his line quickly learn the message he shares spreads quickly, and more kids than ever before are waiting to be led to a better life through healthful-minded living.



I got to meet up with the Dean himself deep in the Allegheny Mountains. When I arrived at his newest camp, an adventure racing camp designed for kids, I felt the greatness of his message and he was able to share it with me.

TS: Tell me more about American Adventure Sports. Years ago, your company introduced Yoga Fit Adventures: Adventure Within, Corporate Wellness Expeditions and Junior Naturalist Outdoor Adventure Camps (JNOAC) for kids. Now you have taken your junior outdoor graduates onto the next level in the first of its kind - Kids Adventuring Academy for kids. Is your message more about self-empowerment, giving kids a drive to be active or trying to give them a bit of what they're missing?

DC: Not a message so much as a mission. Our country is obese and out of shape. Each day, our chil-

dren are getting less healthy and more nature deficient. Not all of them but for the most part, a larger percentage each year. Children need some instruction on how to be healthy and appreciate the outdoors. If this country thinks that we have problems keeping up with the cost of health care now, wait another 20 years.

Many parents are either to busy, undisciplined, or afraid of being the "bad guy" in their children's eyes. So they don't ask their children to shut off the X-box or the TV to go outside and play. Parents need to learn that's not tough love, that's appropriate love.

When I hear parents complaining about their children spending too much time with the TV or video games, its upsetting. We need to be stronger by setting the appropriate example and exercising with our children. By eating healthy meals together and, not blaming our busy schedules on eating fast food for dinner. These are choices that we make as parents for our children.

We teach our campers the "Total Environment" principle. Part of this is having them understand that their body, their physical well being is a big part of their total environment. We always preach about healthy environment but, we usually don't include the human individual as the center of that Eco-system.

A big part of the reason we limit the number of attendees to our camps is we are able to maximize the learning experience. Some camps host thousands of campers each summer. I'm not interested in that. It can still be fun for the campers sure, but they won't walk away with the same experiences that our campers have. I personally know & work with every camper that comes to one of our camps.

Many of us have heard the youth of today being described as having a 'nature deficit'. What kind of child comes to your camp?

Fortunately for the children that attend our camps, they have parents who want them to be challenged, who want them to grow, who want them to love nature & in doing so, love themselves.

The problem is that, these types of parents are for sure the minority in our culture, not the norm. For every 1 parent like these, there are 4 parents saying that they can't get their children to shut off the TV & go outside & play. Too many parents, like so many of our countries leaders, are making excuses for the wrong reasons.

I notice going into your mess hall

at camp that it's a real clubhouse of sorts. What parent wouldn't want their kid eating organic food at every meal, playing chess or helping with the fire during downtime? Are you attempting the start of a mass turn around - a shift - to get all our youth outdoors?

I have had parents who where very healthy and very well educated tell me that they could not get their children to eat vegetables or salads. The key is to empower the child by teaching them to nurture their eco-system, which is their body. We do that by setting the example. Our leader-coaches are fit, they are naturalist's, they are high energy. That's why they are working for me.

The kids loved playing chess & checkers. When they weren't doing that they where playing domino's or, reading by a headlamp. Sitting around the camp fire (which they started with flint & steel) and telling stories. This is how we get the world off of their backs. get the technology out of their heads. I forbid technology in our camps. Our leaders will confiscate any technology that we find.

The kids have an adventure race after learning the skills taught by you and your team of experts. I was able to follow your two teams during the race and was blown away. It was awesome to see these teams work together. Your campers spend the week learning how to tie in to ropes, climb, rappel, orienteering by using a topographical map, canoe and mountain bike. Why do you think the kids (ages 11-15) make adventure racing seem so easy?

The campers that you observed at the Adventure Racing Academy have been with us for an average of four years. We teach them to the same standard as we teach the Expedition Racers that attend our adult academy. As you saw their skill sets are well evolved for children their age.

They did a great job of racing as a team and motivating each other. I was pleased with their drive and





determination. Most adults could not have done that canoe portage back up the mountain any better.

I was moved by how much the experience meant to them. To see children crying because they were so happy with what they had accomplished & so proud of themselves, nearly brought me to tears. That was one of the most perfect moments in my life.

In the history of adventure racing, you were the first director to change the dynamic of a group race, allowing every team a chance to finish. Can you explain more about the changes you have made to your races that are pioneering a new standard of team adventure competitions?

I don't know that I was the first. I just know that I have been told by many that their first time with the new format was with us. Adventure Racing used to be linear by design. In order to complete the race, you had to knock off 1 check-point at a time, and in order. If you missed a check point, you would not finish the race. The old format really limited a team's ability to develop a strategy that supported their team strengths. It also caused a lot of teams to not finish, simply because they missed a single check point. Nobody wants to compete that hard and not have success. It also felt elitist to me which I did not like.

Many other race directors are now using that format, which is flattering.

I wanted to designed courses that challenged teams mentally and physically. With the new format, teams have tons of choices to select from in terms of route strategy. Also, with checkpoints being given a point value based on the distance to them and the difficulty of terrain, race strategy is evolving, making adventure racing even more interesting. Finally, it gives racers the opportunity to succeed.

We kept reinforcing the same lessons at the Kids Adventure Racing Academy. Race as a team, don't race your teammates. Take time to make good decisions. Your team is only as strong as your weakest member. Synergy is an energy multiplier. The only failure is in not trying, etc. All of these messages are life lessons, life tools if you will, that we teach our campers through sports and competition.

I want to know what you say to these kids every day. A guy like you isn't about dazzle. Your message is probably the same at the start of the camp week than it is when you say goodbye to your campers. Your constant message to them is what?

It's your life, your body, your ecosystem, your path.

Our children are amazing. The weak link in the American culture right now is the adult, not the child! Our children aren't corrupt. They're not selfish. They are strong and courageous and when we empower them and challenge them they can amaze us all. We can learn from them.

It makes me laugh when I hear some old guy talk about how tough they had it growing up. Sure the depression was tough and the great wars where tough but, when I was growing up there were no drive-by shootings, no school shootings, no crack cocaine, no internet or Nintendo. Life was a lot more simple and easier to maneuver through. Kids today face very tough challenges while growing up. That is why it is important to challenge them through physical exertion. That's why it is important that they spend time in the calmness and beauty of nature, away from the trappings of today's hectic lifestyle.

I can only sense a man like you

has bigger visions. We talked a bit about this. You have some experience in going green, right?

Our AAS staff cottage is about 70% green. The cottage is cooled naturally by an underground spring in the summertime with double the amount of fans in a normal space. All of the windows & doors are recycled. All of the wood was cut by our Amish neighbor & is a renewable resource when managed properly.

As far as training, we are going to produce both an Adventure Racing Academy & a Triathlon Camp for Kids in 2010. We need to continue to evolve our training methods to grow as an organization by challenging ourselves as leaders.

We hired Alisa Pitt who is a Collegiate National Champion and all around amazing person to evolve our camps and she is doing amazing things. I'm really excited for this years camps.

Camp had stacks of recyclables you were saving to haul back home and you serve up organic meals for your campers. Now you are thinking about incorporate a farming education/ all natural/sow-what-you-grow during camp. How will you achieve this goal?

Our ultimate goal is to have a camp where the campers tend their own organic garden, harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables daily, collecting eggs each morning from the camp's free range chickens, drinking water from a spring and showering in solar showers. At the Adventure Racing Academy the campers had free time each day to



rest their bodies from all the physical training that we do. Often they would catch fresh fish which they learned to clean and prepare.

We also are focusing on re-usable sources of energy such as wind, solar and water; campers are building solar panels and wind turbines.

You are not alone in this, Doug. What drives you to fulfill your promise of helping the youth of tomorrow?

I consider it my responsibility to give back as much as possible as I have been so blessed. I have lived an amazing life. I have 3 beautiful and healthy children who all love nature. Providing scholarships to those less privileged is an honor for me. Each one of us can make a difference for improving our environments. This is 1 small way that I am able to impact my own.

Doug Crytzer lives in Indiana County, Pennsylvania. A retired Army paratrooper and mountaineering instructor, professional mountain biker and kayaker, Doug is the founder of American Adventure Sports. To continue your journey from the starting line, go to http://americanadventuresports. com/jradracecamp.htm



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Jeam Untamed New England At The End Of The World

Story by Harper Forbes

For the past few years our team has talked about doing one of the most isolated, pristine and truly epic adventure races out there the Wenger Patagonian Expedition Race. We had seen the pictures and spoke with past racers who confirmed this is one amazing experience. Unfortunately our regular teammate - John Ranson - could not make the commitment with Denise Rispolie, James Galipeau and myself. It was November and the race was in only 3 months so we needed to contact some others we knew who might be up for the task. The first person we asked was Andrew Cameron, from Team Salomon-Suunto. We'd raced with him twice in the summer of 2009, both to some enjoyable overall wins, so we knew he'd be a great fit, plus a very strong athlete and navigator. Amazingly he responded he was up for the challenge and our team was set.

Next, we contacted some companies who we thought might be interested in helping us with some of the extensive gear required. The

amount of support companies we received was outstanding - companies like Princeton Tec, Hilleberg the Tentmaker, Fox River Socks, Aquatabs, Icebreaker, Meal Kit Supply Canada, Smith Optics, Mountain Hardware along with our usual sponsors Running Free and Salomon, Phat Moose and Rohloff - all provided us with some essential equipment needed for a successful race. We would be named after our title sponsor (and a favorite race of ours!) Team Untamed New England (which drew some curious questions given our home country of Canada!).

We took the 20+ hour flight out as late as possible, missing the official registration and crammed in registration, grocery shopping, packing and testing for the next few days in Punta Arenas prior to race start. The international atmosphere and an exciting course preview had us restless in the nights prior to the race. The course would feature an 8K paddle across the Strait of Magellan, followed by a mix of 300+K of trekking and biking across the relatively flat portions of Northern Tierra Del Fuego. Once at the south end of the island, it featured a 100+K trek across the Darwin Cordillera, featuring many mountain passes and basically up-and-down (repeat 5-7 times) for the entire trek. Finally arriving near the Beagle Channel, we would kayak 50K across to Navarino Island where a 40K trek and similarly distanced mountain bike took us to the finish in Puerto Williams, the southernmost city on earth. Total distance was right around 600K.

The maps were a mix of rough satellite images on a 1:200,000 scale with the occasional 1:50,000 "contours only" detail, all featuring contour intervals of 100m! Such large scale maps would make navigating difficult as we had heard from previous years. Apparently these maps were even better than in years past too! Checkpoints were pre-plotted with recommended routes, which usually made good route-sense. The course designer Stjepan had spent the last 18 months scouting all areas of the route so the sug-



gestions were not taken lightly, although we did veer off them occasionally, usually on purpose ;) The other important note about the race was that gear bags were to be separated by specific checkpoints, so no one was going to have their own gear bag at every checkpoint transported every time; instead, we had to pack our bags according to the section following the checkpoint. Smart packing was essential with respect to clothing and food for race success.

The race start consisted of a bus ride to the Strait of Magellan where high winds/swells forced Stjepan to cancel the paddle at the advice of the Chilean coast guard. We took a ferry ride across to Tierra Del Fuego and within minutes the race was on. Since the paddle was cancelled the 'trek' was increased another 5K or so, making it a half-marathon distance along the beachline. Teams were told not to stray off the beach since there were land mines still in the upper shoreline - remnants from the former war between Argentina and Chile for the possession of Tierra del Fuego. We weren't sure how fast the

start would be considering we had about 8 days of racing to do, but we found out quickly that the top teams would be running this at a very strong pace. With our ~25lb packs we followed suit and were finally racing! The sand was slow going and I'm pretty sure we all redlined for the first few hours along the beach. Not the start we expected but we made it into the first CP/ TA in 5th. We assembled our bikes as soon as we could but our slow transition (a recurring theme in this race for us) got us out in 7th, where we made our way along the gravel roads of Tierra del Fuego.

The wind! Wow... is all I can say. We were blown all over the place with a constant wicked 60-80km/h head/crosswind coming in from the Strait of Magellan. We formed a diagonal pace line (echelon) and tried to stay on our bikes as much as possible. The first 30K along the coast took us nearly 3 hours! It was mentally very tough to be pushing so hard pacelining at just 10km/h and having to pedal downhill at 12km/h! We did get through it, albeit with several comical crashes, and managed to pass the 2 other

teams that beat us out of the TA in the process. Once out of the head/ crosswind we had the wind at our backs for the complete opposite experience. No need to pedal as we were pushed 35km/h with NO EF-FORT. Some uphills didn't even require pedalling... it was nuts. We eventually made it further inland where wind wasn't as much of an issue and into the next CP/TA. At the TA we disassembled our bikes and changed into our trekking gear. I think we were somewhere around 5th. Unfortunately our transition bag had not arrived, where I had placed our detailed (1:100,000) trekking maps, food and clothing for the next section. All the teams were in the same boat for this section though; the ferry we caught across the Straight of Magellan earlier that morning was closed shortly after our sail due to high winds and heavy seas, stranding our gear bags on the mainland. That explains our difficulty biking! It wasn't too much of a hindrance though, as the race provided some food and our cycling clothing was still dry.

For the next trek we decided to veer off the recommended route and take the road to the next CP, followed for a while by adventure racer-turneddocumenter Mike Kloser, who was down to film footage and ask ARrelated questions while racing. It was a boring trek, where we decided to run for 1 min and speedwalk the next minute, repeating this as long as we could for the ~40km to the CP. It took us through the night and into morning when we arrived at CP5 shortly after the Swiss and Helly Hansen who were vying for 1st place. Our gamble had paid off taking the roads and we used the same thinking (roads) to CP6. The

roads would add a good 5K or so to the 18K trek but since the maps were so poorly detailed and we now were in some hilly areas, it seemed like a logical choice. Once again, it paid off and we came into transition 1st, 4 minutes before Helly Hansen and 10mins before the 3rd place Spanish team.

We had a really slow transition here, taking just over an hour to build our bikes and eat, whereas Helly Hansen was out in less than 20 minutes! We had been pushing at near full-steam for the last 30 hours so I think that also slowed our eagerness to get on the bikes. The Spanish beat us out of the TA as well, although one of them was begging around for spare chainring bolts. James lent him his spare bolt to help fix it but I think they guy just ended up removing his middle chainring completely.

Once on our bikes we were subject to the harsh Patagonian winds and decided to walk our bikes over several extremely windy parts to ensure we stayed on the road and away from the roadside cliff. For a while again we were joined by Mike Kloser who had no trouble keeping up with us on our loaded bikes. After about an hour of some technical doubletrack James' seatpost bolt exploded and we had to do some repairs. After a few iterations of creative zip-tying and duct-taping and an eventual supplement of a rack strap, it seemed to support James very well for the remaining ~150km. We had lost some time here, but it could have been much worse. We continued to plug along in a paceline for a long stretch heading further south across Chilean Tierra del Fuego. Eventually we passed the Spanish

team and darkness soon fell. We debated stopping to sleep at CP7 but decided to push through the next ~50km to CP8 - the transition to trekking. Andrew was battling the sleepmonsters but was quickly back in action after a little help from a caffeine pill. The remaining 50km on the bike was tough... mostly all uphill, with a huge ascent at the end which seemed to last forever. Denise, James and I were especially struggling with the climb and sleepiness at this point, the only cure seemed to be endless annoying banter and terrible singing, but we eventually made it over the pass and descended while the rain fell. It was a cold ride down the mountain and we were a little chilled when we eventually made it into the TA at CP8. Once there we took our first sleep of the race, deciding on 4 hours to get us fully recharged for the huge trekking portion of the race, which we estimated to be three days, but it was really anyone's guess.

After 4 hours of sleep we awoke to the Swiss, Spanish and German teams also in the TA about to de-

part. Helly Hansen had left in the middle of the night after getting a few hours rest. We took down camp, packed our bikes away and stowed 3 days of food each in our now monstrous packs. Though our packs were very heavy, we knew this weight investment would pay off later in the trek.

We ascended sharply into the Darwin Cordillera and the scenery was spectacular. We made it up and over the first major mountain pass, giving up spots to the Swiss, Spanish and Germans, who appeared to be quicker mountain trekkers.

Eventually we made it to CP9 at Profundo Valley, where the rappel was located and the Germans were just about to start. Waiting for them to rappel on the single line cost us a good hour of precious daylight, and we eventually made it down into the canyon after the rappel just before dusk.

We scrambled along boulders and llama trails between the canvon's massive walls for about 5km down to the end of the canyon, where it



opened up to a perpendicular valley between two alpine ridges. We were to take the Los Vientos pass (pass of the winds) located in a notch, high on the mountain. We had a lot of difficulty in this stretch due to the darkness – firstly because we prematurely thought we had reached the valley floor when we turned out to be still in the hanging valley at the exit of the canyon. This led to an unexpected and sketchy final decent into the valley. Additionally we could not seem to locate the recommended route up the following mountain.

After several hours attempting to locate where we were using triangulation off of night-cloaked features, we decided to bed down for a few hours until sunlight. We awoke halfway up the mountain, still unsure of our exact location, but decided we would try and go up a bit and maybe find the route from where we were. We were shortly cliffed-out into a slot canyon within the mountain and decided to turn around and descend back to the valley floor where we'd maybe try going around the mountain along the ocean's coast using the low tide instead of the recommended up and over. We trekked for an hour or so out to the shoreline until finally realizing the beach along the coast only ran 1km or so before steep sea cliffs plunged deeply into the water making our creative idea impassible. We went back to the mountain area and located the approximate start of the re-entrant of the recommended valley route and finally made our way up and over after wasting much time looking for alternate routes.

After finally gaining the ridge and stepping over the breath-taking



we finally ran into a volunteer who indicated the CP had been moved for safety reasons to 3K past the intended area. We'd wasted a good 3 hours of sunlight looking for this thing but we tried to remain positive, knowing that us and the four teams ahead of us had the same problem. The traverse was brutal basically you were dragged through ice-cold water. I am not sure why it wasn't placed higher – we may as well have swam it (which Helly

pass, we descended into the next

valley to the south where we fol-

lowed a river which would lead us

to CP10, a Tyrolean traverse over

the river. I took a mental break here

navigating and we started looking

around the wrong area for the CP,

but got back on track to the correct

area, and in the process realized it

was not in the intended spot. We

ran into several of the photogra-

phers who indicated they had been

dropped off at the headwater of

the river and couldn't find it from

their way either... We backtracked

Hansen did since it was so far off the documented location).

Once off the traverse, we changed quickly and were about to take our 'secret' route which was using a road unmarked on the topo maps that we had found in the road map given to us in our race package. It would make the trek a bit longer distance but wouldn't require us to traverse the Escondido Pass at night. As we were about to depart to the road I asked one of the volunteers how decent the road was. Maybe I shouldn't have asked because they indicated the road was not useable other than for military travel and that we could be detained for using it – D'OH! With that in mind we decided to abandon that idea and use the recommended route.We made it into the valley below the pass before nightfall but were unable to see much once it counted at the higher elevations. We continued up and up until we finally thought we had reached the pass. We descended and started heading down into the next valley but I quickly noticed all the elevation and streams were not going in the correct direction. Did we ascend over the wrong pass at night and into the wrong valley? We studied the maps to try and figure out where we were but at night we couldn't see anything helpful. We decided again to take rest and figure it out in the morning under light. I think we got maybe 4 hours again, although only 2 was intended but we slept through the alarm! We heard the Finnish team outside and we quickly broke down camp and looked around the fog to figure out where we were. Luckily a recognizable rainbow feature on a mountain range to the north allowed us to triangulate our position, which we realized was still shy of the Escondido Pass. The 100m contours had led us over a false summit and we still needed to go further south to hit the intended pass. We made it up and over and finally onto the next CP, trading spots with the



Patagonian Turba (peat bog) onto CP11. Since it appeared most of the high-elevation mountain trekking was over we really wanted to push until the paddle from this CP, however, we were told it was another 2 days trekking from here at a good pace. We needed to take stock of our food since we were on Day 3 of the trek and still had another potential 2 days. James was almost out of food after developing a voracious appetite during the first day of the trek, but Andrew, Denise and I had enough to share we figured. It would be tight, but I think we were in better shape compared to most teams already who'd passed through. Many were already out of food completely with 60K left still! On we pushed to CP12 situatied at a glacial morraine lake. I really wanted to get as much done as we could before dark but once again night descended a few hours before we could make the pass and we found ourselves unsure once more of exactly where we were on the mountain. The situation was compounded by a freak blizzard and a route which indicated there was only one correct valley to take once we arrived at the pass; any other valley would be disastrous. We kept our bearings and hit the proper elevations all according to the maps but the 100m contours would once again wreak havoc on us with us ascending and descending, running into cliff faces to the point where we didn't want to risk the incorrect descent and decided to bed down. As day broke I looked outside the tent only to see more blizzard and white-out conditions. Ugh!! We sat in the tent and drifted in and out of sleep until we heard voices. The

Fins once again were passing us

Finnish team over the infamous





while we slept! We took down the tent and could now see better than earlier. Over the Las Lagunas Pass and into the correct valley we went. Also catching up to us was the US team. GearJunkie.com. We had now dropped to 7th but assumed we would be given a time-bonus for the delay in finding the moved traverse CP, and we knew the other teams were out of food for a while so we maintained a positive attitude. The descent down the valley and into CP13 and CP14 were fairly uneventful, mostly downhill and easy to obtain. We normally would have ran this part as some of it was on llama trails (for the first time in the race!) but unfortunately Denise's leg/ankle was killing her, with a possible stress fracture, so we fast-hiked it as much as her leg would allow. From CP14 it was a coastal trek onto the paddle TA at CP15 where stop-time was also in effect (you could only leave from the paddle at 6:30am - no other time was allowed). We got into the camp, set up our tent and readied for the paddle the next day, setting our alarm for 4:30am. The winds whipped outside the tent and we all

next day. All of the sudden James yells out - "guys it's 5:35am, we slept through our alarm again!". We had 20 minutes to pack up, take down the tent and gear-up for a >50km ocean paddle and a 30km trek! I ran out of the tent to make sure they hadn't left yet and hoped to stall for time, when we luckily found out the paddle was going to be re-assessed at 7:00am because the swells were currently too dangerous for us to paddle. Whew! We got a huge break here or I'm not sure we would have made it. Around 9am we finally embarked on our first paddle of the race, across the legendary Beagle Channel. The race organizers decided to make it mandatory for all teams to stay together for the first 8km across the channel for safety reasons. The swells were reported at 1.5m but the boats were so stable, we felt more than safe paddling. As usual, the scenery surrounding us was stunning. Once all the teams were collected near the south shore of the Beagle Channel, the race re-started. It was the Swiss, Spanish, Germans, USA (GearJunkie, com), us and half of the Finnish team (they had to pull out due to an injury to a teammate). During the paddle we had the Chilean Coast Guard and Navy surrounding our kayaks!

The trek was to include an ascent to Mount King Scott but due to blizzards the previous day and the advice of Helly Hansen (who had completed the paddle/trek the day before and now finished in 1st place) the race organizers decided to skip this portion of the trek due to safety reasons. We were also informed that the final short bike was cancelled due to logistics in moving our bikes, so instead of having just under 24 hours to the finish line, we suddenly had less than 12! We hurriedly packed up and bushwhacked up to higher elevations which was extremely tough for Denise and her injury which was in full blown pain mode. Eventually we made up along the mountain plateau and criss-crossed the existing trail set by the earlier racers. At lower levels we bushwhacked until coming across the recommended trail to the finish. A painfully slow and sketchy boulder-strewn beach traverse took us to the finish. Under 7 days after starting the race we were finished! We were elated as this was the toughest race we had all ever done. We gave a short interview to the cameras and headed off to camp to congratulate all the other racers and get off our feet.

The next day we were transported to Puerto Williams and had a captains meeting to determine the ranking. Unfortunately, it was decided that no time bonuses were to be given for the incorrectly placed traverse (even though all teams after us were directed there exactly from the intended location) and we ended up in 6th overall, beat by the GearJunkies.com by a mere 45 minutes and out of the podium by only 3 hours, which is pretty negligible over 8 days. They also didn't penalize teams who had been given food by the race volunteers, which was a serious offence, but probably too hard to pinpoint who got what/where. We looked back and thought of all the times we wasted sleeping in, having slow transitions and trying to negotiate the alpine passes at night (the only time we seemed to arrive there) and it stings a little, but overall given the adversity of our bike mechanical and Denise's injury we did pretty well and know we could have easily been much further up the standings. After a 35-hour ferry ride back to Punta Arenas courtesy of the Chilean Navy we wrapped up the event by an awards ceremony party before heading back to Canada the next morning.Overall it was an incredible experience and one we will never forget. The scenery was the most beautiful we've ever witnessed and the absolute remoteness was incredible. We want to thank all of our family and friends for their encouragement before, during and after the race. You were in our thoughts at all of those tough times during the race. Also, we'd like to thank of all our sponsors for their support - we were truly amazed at how far beyond our expectations the equipment/food they provided us performed during the race in the most brutal conditions.

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The Coastal Challenge 'Route of Fire Edition' by TCC Adventures ...A Journey of Discovery

By Ty Stevens

THE EXPERIENCE:

Touted as one of TCC Adventures most epic, and enduring of running events. Route of Fire proved to be just that. In six days, runners from across the globe covered more than 220 kilometers of exotic and wild Costa Rican mountains, countryside and rugged coastline with an accumulative elevation gain of over 31,000 feet.

It was an expedition run of epic proportions. Competitors pushed their limits of will and endurance. The terrain was mixed with mountain and rainforest trail, windswept highlands, old country farm roads, beach and reef with rock outcroppings, and knee deep river crossings. The landscape varied dramatically throughout as we traveled through a consistently changing ecosystem. And the views were spectacular as we crossed the continental divide with panoramic displays of Lake Arenal, Arenal Volcano, the Pacific and Carribean coastlines.

MY PERSPECTIVE:

For myself...and the many friends I made during the week. It was more than just a race and a run. It was about finding out what we were truly made of. Discovering ourselves in our most raw, and exposed state with just the elements of nature between us and completing a race unthinkable to many.

The choice to participate was an important one for me. After much consideration, I decided that it was time. To then realize there was no 'better time' to face this, to face myself. The months ahead preparing, sacrificing, and disciplining. My preparation unveiling strengths though always within lie dormant or untapped in some way just waiting to be summoned.

The experience was humbling, and heroic in the same breathe. To discover myself in moments amidst the grand backdrop of Costa Rica feeling rather small in size in comparison, yet significant in purpose. To journey through an expidition race so authentic that I remember again what it is to feel at one with all around. To have toed the start line not knowing what was possible. To then cross the finish line knowing ALL is possible.

I experienced, as we all did many challenges and obstacles to overcome along the way – mostly opportunities to remind us who we are, and that we can. And so it began.

BY DAY:

Day 1 - La Fortuna to Rancho Margot - 24.3k - 1550m elevation

Leaving the friendly, and intimate town of La Fortuna. It was hard to imagine what to really expect. With so much distance ahead of us and so many unkowns. All I could remind myself was to take it one day, and even more one step at a time. There were going to be a lot of them.

The first day proved to be mentally tough. Though feeling fresh and ready I discovered as we made our way into the jungle trail my day would consist mostly of hike and slogging as we ascended the wet and dense rainforest filled with roots, mud, and overgrowth. It soon became a journey of up, up, and up - and often at a rather slow pace. We climbed our way into Arenal National Park up and over Cerro Chato (3,740 ft), an inactive volcano adjacent to the Arenal Volcano (5.360 ft), one of the most active volcanoes in the world.



Day 2 - Rancho Margot to Tierras Morenas - 62.4k - 4280m elevation

The longest day would take us through some of the most difficult terrain, and across the continental divide. This would be the day to break us or see us through. I experienced both. As I had decided after day one to take each day as it came. I no longer thought about time, place, or position. This was a day to commit, and re-commit again and again. To pace well, and hydrate for the long haul. Crossing the continental divide at the halfway point was symbolic to us breaking through to the other side of our ability, and commitment to finish. Completing this day, 38 miles later, confirmed the belief that it was possible to finish the coastal challenge even in seemingly impossible circumstances.

Day 3 – Tierras Morenas to Cuipilapa – 32.9k - 1550m elevation

There was a chuckle in the morning after the race director announced that this stage was considered our 'recovery day'. Yes, shorter in distance than most days. He was sure to mention we would finish this section with a handedly steep 1500m climb up 'Cerro La Giganta'. This was essentially the day to find yourself again, and your legs. To NOT leave it on the trail.

For me...this was the day that my body decided, "ok, he's taking this to a whole other level. New territory for anything I'd done in the past." Adaptation at its finest...or more so, the aches and pains just turned to a comfortable numb.





I finished the evening with my routine of stretching, bandaging my horrendously shredded toes, and an early curfew. The following day would be a pivotal one.

Day 4 – Cuipilapa to Curubande – 46.5k – 1550m

This was the day I determined this race would be about something even more. Initially, I had entered this stage race to finish. To plan, prepare, and complete it first, and foremost. After taking second on day four of The Coastal Challenge, I found myself in competition for second place overall. A new perspective.

I started the day keeping pace with race leader Javier Montero. I didn't wake up and think I would take second this day. The Ticos are phenomenal runners and this was the second hardest stage of the race, but I took a risk and ran alongside Javier for most of the day.

Running next to Javier, one of Costa Rica's finest runners, was a huge highlight. To know that I was keeping pace and to feel an unspoken connection between us as we shared the trail for majority of the day. It left me humbled, yet inspired to realize what I was capable of and that I had made the right choice to be here, running. I was in my element.

The day winded down into a half mile stretch of water holes, and river rapids funneling us to a waterfall finish. My overall place on the day, 2nd just minutes behind Javier. A few tears were all that could explain the exhilaration, and inspiration that day left with me. I was going to finish, and well.

Day 5

(am) – Curubande to Canas Dulces – 11.5k

(pm) – Cuajiniquil Bay to Junquillal Beach – 20.4k

Coming off a strong second place finish on day four, I knew day five would be difficult, and unpredictable. I also knew I had nothing to lose. Everyone out there was "feeling it." At the same time, we all could nearly taste and feel the exhilaration of finishing what was just around the bend. With two days to go and nearly 100 miles under our belt, 30 miles seemed quite attainable. We all shared in the pain of battered feet, tired legs, overheated bodies, and an accumulated exhaustion. Yet, we were motivated, determined, and in all humility, confident that nothing would hold us back now.

The day was split into two efforts. In the morning, a fast and gradually descending 11.5k time trial. In the afternoon, a late starting (11 A.M.) 22k run to the beach in the heat of the day with a long immediate climb. The morning went well. I repeated my second overall finish. The afternoon proved to be a different beast. After starting out in good form, and running parallel to Cesar in second, my body, at nearly 4k out from the finish, had reached its limit. As Cesar pulled away with a couple of miles to go, I found myself dizzily walk-jogging my way through the mid-afternoon heat. The exhaustion from high temperatures and a full exertion in the morning left my tank near empty. I eventually staggered onto to the beach for the final 500 meters surprisingly holding a comfortable third position.

That afternoon, I lay beachside rather spent with just a 20k run the next morning between me and accomplishing the most enduring, enlightening, and enriching experience I had known to date. That night was spent indulging in fluids, electrolytes, good food, and the comraderie of every runner all with one thing left on their mind: finishing the final day of the coastal challenge.

Day 6 – Junquillal Beach to Bolanos Bay – 22k

High tides kept us from starting early morning. Our final jaunt would start on the beach about 9 A.M. and weave us between inland farmroads and scenic shores for 20k. The finishing stretch was a mix of coast and beach along the Pacific. The misty air and cool breezes off the ocean water brought



a final smile and assurance that the end was near. We had run for six days, through 230 kilometers of epic scenery and essentially every type of terrain and bio-diverse landscape in Costa Rica. Ascending over 30,000 feet, a distance greater than climbing to the peak of Everest, we triumphantly marched across the finish. For me, it turned out to be my best day of all. A feeling took over that transcended the

exhaustion, pains, and sore muscles. It created a momentum leading me to cross the finish only 29 seconds behind the overall leader this day and an accumulative time to secure third overall for the week. That far exceeded any expectations I had before landing in San Jose a week prior.

At the finish, I imagined what each person must be feeling in this mo-

ment as I watched every other inspiring individual leap (or crawl) across the finish in their last steps flags in hand, arms outstretched, and hearts open. There were no words, or explanations. Everyone here shared in the challenges, faced the elements, and pushed through, moving past anything that was put in front of us. Further leaving connected in shared purpose, and a familiar journey.

Top Overall Finishing Times:

Men- Javier Montero (CRC) 21:36:14, Cesar Ortega (CRC) 22:15:03, Ty Stevens (USA) 23:53:05, Mark Lattanzi (USA) 27:09:04 and Rolando Moreira (CRC) 30:03:29.

Women- Margaret Phillips (Canada) 32:37:26, Stacey Shand (Canada) 35:23:13, Melida Barbee (CRC) 35:39:39 and Shannon MacLeod (Canada) 39:59:46.

IN THE END:

Lessons Learned. I am one man, one traveler, one seeker. Rather small in a greater perspective, but significant. There is much we can do despite what we often tell ourselves, and even convince ourselves. This message universal. The many individuals that came together at Coastal Challenge may be from different regions of the world but share in similar goals, and purpose.

In my journey I discovered the importance of being able to move with the moment, prepare for change, and overcome obstacles in my path. To plan, yet remain flexible. Continuing in persistence, and tempered by patience. As I learn to pace myself for the long journey, as there is much to endure along the way.

Personally, I can't think of a better place to take this journey than in Costa Rica. A country filled with abundance, rich diversity, and equilibrium. In this race, the beauty and richness of its surroundings carried me many times when it was most difficult. I depart taking with me a great connection to this land and its community of people, local Ticos.

Pura Vida.

ABOUT TCC:

TCC Adventures mission is of purpose driven, experiential travel. To provide a personal journey with new challenges daily and a deepened commitment to oneself and the road ahead. TCC inspires authentic adventure and discovery amidst some of the most breathtaking, remote and challenging running routes across the globe.

The approach is to strive for cultural interaction by going deeper into the heart of a country and sharing a glimpse of a more traditional way of life. In essence, stepping back in time and bringing competitors along. With a compelling concept in hand, TCC plans, promotes and produces a variety of race formats for runners, ultra runners and endurance athletes of all different abilities.

Each year TCC Adventures' flagship Coastal Challenge event in Costa Rica attracts runners and their friends or family members from all over the world. TCC Adventures now hosts races in three countries, including Costa Rica, Panama and Bolivia. The races: The Coastal Challenge: Route of Fire, The Coastal Challenge: Rainforest Run, TCC Panama: Island Run, TCC Bolivia: Inca Run, The Coastal Experiences, xx-y Surf and Run Adventure. Learn more at www.tccadventures.com. Toby Angove

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2010 American Adventure Sports Race Calendar

April 9-11 AAS Adventure Racing Academy Ohiopyle, PA

April 24 TeamSOG Yough Xtreme Adventure Race Ohiopyle, PA - (USARA National Qualifier) 35 miles of mountain biking, 20 miles of trekking/orienteering, 9 mile kayak

June 4-6 TeamSOG EQUINOX TRAVERSE 2-Day **Adventure Race**

Covington, VA - (Checkpoint Tracker Series and USARA National Qualifier) 70 miles of mountain biking, 50 miles of trekking/orienteering, 20+ miles of canoeing

June 5 TeamSOG Dash 4 Cash Mountain Bike Race Sarver, PA - 15 mile sport or 20 mile expert

June 5 TeamSOG Buffalo Stampede Trail Run Sarver, PA - 5 mile novice, 15 mile sport, 20 mile expert

July 11-16 Adventure Racing Camp For Kids Location TBA

July 31 The Laurel Highlands Mountain Biking Race Yellow Creek State Park, Penn Run, PA

August I XTERRA APPALACHIA Yellow Creek State Park, Penn Run, PA

August 7-8 TeamSOG LIONHEART **Adventure Race** Ohiopyle, PA (Checkpoint Tracker Series and USARA

National Qualifier) - 50 miles of mountain biking, 35 miles trekking/orienteering, 10 mile kayak

August 15-20 Junior Naturalist Outdoor Adventure Camp (JNOAC)

Camp Harmony, Quemahoning, PA

Sept 11-12 Allegripis Outdoor Festival Raystown Lake, PA -Mountainbike Race & Trail Run

September 18 TeamSOG Black Beard **Adventure Race**

Nags Head, OBX, NC (USARA Points Race)

es S October 15-16 U.S. Adventure Racing NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Hidden Valley Ski Resort, Laurel Highlands, PA - USARA.com

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Dear Kayak, I'll Be Home Soon! By Susan Hollingsworth

The year began and ended with the most irresistibly unstable kayak I have ever seen. A kayak that made class II whitewater turn my knuckles white. A kayak that would slow down for nothing. A kayak I just couldn't get my mind off. Surfing on China's colossal Salween River, steep-creeking in California's Sequoia National Park and paddling the drainage of Machu Picchu's Urubamba River could not even distract me from this kayak.

This past year served up some of the most incredible adventures I have ever experienced. Yet after all the traveling, kayaking, biking and exploring; I find myself back in the overly tippy and somewhat uncontrollable kayak that will hopefully carry me to a world championship.

My Wildwater race kayak and I did not have much time together before I set out again to travel around the world. It began when I lovingly put my 8-foot Pyranha creekboat aside in exchange for the '89 Perception Mirage and Dagger's 12-foot Green Boat. They were longer and faster, yet felt comfortable even on West Virginia's classic Cheat and Gauley Rivers, both stacked with miles of class IV/V rapids. But at each race the winner would always be paddling a lightweight, torpedolooking boat that left his competitors in the dust.

So naturally, I had to find one.

When it came to me, it came on flatwater. To understand this kayak, one must throw out every variable possible. No current, no rapids, no rocks. I had discovered a way to jump from being an advanced whitewater kayaker to a pure novice. While not the typical progression one takes when learning a new sport, it gave me a whole new reason to love the river. Just as I was beginning to find a sense of stability and control, I was offered a kayaker's dream job. Forced to put aside my fiberglass boat, I joined the teaching and coaching staff of the World Class Kayak Academy, a traveling and kayaking high school. For the next year, I would feed my other passion, that of traveling to uncommon places and discovering the intricacies of a foreign culture.

I packed my Subaru and drove across the country to begin work. The first of many cross country trips I would take over the course of the year.

Within the first week of work I found myself floating down China's Yangtze River in a six-foot kayak made for rodeo, not racing. My students learned about the social and political effects of damming major rivers while sleeping on their banks every night. Over steep-mountain passes, we passed military checkpoints on our way to new rivers. Tibetan monks greeted us as we climbed out of the river, just to see these fascinating boats and the people who paddled them. It was a like being hit by a hurricane of loud and sharp voices, pungent aromas and bizarre symbols.

As each week passed, the rapids seemed to get bigger and bigger. From the Mekong to the Salween, we explored hundreds of miles of pristine rivers. I guided students through the hardest whitewater some had ever seen and faced a few of my own apprehensions.

We returned to the United States and resumed our tour in California for the fourth quarter. Smooth bedrock and bright sunny skies were on the menu daily. We continued our schedule of class in the mornings and kayaking in the afternoons as we descended classic stretches of rivers like the Kaweah, the Feather and the Trinity. We walked through Giant Sequoia and Redwood forests before we wound our way up the steep and craggy Oregon coastline, stopping for a surf when the



mood struck.

The semester wrapped up back in Montana with a unique graduation ceremony and a rodeo competition. Three months of summer vacation lay ahead of me and all I wanted to do was keep traveling and kayaking. China's vast, unexplored landscape had left me wanting more. So I packed up my Pyranha Burn creekboat and flew back to the other side of the world for more awkward foreign moments and new rivers. Thirty-six hours of flights later, I landed in the middle of another bustling, smoky, endless Chinese city.

I met up with my friends at Last Descents Rivers Expeditions in Beijing and began planning the logistics for a high-water descent of the Tong Tian He. Imagine putting on a river at 14,000 feet elevation that is ripping trees from the banks and crumbling boulders the size of houses. This is the Tong Tian He at flood stage.

Monks begged us not to go. When that didn't work, they prayed for us to survive. A local town threw scarves from a bridge to bring good fortune. Of course, none of these people had ever actually been in a kayak. While the waves swallowed us and the current propelled us, we loved every minute of it.

China, round two, also topped my personal international travel list in another way. Never before had I felt more stripped of all ability to communicate. Deciding to travel without my Chinese-speaking friends might not have been the





best decision, but I figured I could make it work. Wrong. It also did not help that I was a western female trying to travel through the border territory between the autonomous region of Tibet and China on the 60th anniversary of China's seizure of all Tibetan lands.

I eventually made it, only by the more expensive and far less scenic air-route.

Summers always come to an end, however, and I began to prepare for another semester at World Class. We began in Canada this time and made our way down the east coast. This quarter gave me tastes of the world of racing I did not realize I missed so much.

In Pennsylvania, I paddled behind my students in the annual Upper Youghiogheny race. I glowed with pride as we sat at the finish line. One student had won the short-boat division with the others not far on his heals. Once in West Virginia we raced on the Upper Gauley River, another difficult class V run. It was all coming back to me. But still, racing had to wait.

After fall break our group traveled even further south to Peru. Cusco, Peru might just be the complete opposite to Beijing, China. Spanish class went to meat markets and History classes went to Incan Ruins. As with school policy, we went kayaking every afternoon. Only miles from Machu Picchu we explored multiple stretches of the Urubamba river, our backyard run. Side creeks provided alternative adventures, all within minutes of our canopy camp.

In addition to kayaking and classes, the school also satisfied my craving to train in other ways. Throughout the semester the head coach and myself led our team of students through strength and flexibility workouts every morning. China's terraced mountainsides made for an intense running course. Oregon's sandy dunes provided more difficult terrain for Ultimate Frisbee games and nothing compared to doing 500 sit-ups at 11,000ft in the ancient ruins in Cusco. Yet through it all, I craved my Wildwater kayak.

The semester ended and I began to see myself paddling the race boat again. After some deliberation, I chose to move to Asheville, NC, mostly because I had always wanted to spend more time in a kayak in that part of the country. The east coast is also the home to my fellow racers on TeamSOG, which I look forward to being a strong part of this year.

Keeping with my penchant for travel and adventure I stopped in Flagstaff, Arizona on my way to my new home to do some mountain biking in Sedona, snowboarding on the San Francisco Peaks and an epic hike into the Grand Canyon. I had never been there, what can I say.

Now the gears have changed. I have traded the coaching position for that of a teammate and the small playboat for my 15ft fiberglass race boat. As a member of TeamSOG, I am looking forward to training, going fast and crossing the finish line first in 2010. It's good to be back.

Susan Hollingsworth is most often reminiscing about her last adventure, planning the next while enjoying the present. As a member of the US Canoe & Kayak Downriver Race Team she looks forward to steering her travels toward races all over the United States this year. Summer in Washington's Columbia Gorge, winter in North Carolina's Smoky Mountains, and South America and China in between, Susan never stops finding new rivers and new ways to test her physical abilities on them.

Follow Susan's 2010 competition season and travels on TeamSOG Blog: www.americanadventuresports. com/blogsite and Susan's Blog: www.SusansEvolution.blogspot.com

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34 hours into the race, with 43 teams chasing fiercely behind them, the ATP/Salomon team reached the start of this trekking section.

20 miles & 2 mountain summits later, with half of that mileage spent bushwhacking their own trail through the forested wilderness, ATP/Salomon emerged.

They were sore. They were dirty.

They were winning the 2009 Untamed New England Adventure Race.

CLuis Moreira Photography

ATP/Salomon went on to win the race in 69 hours & represent North America at the AR World Championships. They're returning to defend their New England victory in August of 2010. Do you have what it takes to race the Untamed New England Adventure Race?

We salute the ATP/Salomon team's accomplishment - ATP/Salomon racers are Scott Pleban [VA-USA], Leanne Mueller [ON-CA], Andrew Cameron [ON-CA], & Sean Roper [ON-CA].







Winter Ascent of New Hampshire's Nount Washington

By Dave Romilly

Winter training in the Northeast is, without question, frustrating! However; the rewards are great to those that battle through the conditions.

Wednesday, 30 December 2009, 4:00 PM - I break from my desk with eager anticipation for what will become one of the most memorable hikes of my years thus far. I hopped into my car and headed north from my Portsmouth office in haste towards the foothills of the White Mountains and the behemoth that lay ahead.

I was meeting my greatest of friends and teammate, Dave Lamb, at his home in Jackson, NH for an "EPIC." Very few missions are granted this term, but this one definitely deserved the title.

I made a quick stop into International Mountain Equipment in North Conway to round up my last pieces of gear around 6 PM before making dinner time at the Lamb estate shortly thereafter.

I was greeted at the door by two rambunctious canines anxiously anticipating play time. After 10 minutes of rough housing, I was able to subdue them into a frantic pant while I sat at the dinner table and was served a wonderful chicken parm and pasta meal by Mrs. Carol Lamb. The dogs were never far as they thought that table scraps were going to be discarded at any moment.

Around 7:30 PM, Dave and I made our final preparations, packed our bags and donned Darn Tough Merino Wool Socks and our Roclite 295 INOV-8 shoes (sorry SOLE, you didn't arrive in the mail yet, so you'll have to wait for the next mission) for the short drive up Rte. 16 to the Pinkham Notch parking area and the base of Mt. Washington.

Both Dave and I had large packs stuffed to the gills with plenty of extra clothes, food, water, survival gear, plastic mountaineering boots and crampons. Due to the nasty weather that could formulate at any moment, we packed for an expedition. Winds can often reach 100 mph at the summit, but are felt at or slightly below summit intensity for the final 1+ miles of the hike. Compound winter conditions and sometimes spotty night time visibility and we were definitely setting ourselves up for calculated risks and choices. Summiting this monster is never guaranteed and, even though small in comparison to giant's such as the Seven Summits, it still deserves a great deal of respect.

Our mission started off with our INOV-8 shoes and a single trekking pole. From the parking lot at Pinkham Notch (elevation 2,000 ft), we headed up the Tuckerman Ravine trail, one of the most well known spring skiing trail routes in the nation. But this evening we were not going to ski, nor were we going to enjoy a nice evening picnic on Lunch Rocks - we were going to summit one of the most well respected mountains in the country. We made the trek to the base of the Lion's Head winter route (elevation 3,800 ft) in just under an hour and donned our summit gear; which consisted of mountaineering pants, jackets/suits, boots and ice axes.

Since we were making a gear change, it allowed us a brief moment to take in the night's winter air, shut down our head lamps and look into the clear sky at the endless array of stars while listening to the silence of the surrounding woods. The solitude we felt on this night is what makes each and every outdoor enthusiast contemplate earth's deepest and darkest mysteries.

Our goal was to summit, but in the true spirit of adventure racers we wanted to make it snappy. With only enough time to capture a few pictures and video to commemorate this adventure. Dave and I huffed and puffed the cool winter air as we made our next pitch to the Lion's Head (elevation 5,000 feet). The hike from the start of the Lion's Head winter route to Lion's Head has you ascending 1,200 vertical feet in just under 0.5 miles. That equates to steep and technical, especially with two-inch spikes sticking out from the front of your boots - ready to trip you every step.

Lion's Head is on the nose of a ridge line that runs along the north rim of Tuckerman's Ravine. Its location is a prime spot for intense winds and is where the hike becomes serious business. On a previous summit attempt a year earlier, teammate Chad Denning joined Dave and I for another EPIC assault on this mountain where the winds topped 70+ mph and the temps dropped into the minus 60 degree category. During that mission, the Lion's Head was the spot where we all stopped talking and made certain that no piece of skin was left uncovered. The assault was strategic and fast from the Lion's Head to the summit and back down. Though this attempt was not as intense in temperature and wind as our previous bid, the night time planning did not offer much reprieve in terms of evacuation and rescue opportunities.

Dave and I scurried along the crusty wind packed snow as we intercepted small animal tracks and trail markers left in the snow by previous day time travelers. Dave suggested that the trail markers, small flags stuck in the snow, were left by guides leading their groups during inclement weather and low visibility. We followed the markers for a period of time before we intercepted the main hiking trail, marked via large cairns. The tops of the cairns were visible, as were the largest rocks on the slope side but



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due to the snow, the mountain side was quite barren with little nubs of exposed rock everywhere. A slip and fall could result in a multiple hundred foot uncontrolled glissade if a self arrest was not quickly performed. We became very alert at this point - toe pick, side step, toe pick, side step.

11:10 PM - An hour and a half after leaving the start of the Lion's Head winter route (elevation 3,800 feet), we crested the final steps over the cog rail way and forged through the blistering wind towards the summit stake (elevation 6,288 feet). The temperature was close to -15 degrees with winds around 40 mph. These conditions are considered pleasant for Mount Washington standards, and it allowed enough time to leave hands exposed long enough to snap a few pictures. As any experienced hiker knows, the summit is only the half way point. We spared little time exposed to the elements and ducked behind the observatory building in order to re-organize some gear, grab some food and guzzle some nuunenhanced water.

Fortunately the descent was uneventful but nerve racking none-the-less. We made it down to Lion's Head in about 30 minutes where we made our 4th gear change and downed the remaining calories that the frigid air on the summit prevented us from ingesting. I was able to take advantage of the gear change and made some of the descent without headlamp and well in front of Dave. I could see for miles in all directions even in the pitch of the night and it was breathtaking. Even watching Dave descend behind me allowed my brain to think we were in a world removed from our own, almost as if we were walking the surface of the moon.

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OUTEVENTS

CALIFORNIA ADVENTURE RACING

Thursday, 31 December 2009, 12:45 AM - Dave and I arrived back at Pinkham Notch Visitor's Center for the conclusion of our EPIC mission.

Thursday, 31 December 2009, 1:15 AM - Consumption of a few carbohydrate enriched recovery beverages followed by a prompt 2:00 am bed time.

Thursday, 31 December 2009, 6:00 AM - Up and at 'em and on my way to a 7 AM client meeting in Farmington, NH with an intense sun glaring back at me, shaded by the polarized lenses of my Numa Optics Sparta Lenses with fond memories of the last few hours. No better way to spend a "school night" than climbing Mt. W with a great teammate and friend.
Adventure 101 - Paddling

Love to paddle and curious about long distance events? Well, there can be too much of a good thing -if you're not prepared. Follow these five tips to increase your chances of finishing a long race and have fun doing it.

Pick a boat you can go the distance in. The "fastest" boat might not really be the fastest in a long race. Comfort over the long haul can translate into speed. With a stable boat, you likely will find you can use proper paddling technique longer. And when you have to reach for that tasty snack late in a race, you're less likely to take a dip in the pond. So, if you're new to the sport, you might want to opt for a hearty sea kayak with plenty of secondary stability rather than a sleek surf ski.

Train in your race-day boat. It's best not to show up on race day in a boat you're unfamiliar with, if you can help it. Your derriere is most likely to suffer the most when it has to conform to an unfamiliar position for hours on end. Problematic pressure points might not reveal themselves immediately. But, you'll be able to find them if you spend plenty of time in the saddle before the starting gun goes off. Plus, you'll want to be familiar with how to quickly fix items like rudder cables if they loosen or break during the event. The same goes for the paddle you will use. Whether it's a wing blade or a flatbladed paddle, train with it so you can learn to get the most power from good technique. Find a friend to video tape your paddling from the front, back and side. Watching yourself will help you find hitches



in your technique.

Cover up. Since you'll obviously be on the water, you're likely to find yourself spending nearly all your time exposed to the wind and sun. So, cover your arms, legs and neck with clothing that will block UV rays and keep your skin from getting painfully burned without trapping too much of your body heat. Use plenty of waterproof sun block, too. Yeah, you might look like a white-faced mime out there, but you'll be happy later. I didn't take the time to apply lip balm during the Yukon River Quest and could barely talk after the race. And oh, the post race pictures! Every smile for the camera was immediately followed by a painful-looking grimace.

Put food and water in a handy place. It's pretty easy to fall into the trap of eating and drinking too little while paddling if it means having to stop swinging the blades. So, put your food and drink in a very accessible spot. I most often paddle a kayak, so I like to attach my hydration tube to my PFD, but I keep the bladder resting on the floor of the boat to keep the weight off my back.

Don't dodge the draft. It's not just for road bike races. Drafting can increase your max speed if you get behind the right boat. But, more importantly, it can help you maintain your speed much more comfortably. Prior to the race, find a friend and practice your technique, either by getting directly behind the boat you want to draft off or riding the wake off to the side. But, just as in bike racing, there's real etiquette to drafting. Talk to your potential drafting partners before the race if you can. Make sure they're fine with it. If they're in a different boat class, for example if they're paddling a tandem and you're a solo, then they're likely to be agreeable. Be sure to take your turn at the front. If you work together, you'll find you can go much farther, much faster.

Grab your paddle and give these endurance events a try:

- Texas Water Safari, Texas, 260 miles, June, http://www.texaswa-tersafari.org/
- Missouri River 340; Missouri, 340 miles, July, http://www.mr340. com/

• Yukon River Quest; Yukon Territory, Canada; late June; http:// www.yukonriverquest.com/

• Adirondack Canoe Classic, New York, 90 miles, September, http://www.macscanoe.com/90-Miler/90-miler_Index.htm • Colorado River 100, Texas, 100 miles, September, http://www.coloradoriver100.com/

• Phatwater Challenge, Mississippi, 42.5 miles, October, http:// www.kayakmississippi.com/phatwater/

• Suwannee River Marathon and Challenge, Florida, 26 and 52 miles, October, http://www.aca1. com/

Paul races with Team Checkpoint Zero and has won the unlimited division of the Suwannee River Challenge and placed third in the tandem division of the Yukon River Quest with Checkpoint Zero Teammate Allen McAdams. Paul hasn't finished every race he's entered. Some lessons he learned the hard way.

"Racing to New Orleans" GULF COAST ADVENTURE RACING SERIES



Adventure 101 - Hiking

By Justin Lichter

The first day of spring has passed and Old Man Winter's wrath is starting to give way to spring weather. It is a great time of year to start planning and looking into a long distance hike or expedition; or a shorter hike.

Here are a few pointers that I would recommend.

Plan, Plan, Plan.

You haven't planned enough if you haven't thought about a lot of things for your trip. The route is one thing and the most obvious. However you should also be looking into how frequent and reliable the water sources are, how often you might be able to get more food or purchase food at a store, the weather for the area during that time of year, and fine tuning your gear. No doubt you will have some nerves at the start of a trip, but if you plan well and are comfortable with your gear going into the trip then that should ease the nerves a little.

Train

As your trip begins top take shape you will ideally start to train for the experience beforehand. This will help make your trip as enjoyable as possible as well as getting you used to your equipment. This will help your feet get ready, and if need be callused, for you to break in your shoes and help your hips and shoulders get used to wearing a backpack. If you prepare beforehand then you'll be ready to hit the trail when the time comes and the mileage that you planned for the



trip won't be daunting. The training will also help in your planning because it will let you know what distances and terrain are obtainable for the trip in the time that you have.

Gear Up, But Not Too Much

Research the gear that you would like to use on the trip. Do as much research as possible looking online and asking questions of shop employees, but definitely do NOT just ask shop employees. Some store employees are great, but each has their own personal opinion and they might not even have done the activity or been to the terrain you are looking at doing. My typical gear list has many recurring pieces of gear, but there are also many things that change depending on location and time of year. This helps to keep your pack light by taking only what you will need. For example, there is no reason to carry a 3lb. -20 degree sleeping bag if you are heading out to the High Sierras

in the summer. Chances are you can probably get away with a sub 2lb. 30 degree sleeping bag, especially if you plan on sleeping in a tent because that will add about 10 degrees to your sleep system. Get your system streamlined and dialed beforehand and then only take what you think you'll need. If you don't use it every day then generally you don't need it. Also, try to make things have multiple uses. For example, I use a half length sleeping pad and then use my backpack for the lower half of my sleeping pad. This saves about 8oz on my sleeping pad and makes it more packable since my backpack won't be needed for anything else while I am sleeping.

GO!!!! And Have Fun!

(Sample gear list on next page)

Sample gear list for Alpine in summer/fall (such as the Rockies or Sierras)

- Backpack- Granite Gear Meridian Vapor w/o lid or Vapor Trail, w/ hipbelt pocket 2lbs 4oz
- Granite Gear White Lightnin Tarp and 6 titanium stakes- 23oz
- Sleeping Bag Montbell U.L. Down Inner Sheet- 11oz (summer), Montbell U.L. S.S. #3- 23oz (fall)
- Pad- Ridgerest- 7oz
- Supermarket brand trash compactor trash bag- 2.2oz
- Pair of Icebreaker socks- 1.5oz
- Montbell Chameece Earwarmer
- Hat- loz
- Icebreaker wool gloves- 2.5oz
- Montbell Versalite Rain Jacket-10oz
- Montbell U.L. Wind Pants- 2oz
- Montbell U.L. Wind Jacket- 3oz
- Montbell Ex Light Down Jacket-5.5oz
- 1 Medium Air Space (for food bag)- 1.7oz

• Ditties (book, phone #'s and info rewritten on a piece of paper, pen, Princeton Tec Scout headlamp, and small Gerber nail clipper multitool) in a medium Air Pocket- 8oz
Toiletries (small toothpaste, toothbrush, contact lens case, glasses, and saline solution, sunscreen) in a

- #1 Air Bag- 7oz
- Wallet and town necessities (cred-
- it card, ID, and cash)- 2oz
- Camera in Aloksak- 6oz
- Cookware (.9 liter titanium pot), Etowah outfitters alcohol stove, fuel bottle (small powerade bottle with duct tape wrapped on it, titanium spork, HEET (about 1 oz/ day)- 10oz + fuel 1oz/day
- Steripen Journey- 4.5oz w/ CR123 battery
- Water bottle (1 liter Pepsi bottle)/ straw- about 2oz
- 1 3L Platypuses- 1.5oz
- Extra Insoles (ground down Waldies that can fit into my shoes)-3oz
- Native Eyewear sunglasses w/ case- 3oz
- Tyvek ground sheet- 4oz



Wearing:

- Highgear Watch- 3oz
- Icebreaker Wool Boxers- 3.4oz
- Icebreaker Socks- 1.5oz
- Icebreaker Long Sleeve Half Zip
- Merino Wool Shirt- 9oz
- Montbell Sunnyside shorts- 5oz
- Visor- 3oz
- Leki Makalu Carbon Ultralite Poles- 12.6oz
- Garmont 9.81 Trail running shoe-260z/pair with Superfect insoles

Justin is currently living near Lake Tahoe, CA and he loves to hike, ski, surf, swim, climb, and do pretty much anything outdoors and active. You can find more info on some of the long-distance trips that he has done on his website at www. justinlichter.com.





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Desert Winds II Adventure Race • May 8 www.desertwindsadventureseries.com/index

Atomic Adventure Race • May 15 www.atomicar.com/

Central Coast Adventure Challenge May 15 • www.ccadventure.com/

MISSION Adventure Race • May 15 www.dinoseries.com/

USARA Collegiate National Championship May 15 • www.usaranationals.com/

USARA Sprint National Championship May 15 • www.usaranationals.com/

The Longest Day and Night • May 21 www.nyara.org/nyara_races/

Chadron Adventure Race • May 22 www.angrycowadventures.com/angry/

TeamSOG Equinox Traverse • June 4 americanadventuresports.com/traverse.htm

The Cradle of Liberty 24HR AR • June 5 www.goalsara.org/

The Crux • June 12 / The Crucible • June 13 www.adventuresportsweek.com/index

Run, Row, Rock and Roll • June 19 www.nscracing.com/ Sheltowee Extreme South • July 10 www.sheltoweeextreme.com/

Lake Tahoe 24 • July 31 www.bigblueadventure.com/pub/main

Riverlands Rampage • July 31 web.me.com/earthscapes66/Riverlands_ramble/ Casa.html

Bushwhack This! • August 7 www.alaskaadventureracing.com/

MVP Health Care Bitter Pill • August 7 www.gmara.org/bitterpill/index.html

TeamSOG Lionheart 24 Hour • Aug 7 www.americanadventuresports.com/

The Thunder Rolls • August 28 www.thethunderrolls.org/

Wild West Eco • August 28 www.adventureracekansas.com/

New England Adventure Weekend Sept 11 • www.racingahead.com/

Raid The Rock • September 11 www.raidtherock.com/

Sheltowee Extreme • September 11 www.sheltoweeextreme.com/ Wild Adventure Race • September 17 www.wildadventurerace.com/

San Juan Island Quest • September 25 www.islandathleticevents.com/

Terra Firma Adventure Race September 25 • www.terrafirmapromo.com/

The Shag • September 25 www.nyara.org/

Florida Coast to Coast • Sept 30 www.adventurousconcepts.com/

Howl at the Moon • October www.adventurousconcepts.com/

The Rock Ranch Adventure Race • October 2 www.therockranch.com

Lewis & Clark Ozark AR • Oct. 29 www.ozarkadventurerace.com/

Huntsville Hammer • November www.texasadventureracing.com/

Red River Gorge American Classic. The Fig Nov 6 • www.racethefig.com/

Dave Boyd Adventure Race • December 11 www.texasdare.com/



The 2010 Coed USARA Adventure Race National Championship team will receive free entry into the 2011 Lycian Challenge in Fethiye, Turkey. They will also receive free entry into all 2011 Regional Qualifying Events. Zanfel is proud to donate \$100.00 towards the entry fee to the 2010 Zanfel Native USARA Adventure Race National Championship to the winning teams from each regional qualifying race. Teams may only win one Zanfel sponsorship per year.



Adventure World Magazine Spring 2010

Huairasinchi Adventure Race

By Nicola Cameron

I was so mad. I couldn't switch off the voice in my head – "this is IMPOSSIBLE; this is DUMB; there is NO WAY we're going to get there." And more than that – "this HURTS." It was dark, and so misty it was difficult to tell if it was raining or not. I was biking up a steep mountain road with my four team-mates, 36 hours into the Huairasinchi, an Ecuadorean adventure race with the claim to fame that it is the highest adventure race in the world. That was a hint: the top of the hill was a long way away.

My team-mates and I had just left a check-point where we had been informed, over the blasting radio that celebrated Ecuador's Carnaval weekend, (even though all that was left of the party in the dingy square in the dusk was garbage and a few drunks attempting to play volleyball) that the cut-off time for our next checkpoint had been pushed back – we now had a chance at making it – we had 3 hours left to cover 40 km. What was more, the volunteer chirped, most teams were SO HAPPY to hear this that they had biked VERY FAST and had made it with lots of time! Mucho time! We stared grimly at him. The mountains were so steep, and we were so unprepared for the length of the climbs, that we were averaging 5km an hour. When we were going fast. By the time we left the checkpoint, we had 2 and a half hoursto go. "That's like, timetrial speed!" said Trish.

Huairasinchi actually means something along the lines of "the strength of the wind" or "the agility of the wind" in Kichwa, one of Ecuador's indigenous languages. Our local support crew member Raul taught us how to pronounce it - and then fell in love with its vowels and, presumably, its spirit and used it to cheer us one whenever possible. Hooo-eye-rrrrra-SEEEEENCHEEEE!!! When Leanne, our team captain, emailed me to say that she was putting together an all-female team for the race, my response consisted largely of enthusiastic exclamation points. It would be 60 hours: two nights,three days of biking, paddling, and trekking across a new landscape. The website promised the discovery of "hidden places in Ecuador, rich places" of natural and cultural significance and a chance to exceed your own physical and mental limits. I love racing with Leanne and an all-female team and the chance to visit Ecuador conjured up appealing images of llamas and ponchos.

There was one tiny snag – Quito, the capital of Ecuador where we landed, is 3000 metres above sea level, and the race would only climb from there, hence the race's distinguished tag line. Coming from essentially sea level, we knew we would need to acclimatize to the altitude; we hadn't realized how much we needed to get used to mountains as well. The mountains on the way to Ibarra, the region where the race was held, were not the innocent, isolated swells of the ones around Quito. These ones were a savage throng, rocks punching out of desert earth. At one point we passed a cut through the mountain where the mineral lines in the rock actually doubled back on themselveslike a gnarled tree – evidence of ancient geological violence. We took a picture on the side of the road with the jagged peaks as a background. My smile seems forced. "Are we going to have to go UP this?" reads my thought bubble.

After a race briefing that included a standing ovation for our lack of y chromosomes, Las Quattros Chicas, as we were dubbed, were on the start line in a cobble-stone square in Otavalo, a city famed for its weekend market that attracts local indigenous groups to sell their crafts. We hugged and giggled nervously, then jumped on our bikes and headed off in a huge pack to the sound of the start horn. We set off down a hill, Leanne's long legs spinning double-time and the rest of us following in line, turned off the cobble-stone road onto a dirt back road, and started to climb.

And then we didn't stop.

See, here's the thing: in Eastern Canada, the athletic challenge for endurancesports – biking, running, cross-country skiing – involves making it to the top of the hill. Keeping going until the downhill. We practice interval training to help us sustain that intensity for longer periodsand to train our bodies to recover fast once the hill is over. What we were going to learn in Ecuador is that this racing rhythm doesn't work in mountains, where the top will never be reached in one burst of effort.

We climbed and climbed until I panicked, over-heated, fell behind, and got off my bike to throw up.



The teams that had applauded us the night before passed us while Leanne took my bike and pack and I walked until my legs stopped shaking. I took my pack, then a few steps later my bike, then got on it a few steps after that. We continued at a slower pace, but the hill never stopped, generating the illusion that we weren't actually climbing a hill; we were just biking through an extra-strong gravitational field.

Our all-women teams are usually very competitive, placing with the top teams in most races we enter. Our favourite game is watching the surprise on the face of athletes that don't know us as we pass them. When a team actually RAN by us on the first trek while we dragged ourselves along, leaning heavily on our trekking poles and doing the "everestwalk" (locked knees, little steps) that Trish had taught us would save energy, we began to question ourselves. At hour twelve, Leanne, known affectionately as the bionic woman, confessed: "I feel like I'm on day three of a really tough race. What about you guys?" We moaned in response. The altitude and the elevation gain

generated that dream-like feeling of disconnect between the desire to run and the total lack of response from our legs.

The positive aspect of our reduced speedwas the opportunity it provided us to observe the landscape. We climbed to the top of a mountain and found little stone houses with hill-side farms, where we met indigenous people, some in traditional dress, and filthy but adorable children guarding their farms with machetes. We descended like scuba divers into the rainforest and watched as it grew lush and dank around us; we crawled up a mudslide into the golden paradise of the paramo, the Ecuadorean grassland. Over the 60 hours we covered mountain tops and rainforests, farming areas carpeting the valleys and climbing up the sides; wide plains with shimmering lakes like heat hallucinations andwinding rivers. The mood and the tempo of the race changed like switchbacks, living up to every expectation we had, but the climbing and our fatigue remained constant.

Another constant was the pres-



ence of race staff. In the middle of a peaceful night trek, one of our only rolling sections, four glowing shapes emerged from behind a hill and floated and bobbed towards us, otherworldly fireballs until they stood before us, resolving themselves into four smiling volunteers wearing very reflective vests - just checking on us. They were typical Huairasinchi volunteers - attractive, smiling, stylishly ragged in the way of climbing types around the world. It was wildly disorienting. In Canada, volunteers appear near roads - you emerge from the bush onto a path, then onto a road - and you usually see the cars before the people. Our night visitors were nowhere near roads and their relaxed presence seemedtotally out of place.

The moments that followed were typical of the race organization of the Huairasinchi. Joined by the other Canadian team, Milton Basement Racers, we crawled over the surrounding hills, looking for the one spot in the forest with a path that would take us up the next mountain. The volunteers lounged in the valley and watched our headlamps perform intricate loops as we explored back and forth, sending us hints in the form of morse code headlamp flashing and the occasional piercing whistle when we went really off course. Relaxed but watchful, they let us do our thing.

Finally, we heard a voice. "Come down." The valley made for perfect acoustics between us and them, and hedidn't even have to yell. We clambered down and followed the bearded dude to the right path, into the forest and up a mudslide.

It had rained heavily in this region before we got there, and climbing up this so-called "path" was like a Japanese game-show involving mud and creative face-plants. Not so for our guide. His rubber boots gripped the way our Salomon XA Pros, prized adventure racing footwear, totally failed to do, and he strolledwhile we flailed and swam uphill. We encountered him quite some time later, about three-quarters of the way up, leaning back against a tree with another goodlooking girl. They smiled lazily at us, two old friends on a picnic. I heard him updating someone on his walkie-talkie... "Las quattros chicas... lento [slow]."

After a spirit-lifting stop at a sunny, windy TA, we left on our bikes with full bellies and Raul's cry ringing in our ears. This brings us, many hours later, to the Lentos Quattros Chicas pedalling their way up a mountain at 5km/hr to make it to the rappel. It was dark and drizzly, and, as mentioned, my mood was pretty much identical.

Then we came to the miracle of mountains. As far as they go up....



they also go down. We turned a corner and began to descend. And descend, and descend. Trish and Sarah led the charge at ferocious speeds, Sarah to prove her biking pre-eminence, Trish to just get to a spot where we could stop moving. In a terrifying moment, she confessed to me that she was falling asleep at 40 km/hr. We passed Milton Basement Racers in a blur of headlamps. The mist intensified, and it was impossible to tell how fast we were going or what was coming up. It was like leaping off a cliff. We found out later that Team Buff, one of the top contenders, wasknocked out of the race when they rounded a corner on this section and hit a cow. Oops. There was no live-stock on this trail for us, and we rocketed through space and time to skid into the rappel site with seconds to spare. We swung off a bridge (well, I had my fingers peeled off a bridge) and ended up sitting on the ground eating, congratulating ourselves, and examining Trish as she told us carefully that she REALLY didn't feel well.



Trish had been making jokes about not feeling well for the majority of the race, suffering more than the rest of us from the altitude and the relentless climbing. What we didn't know was that her body's response to the stress was intense nausea, and as a result she had quietly stopped eating and drinking. Ourpush for the rappel pushed her body over the edge, and as soon as we started biking uphill again, she pulled over the side to rest. A few minutes later

<image>

she was on all fours, retching like a cat bringing up a hairball, a ritual that was to be repeated for the rest of the bike ride to the safety of our transition area and our support crew. Sarah looked at me with the white showing all around her eyes. Leanne looked cross, as she does when she's worried. "She needs to eat. We just have to get some food in her." Trish gamely put various items in her mouth and swallowed, then threw them up immediately. I examined the perfectly undigested electrolyte pills in a little pool of saliva on the ground.

The rest of the journey to the T.A. was a nightmare. We moved up another mountain, passing from tiny village to tiny village, greeted by viciously loud dogs that never actually attacked us, and bid farewell by suspicious smells of sewage that made me glad of the darkness. Sarah and I pushed Trish's bike, holding our bikes in one hand and a handle of her bike in the other. Leanne took her pack and attached her to a tow rope. We moved slower and slower, discovering that any increased effort would make Trish stop for anotherbout of retch-





ing. She continued to make jokes the entire way, and Leanne made light of the situation by pulling out her camera at one point to capture Trish's superhuman efforts to actually throw up her digestive organs. "Trish!" I asked at one point, "Better or worse than morning sickness?" Trish giggled. "Oh, better, definitely." Trish had intense morning sickness for a large part of her pregnancy. Tough girl.

After a final two kilometre uphill up a thin cobblestone path that made pushing two bikes feel impossible, we found the TA, with Raul and Belen, our devoted support crew, worriedly welcoming our late arrival with tea and chicken and rice. "We'll stay here until Trish can leave," Leanne pronounced, and instantly fell asleep. We slept for several hours and woke to a beautiful day. We were at the base of an elegant mountain that climbed in various shades of green into the sky. We examined Trish. "How are you?" we asked. "Awesome!" she squeaked. "Awesome-o 3000!"

Leanne wrinkled her nose in disbelief. "Okay, I'm not much better."

We had reached that horrible moment where we would have to decide whether to continue as a team or leave Trish behind. Trish encouraged us to go on without her. If we continued with her, we were risking not finishing due to her condition, not to mention how

slowly we would have to move. If we continued without her, however, we would definitely not finish ranked – a team has to finish with all four members. More importantly, none of us had any desire to prioritize moving faster over moving as a team. Leanne finally left it with Trish. "You know best how you feel, Trish. We want you to come with us, but we don't want you to hurt yourself." Trish looked up at us standing over her. Trish is an experienced adventure racer; she understands the trick, the hook, the soul of adventure racing. Her response was identical to our successful push for the rappel earlier in the race. "All we can do is try," she said, and started hauling on her shoes. This time we didn't even bring a pack for her - we divided her food and water amongst us, attached her to Leanne, whose pack had treats and drinks dangling off it in easy reach of Trish, and set off up the mountain.

It got very hot very quickly, hotter than it had been at any other time in



the race, and the smell from the lush vegetation intensified. We climbed out of the cobblestone onto packed dirt, then rocks as we hit a tiny village with about three families, but also a school and a play structure. Trish was flushed andweak. Raul, who wanted to walk with us for a while, stopped at one of the houses and asked for panella, home-made sugar cubes that were a traditional cure for altitude sickness. The extended family swarmed out, gracious and helpful, and provided us with a chunk of panellathe size of a large espresso machine. Raul delicately declined the chunk and hacked off a tiny portion for Trish, who sucked on it like she wanted very badly to believe in its powers.

We left the village and Raul; the road stopped and the mountain started. We were following a mysterious path made by wandering livestock that were apparently far more agile than us, with encroaching foliage all around. I walked with my hands on my tired thighs as it got steeper and started to worry -- the heat was dangerous for Trish and the terrain not great for us. What if we got lost and had to spend even more time on this huge solar panel of a mountain? We stopped more and more frequently, taking a few wrong turns that frightened me. We heard later that the teams that had climbed this section during the night had been defeated by the path and had to sleep on the side of the mountain before finding their way in the morning. Eventually, we were bent double under eucalyptus trees, crawling over a carpet of fragrant leaves -- could this really be the right way? - when movement up ahead made me leap to my feet, knocking my trekking poles out of my backpack.

<image>

I saw flashes of orange and yellow and.. safetyvests? Crawling towards us, big grins on their faces, rubber boots on their feet, more Huairasinchivolunwere teers. "We heard you had someone who was sick!" they chirped. "We came to find you!" By the time I had wrapped my head around the fact that there were other people in our heat-delirium dream, they had pulled off their enormous packs and were pouring out lemon verbena tea from a huge metal thermos and adding oral re-hydration salts to it, something it had never occurred to us, not once, to feed Trish. One took her blood pressure and the other wipedher face. Trish took a few sips and looked brigheralmost immediately. We were saved.

Escorted by our medical team pixies, we made it to the next checkpoint, where a doctor used chicken wire to hang an IV bag off the roof of the ruins of a farm, and made Trish feel better in twenty minutes. She actually re-inflated before our eyes. I still feel ashamed that we could not have diagnosed her, as the doctor did, with severe dehydration and that we insisted instead that she continue to try and eat.

While Trish recovered, we lay in the burning mountain-top sun, hats over our faces, and savoured no longer having to walk up things. "Guys?" Trish called us, now sitting up. We went over and sat beside her. "Do you know... are we unranked now? I., I.,," and, her physical needs tended to, her emotional stress finally hit her. "I'm letting my family down; I left them for this; I'm letting you guys down; we're not going to finish; it's all my fault!" she wailed. I hugged her from one side and Sarah hugged her from the other and we huddled for a moment. Leanne took a less emotional approach and went to find out exactly what our racingstatus was.

Leanne returned with good news – a number of teams were going to fail to finish the entire course, and, as we had not dropped out yet, we were going to be driven around the next sections to the final paddle before the finish. We would continue as a ranked team. Trish sat up, shaking off Sarah and my embrace. "All better!" she proclaimed. "No more tears! Even better than baby shampoo! Awesome-o 3000!"

I don't remember the drive to the final section- not even the Ecuadorean mountain roads could keep me awake as we bounced back towards Ibarra. I emerged from the truck, wiping away drool and traumatic memories of Trish's pinched face, into the evening sunshine on the banks of a lake popular with Carnavalrevellers. There were picnics and parties all around the shore, and paddle-boats shaped like swans gliding to and fro.

Our final task was a paddle around the lake to find orienteering flags hidden in the reeds somewhere around the shore. It was a leg clearly intended to raise spirits before the finish, and it succeeded. The water sparkled, boats and mu-

sic gusted to and fro, and we found our little flags without issue. We finished on foot, walking for a kilometre carrying our paddles, our shadows stretched far in front of us with the last of the evening light. I could see a small crowd at the finish line - the charming race director wearing his tilley hat, Raul and Belen, some smiling volunteers still ushering us through the landscape that had proved so monumental. We were seventh – the last of the teams with the distinction of having completed the race. With a little help, we had made it through.

H o o o - e y e - r r r r r a -SEEEEENCHEEEEEE! Nicola has been adventure racing since 2005. The Huairasinchi was her second international race. She lives and looks for adventure in Ottawa, Canada.



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training

Transitions

by Cynthia Engel

This time of year is marked by transitions. It is the transition from winter to spring; when the tipping point between daylight and darkness reaches a perfect balance due to the sun spending an equal amount of time above and below the horizon. It is a shift to brighter evenings and warmer days, periodically moving us onto decks, terraces, yards and parks. It is a re-discovery of the smell of blossoming trees and budding plants. It is that emerging sense that anything is possible and the best is yet to come.

For the multisport athlete, it also marks the transition from the monoculture of one or two outdoor activities and the gerbil like feeling of training in a gym, to the cornucopia of essentially every multisport activity available. Some of the best downhill and cross-country skiing of the season is available while at

the same time, mountain and road biking is starting to mature. The warmer days and cool nights create a great climate for climbing by keeping the temps comfortable at the crags. The rivers are starting to run again making kayaking and rafting challenging and exciting. Paddle boarding and flat water kayaking are fun ways to take advantage of the longer weekends. And we can finally shed the headlamps and yaktrax as we set off running on miles of newly exposed trails after work. Honestly, it's not about what is possible this time of year; it's more about what all we can fit into each day!

What also becomes evident at this time of year is how we, as multisport athletes, seem to find ourselves among one of three types of transition-ers: the "hanger on-ers", the "moving on-ers" and the "do it all-ers". There are those that hang on to their primary winter sport for as long as possible; the skiers that squeeze every last drop of snow out of the year and hold on to that regardless of the weather or the conditions. As an eager XC skier myself, I will admit that I can trend toward this type of multi-sport transition-er. The idea is that when the snow is gone, it's gone, so if I don't take advantage of it now, it's simply lost until next season...which seems to get shorter and shorter as a result of climate change. The downside of this, of course, is that I could be missing out on some killer mountain biking or some great paddle days on the river.

There are also those that have already put their winter sports gear into storage and replaced them with the boats, bikes and trail shoes: the moving on-ers. The idea behind this being that along with the change of seasons comes a serious desire for a change of scenery and pace; we can only do the same things for so long and it's time to do something different...now! The disadvantage to this approach, of course, is that we miss out on some of the best conditions of the season for the winter sports; the severe storms have finished rolling through and left us with corn snow, sunshine, and bluebird skies in their wake.

And then there are those that find themselves in a state of almost schizophrenic multi-sport joy because of all the options available to them at any moment of the day. We wake up at the crack of dawn cranking out a non-stop itinerary that involves skinning up the top of Tumalo Mountain for a few back country turns followed by an XC ski crust cruise to Todd Lake all before 10 am when the snow turns too soft. Then it's a stop in town for a coffee and a sandwich as we load up the bikes head out for a mountain bike ride at Horse Ridge, wrapping up with a paddle on the Deschutes and finally a local micro brew outside with friends, all of us wearing our down jackets and beanies, figuring out what the itinerary is for the next day and doing it all over again. We then find ourselves collapsed and semi-conscious on Monday morning and that's after two double shots of espresso!

While each of these options is attractive in its own way, each leaves a gap as well. During this time of year, just as the sun is spending equal times on each side of the horizon, we as multisport athletes have an opportunity to find our own balance and create an opportunity to truly have it all. This is our chance to make the most of all we love to do while it lasts; to make it all happen. In the process, however, it is important to also take the time to smell those budding trees and flowers; feel the warmth of the sun during the day and the coolness of the nights; and pace ourselves enough to truly internalize the idea that anything is indeed possible and the best really is yet to come.



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training

Balance and Flexibility: Essential Components For Outdoor Athletes

By Trace Adams

Balance and flexibility are essential components for any athlete. Outside enthusiasts are no different. Outdoor athletes gain agility, and muscular efficiency through such training. There are many exercises that develop the body's neurological and kinesthetic abilities. These practices relate to improved coordination and space awareness with the aim of increasing performance, as well as safety.

Another term for this physiological model is proprioception, which can be defined as the process whereby the body can manipulate muscular contractions in immediate response to external forces. For example, changes in technical terrain, incline, or traction may be met with speed and fluidity.

Numerous activities are biomechanically linear in nature, such as road cycling, swimming, and road running. However, several of today's adventure sports demand a greater range of motion. For instance rock climbing, mountain biking, and trail running move through many different anatomical planes and degrees of freedom. This is where balance training becomes imperative. According to Tina Vindum, founder of Outdoor Action Fitness, "Balance is the most neglected component of fitness there is. Exceptional balance is not something you are born with. You have to practice it to own it."

For the outdoor athlete, the most effective way to improve balance is to train specifically and use Mother Nature as equipment. By walking across low-lying fences, fallen trees, and bounding from rock to rock, balance can be improved without the use of a health club membership. That being said, there are several excellent inexpensive pieces of home equipment that can be used in order to greatly increase balance ability. The exercise ball is the most common form of indoor balance training and can be purchased at any department store. Other less known items are the BOSU. Wobble Board, and Cordisc. Although a primarily indoor means of training, they can be highly effective for outdoor athletes. Consult a specific athletic store or an Internet site for these fitness tools.

Another important component of any fitness regime is flexibility. There are over 660 muscles in the human body. Weak, inflexible muscles produce little power and are likely to experience pulls and strains. Strengthening and stretching muscles will have the potential to significantly improve athletic performance. One study estimated that up to 80 percent of all running injuries resulted from muscle weakness, muscular imbalance, or lack of flexibility. Jeff Jackson of Trail Running Magazine writes, "By strengthening the core and extremities and making space in the joints, you prevent injury and promote recovery." Smooth and controlled stretching is the most effective means of increasing flex-ibility.

For anyone who hikes, mountain bikes, climbs, or paddles, balance and flexibility are essential components for performance and injury prevention. There are many ways to improve both of these abilities either through individual exercises, or endeavors such as yoga or tai chi. Choose a variety of activities that apply to your specific outdoor interest. Muscular strength and an effective cardiovascular system are important; however balance and flexibility bring all physiological aspects together to create a well working human performance machine.

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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@adventureworld magazine.com True North and Grid North are assumed to be identical on this 1:24K map.

This month your team is El Dorado County for the Eleventh round of the Adventure World Magazine Navigation Challenge, brought to you by www.ARNavSupplies.com. For additional navigation challenges see the new Tabletop Adventure Race & Navigation Challenge Books from AR Navigation Supplies.

Checkpoint	Instruction	Question
Start	Find BM 805	Give the UTM of this point.
CP 1	Find the building at UTM 0665720 4292900	Traveling by road what is the distance in miles from the Start to this CP?
CP 2	From the hilltop marked 1342 plot a bearing of 256 Deg from Grid North. From the peak of Flagstaff Hill plot a bearing of 301 deg from Grid North.	What is the elevation of the knoll at the intersection of these two bearings?
CP 3	Travel via the flattest route to the peak of Flagstaff Hill.	How many contour lines did you cross?
CP 4	From the peak of Flagstaff Hill follow a bearing of 174 deg from Grid North for 0.37 of a mile.	What is the elevation of the point that you reach?
CP 5	Bushwhack West to the road and follow it to the point where it crosses creek in Deep Ravine.	What is the elevation where the stream crosses the road?
CP 6	Follow the shortest route by road to Granite Ravine.	How many trail intersections did you pass?
CP 7	From the point where Granite Creek meets Folsom Lake bushwhack to the top of Shirttail Peak.	How many major contour lines did you cross?
CP 8	Bushwhack from Shirttail Peak to Zantgraf Mine by following a bearing.	What Grid North bearing would you follow?
CP 9	Pick up your Kayaks at Zantgraf Mine and paddle SSW to the island marked 544 in Folsom Lake.	What is the distance in miles you would have to paddle to land closest to the highpoint?
CP 10	Paddle to the point where Anderson Creek meets the Lake and bushwhack to the highest marked point of the creek.	What is the elevation of the highest marked point of Anderson Creek?
Finish	Email your answers to: info@adventureworldmagazine.com	



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Firefly

What You Need:

Dark outside area 1 Flashlight

How To Play

Once it's dark, give a chosen player (the firefly) a flashlight and have her head away from the group with the light off, silently counting to 60 as she goes.

When the firefly reaches 60, she must flash the light once.

The rest of the players then count to 100 before setting out to get the firefly, who tries to avoid capture by hiding and changing directions.

But here's the catch: she must continuously count to 60, flashing the light each time she reaches the end of her count.

The first person to tag the firefly takes her place for the next round.



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.





ON THE HORIZON

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Feature Articles:

- Return of Fat Adventurer
 - Night Training
 - Training and Pets
 - Adventure Travel
- Green Gear and Companies
 - Cross Training Options

Gear Reviews:

- Adventure Travel Gear
- Spring Trail Shoe Review
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Desert Winds Expedition Race

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it happened to me!

Plan Well, Leave Early and Carry Extra Water In Your Boat

by Clay Abney

Over a year before the inception of Adventure World Magazine, Dave Poleto and I decided to celebrate a successful season for Gulf Coast Adventure Racing by competing in the Howl at the Moon Adventure Race in north Florida in late October 2007. It was an 18-hour race and it was within a few hours drive of my then home in Mobile, Alabama.

Dave drove from his home in New Orleans and arrived early Friday afternoon so we could make our final gear selection and discuss our race strategy. We would be joining up with two other 2-person teams for this event. The race was to begin at three o'clock on Saturday afternoon so we opted to leave out early that morning.

It wasn't until we were on the road heading east that morning and had crossed over into the Eastern Time zone that we realized we had failed to compensate for the loss of that hour. After a slight increase in our acceleration, we arrived a little after 11am (at the wire for check-in) where we checked in and joined up with our other teammates. We had chosen to race the event as three, 2-person teams to allow us to have extra maps and three possible navigators.

After we received our maps, we began plotting our points and developing our strategy for the race.

Before the race start, we seemed posed for a fantastic finish.

Until....

Right before the starting gun sounded, I realized we had misplaced our team passport. By the time we located this essential component, we were 10-15 minutes behind the race field.

The race required all teams to cross the Suwannee River within 500 yards of the starting line. We continued upriver locating our CPs before opting to cross back over the river as part of our strategy.

After starting at the back of the field of teams close to fifty strong, we reached the paddling leg of the race just after dark to discover that we were the seventh team to arrive. Our decision to cross back over the river proved instrumental in our making up the lost time at the start.

There were multiple choices in canoes and we quickly selected three fiberglass boats and we were off. I took the front of the boat and Dave took the back.

As any paddler knows, trace amounts of water will accumulate in your boat from your paddle stroke but not the volume that was soon filling our canoe. After the depth of water surpassed an inch in our boat, I noticed a small tear in the hull near the front. The further downriver we paddled, the larger the hole became and the deeper the water got. Several of the CPs required us to go ashore to retrieve them and we used this opportunity to empty our boat.

There was one stretch though where we paddled for over two hours without the possibility of a 'boat dump'. During this stretch, we had over ten inches of water in our boat. Our packs were floating around our feet, which remained submerged the entire time. Turning the boat, and paddling in general, requires a substantial amount of effort when carrying this extra weight (we estimated over 300 pounds of water) and sitting that much lower in the water.

Even with our extra resistance, we were able to pass two teams on the water. After exiting the river, we were in fifth place. After a quick transition, and dry clothing change, we headed out on our bikes for the final leg of the race.

We arrived at the finish line after four on Sunday morning after racing for a little over thirteen hours. We finished the race fourth overall (second in our division) but were most elated to have made it down the river where the only creatures that spent more time in the Suwannee River that night were the fish!