



## Presented By:





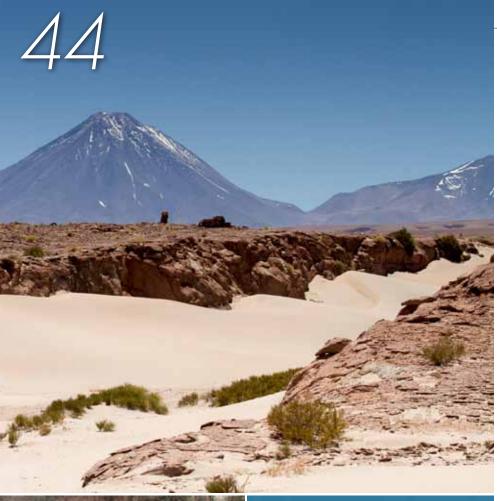
# **USARA**National Rankings

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1	Layer 3	52.00
2	Checkpoint Zero	50.00
3	Adventure Capitalists/BDAR	50.00
4	Rev3\Mountain Khakis	30.00
5	NYARA	30.00
6	Unplugged Adventures	29.00
7	Off-Course Navigation	28.00
8	Journey Racing	27.00
9	Team Kuat	25.00
10	Control Freaks	25.00



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# REBECCA RUSCH: OF PAIN

Betwen rock climbing, outrigger canoeing, white-water rafting, and river boarding, I thought my sporting dance card was full, but it wasn't long before I was whisked into my next activity, which would combine all the athletics I'd ever done, take me to places all around the world I'd never dreamed of visiting, and push me to new limits.

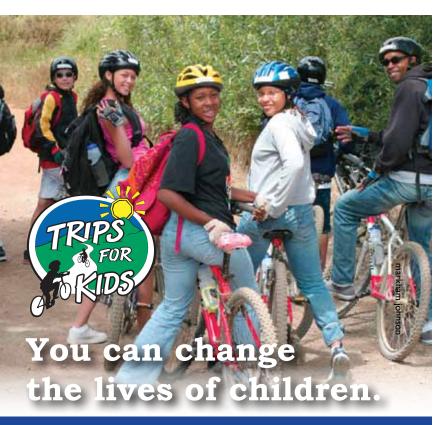
While I was working at the gym, all these Lycra-clad adventure racers would come in and ask for rappelling lessons. I had no idea what sort of racing they were talking about; all I knew was that they didn't fit in with the typical climbing crowd. They were not interested in the physical challenge and intellectual puzzle of climbing. They simply wanted to use the wall as a ladder so they could learn the mechanics of how to get back down. Trying to keep a straight face and an open mind, I would explain that nobody just rappels. That's how you get down. The real joy is in the ascent, not the descent. But they had their minds set on rappelling because it is a required skill in adventure racing. I felt perfectly fine accepting their money for the instruction.

Over time, I was able to look past the silly Lycra tights. I even converted a few adventure racers to climbers. I forged some really great friendships with many of these athletes, and as I exposed them to the climbing world, they solicited my expertise as a climbing instructor and rope safety rigger for some adventure racing training camps. I was happy for the extra work outside and got a glimpse into their sport. One of those friends was Cathy Sassin, a trainer and nutritional consultant at Gold's Gym who had been pulled into adventure racing after winning a contest put on by Mark Burnett, the TV producer who was bringing Eco-Challenge to the United States. Shortly after winning, she came in to Rockreation to learn how to climb in preparation for a race in Borneo, and we hit it off.

In 1997, when Burnett contacted Cathy about needing experienced people to help lead the way at his 24-hour adventure race in Malibu, she decided that she was going to persuade me to race, even if she had to drag me kicking and screaming. My friend Andy Petranek still needed a female team member for his team, so he joined Cathy in convincing me. When they first asked, I laughed at them. I didn't even own a bike, and







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even sit on a couch. But from where they were standing, I'd been a runner and was now a climber and paddler, which loosely covered most of the adventure-racing disciplines. And they figured that anyone can pedal a bike. But the most persuasive argument was that they genuinely needed another woman in order to race. Adventure racing requires a four- or five-person team with at least one member of the opposite sex. So in this male-dominated sport, strong women are a hot commodity, even a woman who hadn't ridden a bike in years and had never touched a mountain bike.

24 hours sounded like a long time to do anything,

Of course I succumbed to the peer pressure. Adventure racing sounded a little outrageous and very challenging, but what I really needed was something to motivate me over the winter months. In the summers, I climbed outdoors every week and was now racing outrigger canoes with an internationally renowned team. However, winters in the climbing gym were leaving me feeling out of shape and uninspired. I needed something new to feed my competitive nature until the climbing and paddling season rolled back around. So I agreed to give it a shot and went about confronting my weakest (okay, nonexistent) skill: the bike.

This was my first personal encounter with mountain biking—and it was a reluctant meeting, to say the least. I had zero interest in the sport, but there was no getting around it: I had to learn



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to ride if I was going to do the race. I purchased a used bike from a woman who used to race downhill and was much shorter than me. It was a heavy bike, and no one educated me on how to adjust the suspension for my body weight. It was a chore wrangling it where I wanted it to go, but I just assumed it was my lack of experience that made it so hard to ride. I never considered the possibility that it was actually the wrong tool for the job, and no one told me otherwise.

For the four weeks leading up to the race, I simply put in time being active. I didn't know about structured training, so I just spent time paddling, running, and climbing. I knew nothing of the sport and had no intention of doing another race after that one. But I did want to pull my own weight, and I was getting increasingly concerned that my male teammates were going to have to tow me around, especially on the bike. I had been searching

for motivation to get active and fit again over the winter months, and it was working.

Team ROAM (an acronym for Rebecca, Owen, Andy, and Mike) did a few organized workouts in the Los Angeles area. Owen Shea, Andy, and Mike Hobbs did all of the planning, and I tagged along, trying to learn as much as possible in a short amount of time. They coordinated sea kayaking workouts in the ocean, rock climbing sessions in the gym, big monster hikes in the Santa Monica Mountains, and, of course, mountain bike rides. We practiced carrying stuff in backpacks, and I used a Camelbak for the first time. I was totally fine with most of our weekend adventures—except when mountain biking was involved. It was a crash course in cycling, with virtually no instruction except "Follow me" and "Get your weight back behind the saddle for the downhills."

Our weekend adventures in the Santa Monica



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Mountains were multi-hour excursions, but we did nothing that lasted 24 hours. I was becoming increasingly concerned about how I would race around the clock. I've always cherished my sleep and never, ever been a morning person. Growing up, my mom continually struggled to get me out of bed and off to school on time. Although my sister would be awake with the sun, I could easily sleep until noon on the weekends. The physical demands of enduring nonstop activity for 24 hours (especially with three big, strong guys) had me worried, but so did my lack of cycling skill.

My anxiety grew as the race neared. In fact, the week before the start I was in tears as I tried to visualize what the experience would be like. I was certain that I'd be the weak link, unable to stay upright on the bike, struggling to survive the duration of the event with three disappointed guys yelling at me. I cursed myself for agreeing to something that seemed utterly impossible and ridiculous. But I felt a sense of responsibility toward the team; I knew they

## **Individual Races**

- 4x Leadville 100 winner and women's record holder (2009,2010,2011, 2012)
- 3 x Dirty Kanza 200 Women's Champion (2012, 2013, 2014)
- Kokopelli Trail Women's Record Holder (2013)
- Mountain X-Games Adventure Race, 1st Women's Team (2007)
- 24 Hours of Moab Women's team, 1st (2005)

## National & State Championships

- 2 x National XC Single-speed Champion (2011, 2013)
- 24 Hour Team Mountain Bike National Champion (2008, 2009,2011)
- 24 Hour Solo Mountain Bike National Champion (2006)
- USAC National Singlespeed Champion: Sun Valley (2011)
- 24 Hour Orienteering National Champion (2006)
- US Whitewater Rafting National Champion Team (2001 and 2002)

## World Races & Championships

- World Master's XC Champion (2010)
- 3-Time 24 Hour Solo Mountain Bike World Champion (2007, 2008, 2009)
- Masters Cross Country skiing World Champion (2008)
- Eco Challenge Adventure Races (1997-2002)
- Primal Quest Expedition Races (2002-2006)
- Raid Gauloises Expedition Races (2000, 2002, 2003)
- Raid Gauloises Adventure Racing World Championships, 1st (2003)

wouldn't be able to find another woman on such short notice. I couldn't back out now.

The race was incredibly difficult and eye opening. I didn't know what was what coming next or even what I was expected to do. My focus was 100 percent on not screwing up or slowing down my team. I followed dutifully, maintained concentration, and pretty much kept my mouth shut. I had disturbing visions of having to be dragged and pushed through the bike section to the finish. Some of the teams were gunning hard for the winning prize: a trip to Eco-Challenge Australia. They had organized team names, matching uniforms, and were dialed in on winning. I just hoped to survive.

The race started on the beach at Sycamore Cove. Huge waves crashed

## SKIN IN THE RACE?



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on the sand as the racers charged into the water to launch their kayaks. Many of the teams took multiple tries and many mouthfuls of seawater to punch through the Pacific Ocean swell. One team's race ended right there when their kayak broke in half after being smashed back onto the beach. Another woman's race ended with a trip to the hospital after having her face drug across the ocean floor. Luck was on our side, and we pierced through on our first try, rocked the paddling section, and were quickly among the top teams. Our biggest advantage was that Andy had trained in the military and was an exceptional navigator. With designated checkpoints to hit but no marked route for miles in between, an adventure-racing course is open for each team to interpret. Andy nailed the navigation, and we literally bumped right into every single checkpoint without error. Naively, I assumed every team was doing the same thing. Instead, there were tons of teams wallowing around lost in the Santa Monica Mountains. I would find out much later how vital and rare a good navigator is in adventure racing. We moved through the course steadily. I kept waiting for my body to say, "Stop. Let me go to sleep." But it didn't.

Just before midnight, and hours ahead of the predicted schedule, we reached the mountain bike section. As Andy plotted the bike course on our map, all I could see was that it went up and up, forever, and he told us we'd be riding uphill for many hours. I braced myself for the inevitable. We rode in silence, and I entered my own world of steely concentration. Soon Mike, a strong firefighter, was wavering, and both Andy and Owen had

to put all their attention into helping him up the hill. This meant they would not be available to help push me up. Although the possibility of needing their help had been haunting me, having that security blanket snatched away was a rude awakening. I was the girl on the team. If anyone was supposed to get help, it was me. If two of us needed help, there would be no way to get to the top. I rode a bit ahead of the team to regain my focus and make sure I didn't fall behind. I also hoped to get out of earshot of Mike's groaning because I feared it would suck me back into my own panic. Behind me, the three guys moved in unison as they took turns pulling and pushing Mike. I had never ridden or seen a hill this big. I started playing little counting games to keep me motivated. First, I just focused on counting 10 pedal strokes at a time. I told myself I wouldn't stop until 10, then 10 became 20, then I began to count to 100. I have no idea how much time passed climbing that hill, but finally in the middle of the dark night, I could see the road flattening out and there was nothing above me except moonlit sky. We were at the top of the hill—I'd made it on my own power.

It turned out I didn't need any additional help from the guys during the event. We ended up winning the race, and despite my massive insecurities, I was one of the stronger members of the team—certainly not the weak link I expected to be. I had no idea how it had happened, but I was able to race alongside three very strong, athletic men who had a lot more endurance sport experience than I did.

The prize for this 24-hour race was a trip to compete in the Australian Eco-Challenge. I stood on



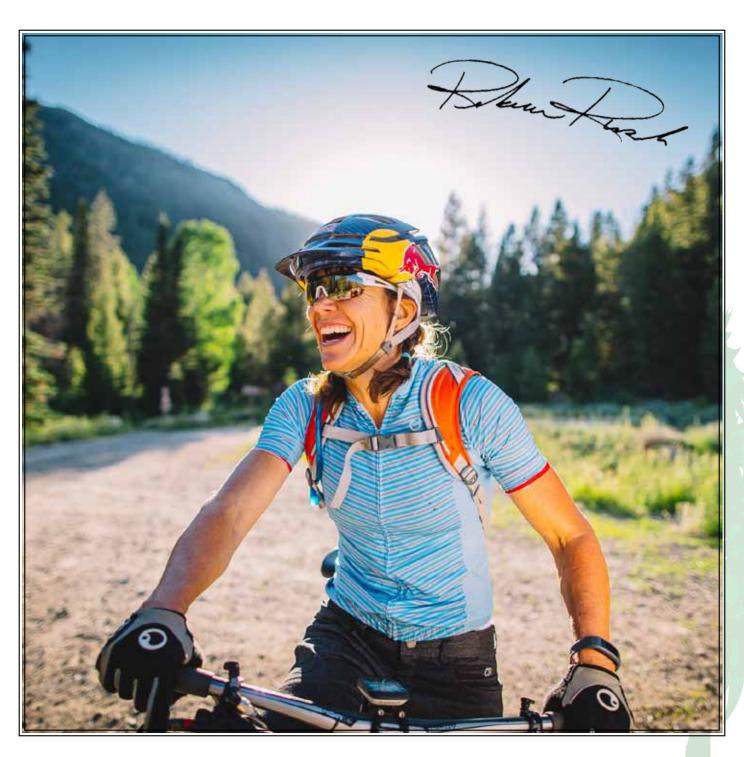
## POPTICALS

POP-OUT SUNGLASSES



the very top step of the podium to accept our award, which now seemed like a death sentence, not a prize. Twenty-four hours on a racecourse was the biggest, longest competition I'd ever done, and now we were being offered the "opportunity" to do this again for a week straight, covering more than 600 miles of scorched earth and deadly snakes in the Australian outback. But

we took the coveted entry to the biggest adventure race in the world, and I agreed to go along. Truth be told, I was just in it for the free trip to Australia. I had been an exchange student there in college and loved the people and the place. I'd take the trip, do my best, and get back to rock climbing when I returned home.





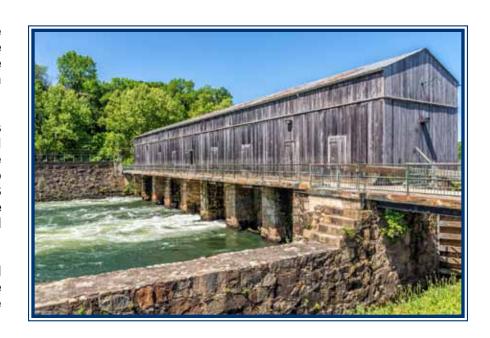
#### 2016 USARA Adventure Race National Championship

The USARA is excited to announce that the 2016 USARA Adventure Race National Championship will be held in Columbia County, Georgia on October 14-15, 2016.

The race directors at Rev 3 Adventures have developed a challenging and beautiful course that is sure to create some fantastic national championship memories. The Columbia County CVB has really stepped up to help insure the 2016 USARA Adventure Race National Championship is a success.

Be sure to get your team qualified as racers can expect a great course followed by an excellent time at the awards banquet.

www.USARANationals.com







The USARA has adopted new point values for the National Ranking System to create a more equitable ranking system.

The main changes under the newly adopted rules are that regional qualifying races will provide five bonus points and the expedition race points have been adjusted. The USARA Adventure Race National Championship will also have a new point structure that rewards the top 20 finishing teams with ranking points.

For more information on the updated USARA National Ranking System visit the ranking page at www.USARA.com.



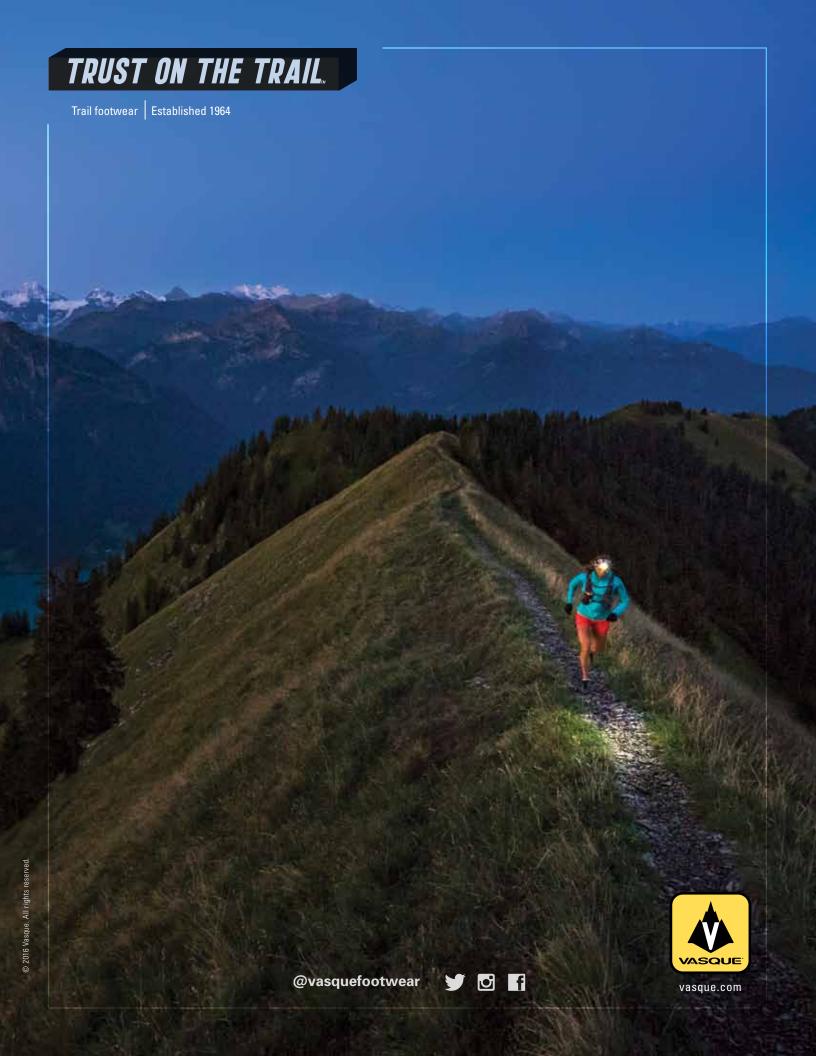


## Popticals to manage USARA Adventure Race National Championship Coverage

Popticals, the official sunglasses of the USARA, will be sending in their media team to manage the live coverage of the USARA Adventure Race National Championship.

Troy Farrar, President of the USARA commented, "We are excited about the partnership with Popticals and the fact that the Popticals media team will be quarterbacking the coverage of the USARA Adventure Race National Championship. The Popticals coverage will really keep the viewers that are not able to attend the championship plugged into the event and promises to be the best coverage we have ever had for the national championship."

Follow team profiles, developing stories & all of the USARA national championship action on the USARA national championship website and the USARA facebook site.





## 岩AFFORDABLE 岩FULLY AUTOMATIC

# FIREARMATIVE

by Troy Farrar

Once while covering the SHOT show I was shooting an AR-15 on range day and the gun rep asked me, "Would you like to shoot the fully automatic version now?" My reply was simple, "has anyone in the history of mankind ever said no to that question?" His reply, "good point." Something about the possibility of shooting a fully automatic firearm turns most shooters plain giddy. It is probably because most of us have never had the chance to shoot a machine gun. The problem is that owning a fully automatic firearm is cost prohibitive for most recreational shooters, as the price tag starts in the \$15,000 range plus the tiresome legal hoops you have to jump through for ownership. So unless you have just won the lottery or own a gun shop, most of us can probably forget about the possibility of owning a fully automatic gun. But don't give up hope just yet, there are a couple of inexpensive alternatives which are legal, affordable and lots of fun for the recreational shooter from Tac-Con and Slidefire. These solutions are much less expensive alternatives and just as much fun as an actual machine gun. We have included a few other must have upgrades in the review for the shooter who is utilizing a Tac-Con or Slidefire stock or for the shooter who is simply putting a lot of rounds downrange.



## Tac - Con 241 Trigger

The Tac-Con 241 trigger does exactly what the name says by providing two different triggers in one, hence the "two for one" moniker. In the past shooters had to choose between a fast and heavy single stage trigger or a light double stage trigger for those precision long range shots. This created a situation which required them to use the wrong tool for the job up to 50% of the time - certainly not ideal. Now shooters can choose the 4.5 pound assisted reset single stage mode which provides a quick break and a short travel that is perfect for close range, rapid firing & CQB. Simply flip the safety selector and now you have a 3.5 pound two stage trigger with a 1 pound break which is ideal for long range shooting. A third bonus is that with a little practice you can shoot the 241 so rapidly that your semiautomatic will feel like a fully automatic rifle. The Tac-Con 241 is a breakthrough in technology providing a very effective situational trigger that features the perfect option for any shooting situation. www.tacconusa.com



#### Slidefire

Slidefire incorporates the bump firing technique which uses the recoil of a semi-automatic firearm to fire multiple shots in rapid succession which simulates the feeling of a fully automatic weapon. With a little practice the shooter can effectively fire a semi-automatic rifle as if it were a fully automatic firearm. The Slidefire stocks are legal and



easy to install giving you the benefits of a fully automatic firearm without all of the paperwork hassles & costs associated with fully automatic firearm. One thing to note is that running a Slidefire stock on an AR-15 can get expensive fairly quickly as ammo cost around thirty three cents per round, which is \$10 for every thirty round magazine fired. A simple solution is to install your Slidefire stock on a Smith & Wesson M&P 22, which is a 22 caliber rim fire rifle, reducing your ammo cost to five cents per round or a buck fifty per magazine. The Slidefire stock can be easily switched from your AR-15 to the M&P 15-22 in about 5 minutes.

## CMC Tactical AR-15/10 Trigger

We suggest adding a CMC Tactical AR-15/10 straight trigger to your Slidefire set up. The positive trigger reset will help make your Slidefire run as smooth as butter and is especially helpful in a 22 caliber rifle setup. The CMC triggers are a great upgrade to any rifle and a must have upgrade for Slidefire equipped firearms. The CMC Tactical AR-15/10 Trigger is a non-adjustable 3.5 pound pull, single stage, US made self-contained drop in trigger module. Available in flat and curved trigger models the CMC provides a crisp breaking trigger with no creep prior to firing. The positive trigger reset allows for smooth lightning fast follow up shots. This match grade trigger has a simple drop in installation that will have you back in action in a few minutes. Get yourself a CMC and watch your trigger control improve dramatically, www.cmctriggers.com





#### Slidefire SSAK-47 HYB

The Slidefire SSAK-47 HYB effectively turns your AK 47 from a semi-automatic into a fully automatic rifle with a turn of a switch on the buffer tube. In reality your rifle becomes a semi-automatic that fires so rapidly it feels and shoots like a fully automatic rifle. The aluminum chassis SSAK-47 HYB allows you to install your favorite mil-spec AR-15 stock on your AK 47 reludes an interchangeable pistol grip mount which will

and includes an interchangeable pistol grip mount which will accept just about any AK or AR pistol grip. The Slidefire provides 6 adjustable stock positions for multiple lengths of pull and a simple turn of a switch unlocks the stock for rapid fire. The removable finger rest (used during rapid fire) is ambidextrous allowing the rapid fire mode to be used by left or right handed shooters. Make that AK sing and have some fun with the new Slidefire SSAK-47 HYB, www.slidefire.com

#### Slidefire SSAR-15 MOD

The Slidefire SSAR-15 MOD is the latest AR-15 stock produced by Slidefire. The SSAR-15 MOD is a considerable upgrade providing 6 adjustable stock positions for multiple lengths of pull along with a dual locking mechanism that really keep the stock locked down for precision shooting. Flip the "fun switch" and the stock allows for rapid fire that simulates a fully automatic rifle. The SSAR-15 MOD features an ambi finger rest and santoprene grips & butt pad which have a great feel. Get the SSAR-15 MOD and enjoy the best of both worlds with a rock solid stock that has rapid fire capability. www.slidefire.com



#### Wheaton Arms Reverse Muzzle Break for S&W 15-22

Certain 22 ammunition and some Smith & Wesson M&P 15-22 rifles do not operate correctly in rapid fire mode due to a lack of sufficient recoil to properly cycle the Slidefire stock. The US made Wheaton Arms Reverse Muzzle Break for S&W M&P 15-22 was specifically designed to combat this problem by increasing the recoil impulse of the 22LR cartridge which improves the functionality of the S&W M&P 15-22 rifle with a Slidefire stock installed. Wheaton Arms is able to get the desired results by pointing the ports forward on the muzzle break. The Wheaton Arms Reverse Muzzle Break is a high quality, made in the US upgrade that is worthwhile addition. Wheaton Arms suggests using their reverse brake in conjunction with the CMC flat trigger for optimum performance of the Slidefire stock on S&W M&P 15-22 rifles. www.wheatonarms.com





The made in the USA Mitusa MAGPUMP Ultralight Loader is an amazing thumb saver and a must have item for anyone who goes through significant rounds at the range or in competition. The MAGPUMP Ultralight Loader is a hopper fed, loose ammo loader for .223, 5.56 NATO, and .300 Blackout which is compatible with all Mil Spec AR-15 magazines. Just dump your ammo into the hopper, insert your magazine and push the lever. The MAGPUMP loads 1 round with each depression of the lever,

automatically orienting the round. This is a huge time saver as you no longer need to align all the rounds to face the same direction before loading a magazine, just dump them into the hopper and start loading. Once your magazine is full, the MAGPUMP will not attempt to load another round. The MAGPUMP has a detachable base so it can be attached to

a GearTrac or Picatinny rail and there are quick release pins which allow you to easily remove the hopper and lever for storage. The MAGPUMP Ultralight Loader is the best bench loader we have seen and a must have product for any serious shooter. www.mitusaman.com

## WMD Guns NiB-X AR-15 Charging Handle

The WMD Guns NiB-X AR-15 Charging Handle is a fantastic upgrade to your AR-15, especially if you are a round hound who puts in a lot of trigger time with your rifle. The self-lubricating NiB-X nickel-boron coating is super easy to clean and runs as smooth a butter because grime & grit will not adhere to the surface. The made in the USA lightweight aluminum charging handle will insure your rifle works when you need it to work – which is always. www.wmdguns.com

#### WMD Guns NiB-X Black BCG

The Newly released WMD Guns NiB-X Black BCG actually has a second NiB-X Black coating on top of the normal NiB-X coating. This proprietary NiB-X Black coating is so hard that it is actually off the Rockwell Hardness Chart. The WMD Guns Nickel Boron coating is 40% more wear resistant than chrome and produces an easy to clean BCG that resists fouling and does not require lube. This BCG is perfect for shooters with the Tac-Con or Slidefire upgrades who shoot lots or rounds, suppressed weapons or weapons that are used in tough environments such as sandy areas. Available in 5.56 & 308, the NiB-X coating will allow the user to run 2-3 times the number of rounds through the gun between cleanings without malfunctions. WMD Guns is so confident in their made in the United States BCG that they will guarantee the NiB-X coating forever, and that is a long time for a gun parts warranty. The WMD Guns NiB-X Bolt Carrier Group is a fantastic upgrade for your AR-15. www.wmdguns.com



## POF USA Ultimate Bolt Carrier Group

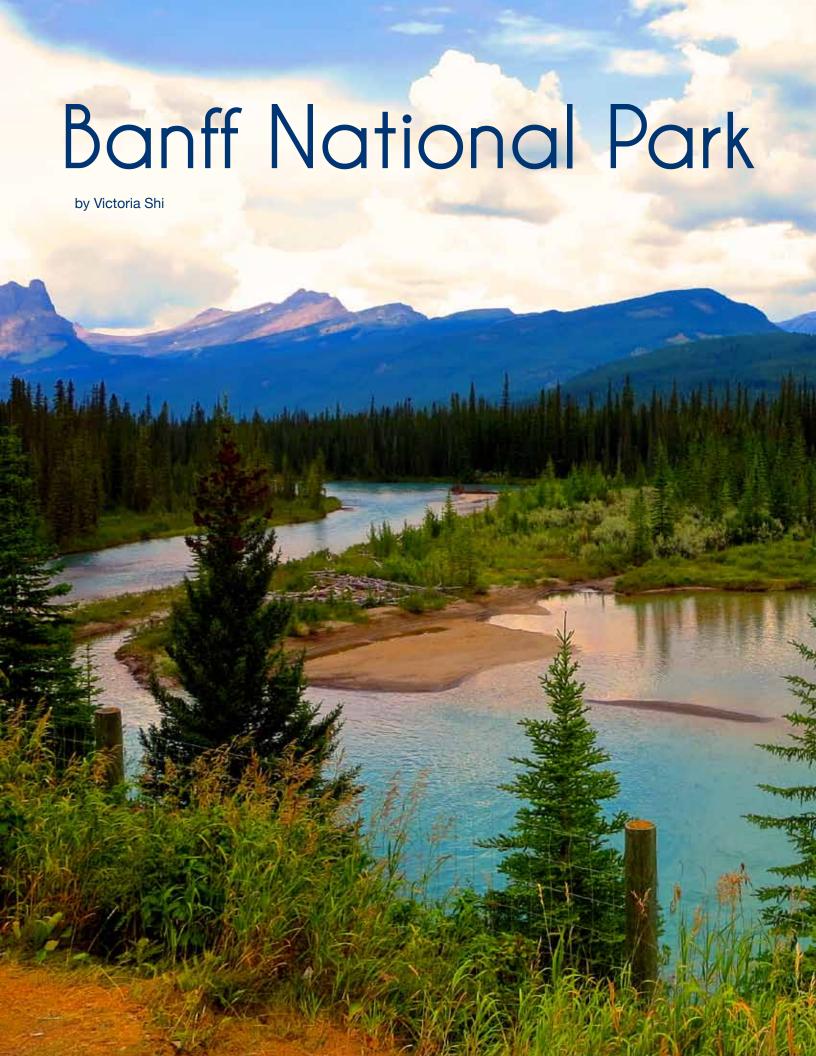
POF USA starts by machining the Ultimate Bolt Carrier Group from a solid piece of alloy steel producing an integrated gas key. This eliminates the need to stake the bolts and removes the possibility of the gas key coming loose during operation. Next the Ultimate BCG is NP3 coated giving it an ultra-durable but easy to clean surface which is especially useful

for high round shooters. The Ultimate BCG rounded out with a chrome bolt, a pressed & pinned stainless steel inlet tube and a roller cam pin to reduce friction and drag. The US made POF USA Ultimate Bolt Carrier Group takes an innovative approach to eliminating all of the common problems which can cause BCG malfunctioning and should

cause BCG malfunctioning and should keep your rifle running great. The perfect BCG upgrade for any shooter and especially Tac-Con or Slidefire users. www.pof-usa.com



is unique in that it is the only rifle in the world that never requires lubrication. No that is not a misprint; the Anderson Rifle never needs lubrication. Anderson makes this possible by treating their rifles with RF85, a nano technology that permanently injects calcium into the molecular fabric of the metal. When heated and under pressure the calcium nano particles elongate and form a protective barrier that eliminates the need for lubrication. By eliminating oil, the carbon fibers are not trapped and baked onto the gun parts allowing the Anderson Rifle to run much longer without being cleaned. The RF85 reduces friction by 85%, producing a 23% faster action. When you get ready to clean the rifle just use a little liquid detergent and water on the BCG and wipe down the rest of the rifle. The Anderson Rifle AM-15 Optic Ready comes chambered in .223/5.56 with a 16" Chrome Moly Vanadium Steel M4 contour barrel and a 17-4 stainless steel match grade Trigger and Hammer. The Anderson Rifle is a sweet shooting rifle and the RF85 coating make this the perfect firearm for the heavy round usage that will occur with the Tac-Con or Slidefire upgrades. www.andersonrifles.com





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361adventures.com

Banff, Alberta, one of the most beautiful places you will ever visit in Canada. With the crystal clear waters, snowcapped Rocky Mountains, and photogenic scenery, Banff is undoubtedly the perfect destination for photographers and travelers who want to relax or go on an adventure. Every part of Banff is breathtaking. Whether you're on the top of a mountain or canoeing along the turquoise waters, you are surrounded by nature. For me, Banff was a getaway from cities. There are barely any buildings and you feel like you have gone back in time before our world was modernized and polluted. Being so close to nature allows you to take a deep breath and admire your surroundings instead of having your head buried in your cellphone. It allows you to disconnect with technology, which I think is



extremely important. Our society revolves so much around technology that we never get a break from it. Banff, however, promotes a healthy mental and physical lifestyle - the two elements that are crucial for living a happy and healthy life.





As you drive through the winding mountains, you will see the pine trees covering the mountains and the lakes below. Look for spots that will allow you to park your car to stop and appreciate the scenery. Banff is known for Lake Louise, but there are many other lakes such as Bow Lake, that are just as beautiful and not as crowded with tourists. Lake Louise does give you the opportunity to canoe under supervision, which is safe for beginner canoeists. If you are going to Banff, I highly recommend canoeing. Even if you've never canoed before, it's a calming experience that you will not forget. Being so close to the cool emerald water reminds me of the Caribbean waters, which you would never expect to see in Canada. There are also countless trails for amateurs and experiences hikers. The 'Banff Gondola' will take you to the top of the Sulphur Mountain. An alluring mountain covered in lush grass, many types of colorful flowers, and ancient rocks. You will get a bird's eye view of Lake Louise and the rest of Banff from the mountain. My favorite part was the restaurant on the mountain which had outdoor seating and offered a spectacular view. It's a place where you can rest after a long hike and enjoy a meal, a quick snack, or refreshment. After a long day of hiking, we decided to switch gears and drive to downtown Banff which consists of a wide variety of small boutiques, restaurants, coffee shops, and candy shops. If you have never tried the famous Canadian 'Beaver Tail', which is a delicious pastry based in Canada, I highly recommend trying it - as it is usually rare to find. Downtown Banff is not



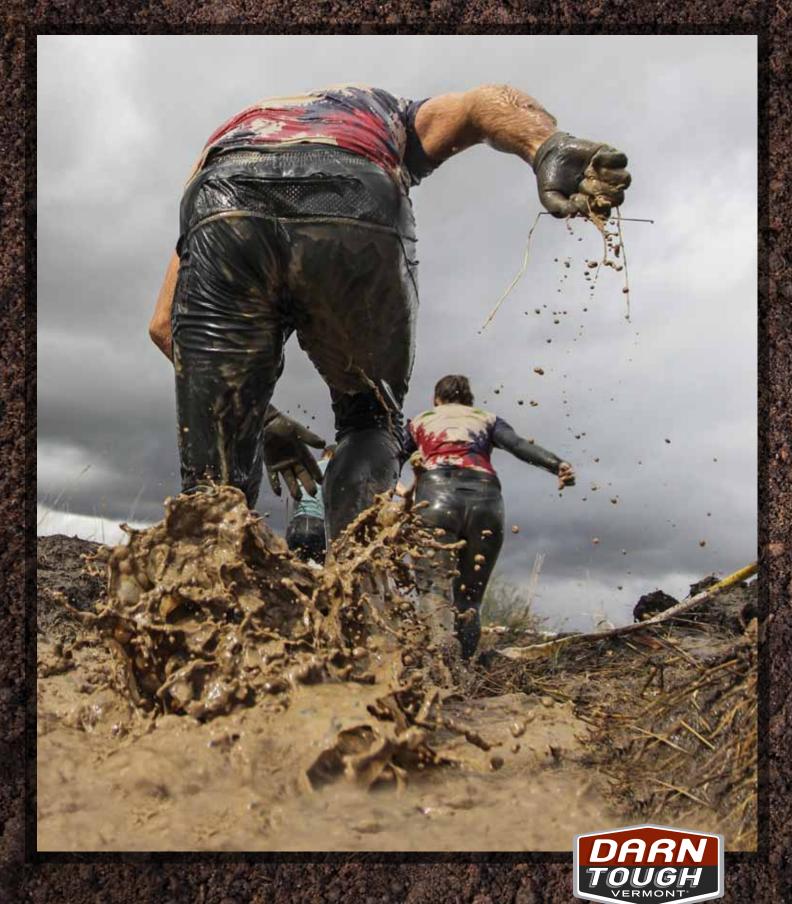




**KUATRACKS.COM** 



chaotic but instead it takes on the 'Old Quebec City' vibe with the old fashioned architecture and glistening lights. You can see the tall mountains towering above the little shops adding the element of nature in a commercial area. Walking along the streets of downtown is enjoyable as there is always something new that you won't see back home. Banff is the perfect spot for families to bond or for adventurers to explore and take on new challenges. I highly recommend everyone take a trip to Banff to create memories and to admire what nature has to offer us.



IF YOU'RE OUT THERE, WE'RE WITH YOU.™

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**Proud Sponsor of the USARA National Championships** 

## Expedition Outreach

by Michael Coyne

All my life I have climbed mountains, my wife Serenity & I have travelled from Alaska to Bolivia climbing walls of rock & ice, putting up new routes & even setting a Guinness Book World Record luge sledding down. Now after heart failure I have a difficult time carrying groceries.

Several years ago a man attacked me because of the uniform I was wearing as a Massachusetts State Trooper. At 6'2" hyped up on street drugs he came at me faster than I could react, we fought



hand to hand because I chose not to shoot him, my gun being the only weapon I had on me that day. When my radio broke the squelch button went off & dispatch called to see if I was ok. When I didn't respond, Trooper Kelly, a fellow former U.S. Marine said he got a gut feeling & headed in my last known direction only to find me unconscious & still clinging to this man's neck in some desperate wrestling move I was attempting before going out as he was slamming my head against the concrete building adjacent. Trooper Kelly saved me that day.





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It was a long recovery but I worked several more years as a police officer before a mysterious anxiety overcame

me. It turned out that the head injury caused sleep apnea which then in turn caused heart failure, 30% of my heart died & I was given roughly 5 years to live & told I would never climb to altitude again. So after a long talk with my wife regarding of what is the true value in life, we agreed, only love, ours & the love of what we enjoy most, so was born The WildHeart No Limits International Kilimanjaro Expedition.

My full time job was now cardiac rehab & training took precedence over everything else. The team I put



together consisted of 4 men who also had heart issues though accomplished athletes it seemed to affect them less.

My wife Serenity, a talented musician Matt Shanahan, future mountain guide Andre Mattos, Doctor Joshua Hirsch, a Chiropractor from N.H. and his son Christian, a naval cadet & friend Arno Mayer made up the New England team. Ken Bell a business man from California who has the goal of reaching the world's seven highest peaks & our new friends from the Swiss Alps Tracie Sachs-May, also a Guinness Book World Record holder & 5 time World Cup Champion speed skiing & Philippe May, 13 time Swiss Champion Speed Skiing who just finished The RAAM: Race Across America.

After 20 hours of flying we arrived late in Tanzania, exhausted we settled into our rooms at the Keys Hotel which was more like a Caribbean resort. The next day we travelled to The Machame Gate 5,718 feet altitude, **the first day** is a trek through the Jungle to Camp at 9,927 feet. We had a staff of over 60 porters, guides, cooks & assistant cooks.

Day 2: Dehydration & Hypothermia! We all left for the Shira Plateau 12,355 feet. Pushing on Serenity & I were our

usual hour behind when it began to rain, the higher we went the colder it became & Serene made one small mistake that cascaded. In the rush to get on the trail she forgot to mix her electrolyte drink & started dehydrating in the heat. The temperature dropped





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suddenly & it began to rain as I watched hypothermia slowly take over my wife's concentration. By the time we arrived at Shira Camp she couldn't use her fingers & was shivering uncontrollably not even recognizing me. I got her in a sleeping bag & dressed in warm clothes & I started her on some oxygen & rehydrating with Trifuel.

Day 3: The storm subsided & Serenity felt better but I made the decision to split the team in two. Serenity & I along with Matt, whose asthma was kicking in stayed at Shira camp while the team climbed on to Lava Tower 14,950 feet.

On day 4 using two way Midland hand held radios I had the team push down to Barranco Camp (13,066) to rest, while we made Lava Tower. Each step was a monumental effort to force air in & out of my lungs, sounding like a machine I chugged along until my Heart Rate Monitor reached higher than 130, the set limit for my heart rate before resting. To avoid dropping to my feet I would yell out, 130 letting my wife know to rest for 3 minutes, leaning on my Leki Trekking Poles & recovering 'on the fly'. Because of my heart failure what is aerobic for some could be unconsciousness for me.

Lava Tower was a cold & desolate place, we had given our team the only cook tent making things dismal. Eating outside & taking blood samples with mud soaked hands under a vast Milky Way of stars was as challenging as it was magnificent. My blood pressure was over 200 & INR dangerously high, we considered descent if I couldn't get these numbers under control. We upped my dose of medication & in the morning decided it was important we push on because nothing new in life was ever accomplished without risk.

Our next obstacle was the towering Barranco Wall: Not really technical but the only hand over hand 4th class rock climbing on our route, the exposure of looking down at a valley thousands of feet below felt good. With clouds beneath us & only clear sky above, Mount Meru loomed in the distance. We reached the top of the wall & with one more valley to cross, we reached Karanga Camp. On day 7 we made high camp at 15,239 feet. Upon reaching our tent Serenity looked at me & said, "I rolled my ankle & it's pretty bad". I asked, when did you do that? She said about an hour after I started the climb. She knew I would have given up the summit for her faster than any other reason, so she lied, she held in the pain & hid herself from my view, I was so busy counting my breaths & pushing the thinning air in & out of my lungs I never noticed her pain. We talked about the need for me to go on, even if I had to go alone as I couldn't hope to keep pace with my team, they were all strong & stayed together. We were all now high on the slopes of Kilimanjaro!



Day 8 Summit Push: Most of the high camp expedition teams left at midnight for a chance to see the sunrise from the summit. A plan that didn't always work. The main body of our expedition left together for the summit near 4 AM. I didn't even try to fall in, because if I were going to do this, I had to get deeply into my head, then completely out of it. A guide had to accompany me by the 'rules' of the mountain & carried oxygen for me but I hardly noticed. The porters & guides are descendants of the Chaga Tribe & are wise and strong on this mountain, yet I would advise anyone seeking to climb Kilimanjaro to have internal leadership as well.

Alone I watched the sunrise near Mount Mweka and the dazzling illumination of the clouds below me. It was not until 16,400 feet that I turned on my Altox Oxygen, I tried to go as long as possible to strengthen my lungs. It wasn't magic but it made all the difference. It takes a lot of effort to commit yourself to the heavy breathing of it. 4 liters per minute was the right dose & I found my new rhythm. Now climbing faster it wasn't long before I met Kilimanjaro's first victim.





Summit Fever: Lying flat on the ground with no guide or porters anywhere near was Raj, of Indian descent living in the UK & with a weak pulse, he was starving for oxygen. What could I do but rip off my mask & offer him mine? Shortly he was revived I thought it was his intent to descend, when I finally got my mask back on & clear of fog I saw him use this temporary energy to sprint up another 40 yards before dropping again. This scenario played itself over again with people from several other expeditions before reaching the high ridge known as Stella Point. On the flat ground the bodies were strewn about the ground, littered even, all young climbers whose first big mountain was Kilimanjaro, all half-awake & struggling to breathe. The common mistake was to spend less on a discounted guided trip & try to reach the summit in a few short days, this nearly always had consequences.

I made a resolve not to rest for more than a moment here, I couldn't stand the thought of lying on the ground in this crowd of zombies, playing out a scene of the Walking Dead.

Stella Point was a place of happy disillusionment, flat enough to imagine you reached the top, but still 45 minutes away. What I didn't know yet was that my team was waiting for me on the summit, they had been there approximately an hour, but the weather was holding & they cheered me on with a final upward push I reached the highest point in Africa. Uhuru peak!

We honor the gift of life through risk, my teammates inspired me, for in their presence I could do no less. We took all the usual summit photos & Ken hugged me &

asked me, "What drives you man"? It was a question I still ponder, was it I had something to prove? Did I reduce Kilimanjaro with supplemental oxygen for ego gratification? I kept telling myself that I was doing it for all the Cardiac Athletes out there, but did I play fair? Then the big one, I'm now at 19,341 feet & low on oxygen because I had been giving it all to strangers, so we started down. Matt asked "how high are we", all I could say was 'too high, way too high' as my pace quickened letting my heavy body drag me down across the volcanic dust.

Mountain Madness: Nearly all mountain climbing documentary's end with the victory shot at the summit, truth is, the greatest risk is often on the descent. Serenity & I are no strangers to mountain rescue or emergency medical care, so our instincts kicked in when we saw a half dozen porters carrying a man down in a wheel barrel. This victim's eyes were rolled into his head and we could not easily find a pulse so we gave him the rest of my oxygen. He was breathing, but just barely.

Serenity forced water into him with this odd jaw lift head tilt method we sort of made up as we went, it was
many hours of worry until we saw him to the ambulance
drop off point & safe at lower altitude. So it goes on
Kilimanjaro.

The meaning of Extreme is a 'relative thing' I have come to relate to all those struggling with health issues, an extreme sport for some is simply getting out of bed in the morning. I have always found extreme sports to be in the variety of spiritual experience more than sport, & like all such experiences ones fears must be faced. After



the assault on my life I suffer from anxiety, (sometimes severe), that make it even harder to breath. I found I was able to hold it together to reach the summit of Africa's highest peak & understand I am the first to do so with such a condition. Each night I used meditation & a style of breath-work called Butekyo Breathing. Stay strong for one more day I would tell myself.

I was supposed to die this year but instead I climbed. I'm not overly talented & have my share of health issues, but I just decided to do it, & if I can do this than I would say there is no limit to what you can do. Life gives us plenty of 'mountainous' obstacles that seem to prevent us from finding happiness & peace, & I would never reduce someone's pain, but I found it helps to get really present with how you are feeling. Pain has a difficult time when you breathe awareness into it. In the end my success was all about focusing on my breath with every ounce of strength I had & after that, concentrating on my upward motion.





An amputee completes the Atacama Crossing - Chile

by Samantha Fanshawe





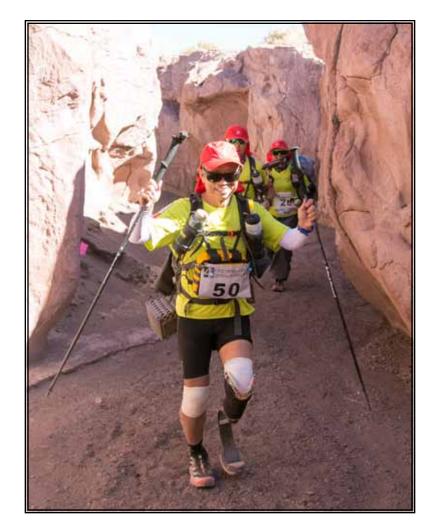
## DETER! Natural Outdoor Skin Protection Proven Long Lasting Deterrent



Camel Fung lost one of his legs in a motorcycling accident back in 1979. Lying in the hospital bed, he never could have imagined that his life 36 years later would include a 250-kilometre foot race across the desert. Although Camel says he would undo the accident and injury if he could, he acknowledges the good that came out of it. An orthopedic nurse who treated him at the hospital became his wife, the same woman who accompanied him every step of the way through the Atacama Desert. "It's your mindset and your determination that gets you where you need to be," says Camel, now 62. "If I had both legs, perhaps my life may not have been as exciting, and maybe I wouldn't have been as tempted to take on these challenges."

As a member of the three-person team 'Five Legs Never Quit,' Camel took on and won the team division of the Atacama Crossing - Chile. As an added challenge, the team set a goal of raising more than \$350,000 for the Hong Kong Amputees Association. The four other legs making up the team belong to Raymond Chak, 42, an attorney also from Hong Kong, and Camel's wife, Icero Bing Ying Chong, 57. As an experienced desert runner and 4 Deserts Race Series veteran, Raymond led the team in Chile, and kept followers back home informed every step of the way by writing a blog.

As the team prepared to start out for Stage 2: The Slot Canyons, Camel discovered a crack between his prosthesis and sole of his hiking boots. "We are now trying to find glue in the desert!" Raymond wrote





on the blog. "Hope we can fix it before tomorrow's race starts!" The next day, with glue and tape holding Camel's leg together, the team set out to face tough terrain. Camel's leg made it through river crossings, but came off as he traversed sand dunes. "I was able to prepare for the heat, but not for the terrain," he said. "I'm incredibly grateful to Raymond and my wife for getting me through the hard times." Camel calls his wife Icero his "angel" and after watching the care he received during the race, Raymond agreed. "Mrs. Fung is really an angel. She's taking care of



Mr. Fung all the way during the race, better than a personal assistant," he wrote. "Our tent-mates all making jokes, saying no one can convince their wife to come to the desert and run together. To convince a wife to join may be the most impossible mission for Ethan Hunt." Despite the challenges in Stage 2, Team Five Legs Never Quit crossed the finish line first among teams, which buoyed their spirits as they set out for day three. The enthusiasm began to wear off as the team encountered terrain Raymond compared to frozen broccoli. "It's so hard to balance your body and













extremely easy to twist your ankle. Luckily, we all managed to go through that worst-place-on-Earth safely." Camel's health took a turn for the worse thereafter, but Icero and the 4 Deserts volunteer medical staff nursed him back into racing shape, while Raymond hid his concerns and kept the group upbeat. "This is all about team spirit," Camel said. "Raymond has been great in keeping the team together." More tough terrain lay ahead during Stage 5: The Long March, which took the group about 22 hours to complete. Instead of "frozen broccoli," Camel and his team had to struggle through more sand dunes, which Raymond compared to another food. "Every step you made, your feet would be sucked into the milkshake-like ground," he wrote. "We never imagined such difficult terrain," Camel agreed. "Climbing the dune was like climbing a slide from the bottom to the top." The team also never imagined they would take first place among teams, crossing the finish line together within 65 hours and 35 minutes. "Magic happens! We finished! Unbelievable! Unstoppable!" Raymond gushed on his blog. Looking back, Camel reflected on his fears about the heat, the terrain, and the distance. "It's not about how afraid you are, but rather how determined you are," he said. "This is beyond our expectations. This has been a wonderful experience."



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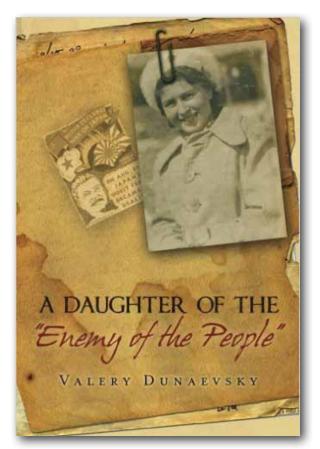
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## Product Reviews

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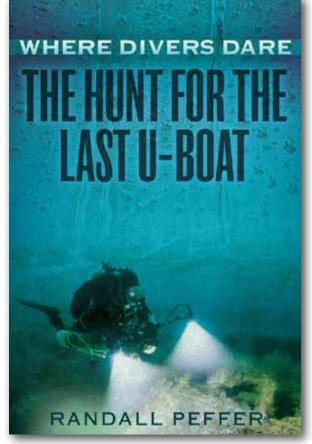


#### A Daughter of the Enemy of the People

A Daughter of the Enemy of the People by Valery Dunaevsky highlights the destruction caused by the Holocaust and the abuse of power in the Soviet Union before, during and after World War II. During Stalin's reign millions of innocent Russians were arrested, shot or sent to the Gulag after being labeled "enemies of the people." Dunaevsky's grandfather was labeled as an "enemy of the people" and died in one of these camps. His parents also narrowly escaped one of these camps during the Holocaust. Dunaevsky's memoir intertwines his family history with the violence against the Jewish population in parts of the Soviet Union and other Nazi occupied countries during World War II.

#### WHERE DIVERS DARE: The Hunt for the Last U-Boat

In an oxygen-starved sphere three hundred feet below the surface of the Atlantic, a ragtag band of divers go looking for the "holy grail" of deep-wreck diving: German U-boat 550, the last remaining diveable U-boat along the Eastern Seaboard, sunk on April 16, 1944 during WWII. Death stalks deep-wreck diving. But for this young, gutsy, salt-of-the-earth nucleus of diverselectricians, lawyers, and engineers by day, diving the U-550 was akin to finding a peak higher than Everest, and climbing it for the first time. The question of "what happened here" propels them, seductive as a siren's call. But when the divers locate the wreckage in a location far off course from where the Navy claimed it had sunk, they uncover proof that will unravel everything we thought we knew about that battle. WHERE DIVERS DARE: The Hunt for the Last U-Boat by Randall Peffer charts two stories: the divers' search for U-boat 550; and the truth about what really happened to 40 unaccounted for German soldiers after they tried to surrender to American destroyer escorts. After years of



detective work, interviews with both American and German survivors, and a series of very risky dives, the team managed to bring the truth to the surface. But in doing so, they would find themselves in the nexus between Germans and Americans. Why had both sides kept silent about what really happened that day? The answer will speak to the bonds of the sea, and its ability to transcend time, place, and nationality. www.penguinrandomhouse.com

## Product Reviews

#### Rheos Bahias

The Rheos Bahias is a versatile athletic sunglass with a floating TPX frame. That's right if you drop these glasses in the water they will float making them perfect for fisherman, kayakers or anyone else who like to



spend those summer months on the water. The Bahias have 100% UV 400 polarized & shatter proof lenses and come with a micro cleaning cloth & hard case. Rheos features two different models of floating sun glasses and take the worry out of losing your eyewear during water sports.

www.rheosgear.com

#### Brunton Heat Sync Glove Liners

The Brunton Heat Sync glove liners are a low profile solution to cold hands in just about any situation. The liners can be worn as gloves on milder days or used as glove liners with heavier gloves on those colder days. Available in 3 sizes, the Brunton Glove liners include 2 batteries and a USB micro charging cable and they will last between 1-3.5 hours depending upon the setting chosen. The glove liners feature a silicon printed palm which provides great grip and the conductive forefinger and thumbs provide easy control of all your digital devices. Get a pair of Brunton Heat Sync Glove Liners and say goodbye to cold hands. www.brunton.com



#### Ultra Light Bino Harness

The Ultra Light Bino Harness from Rick Young Outdoors are a unique find. Forget the restrictive and bulky bino harnesses you have seen in the past as you slip into the Ultra Light Bino Harness. The shock cord harness transfers the weight equally to your chest & shoulders and do not trap heat or rub hot spots during those long days on the trail. The quick release clips allow you to easily adjust the harness which can be worn in 5 different ways and the shock cords keep your binoculars firmly in place. When you are done the Ultra Light Harness conveniently stores on your binoculars. The Ultra Light Bino Harness is the perfect light weight harness for binoculars, cameras or rangefinders and even includes an emergency whistle. www.rickyoungoutdoors.com

## Product Reviews

#### Brunton Heat Sync Vital 2.0 Vest

The Novagrade Digiscope adapter allows you to mount your camera, tablet or smart phone to a variety of scopes including spotting scopes, binoculars, telescopes and microscopes. The quick and simple eyepiece attachment automatically centers the optics so you can start sharing the images with friends. Great for zooming in on wildlife, star gazing and sharing those interesting microscopic finds, the Novagrade Digiscope adapter is a blast to use. Perfect for the outdoorsman, hunters, teachers and kids, you will find unlimited uses for the Novagrade Digiscope adapter. Made in the USA, the Novagrade Digiscope adapters are machined from durable alloy aluminum and built to last a lifetime.

www.novagrade.com



#### GPS Medium Range Bag

The GPS Medium Range Bag is well designed and has a dedicated space for all of your range supplies. These guys thought out everything as there are 5 magazine holders, a spacious, padded & lockable central compartment & 6 other compartments providing lots of storage space. The range bag also includes 2 ammo dump or parts cups, a small plastic case for spare parts or tools, and a padded shoulder strap. My favorite feature is the visual ID system with a marked dedicated space for just about anything you would need at the range including eyewear, ear plugs, ear muffs, stapler, tape, tools, binoculars and targets. The GPS range bag features a strong webbing handle with velcro gear straps, durable construction and lift ports on each end for easy maneuvering. The GPS medium range bag is available in black, tan or camo and is one of the most thought out range bags we have ever tested. Perfect for the beginner or the experienced shooter, you cannot go wrong with the GPS range bag. www.goutdoorsproducts.com

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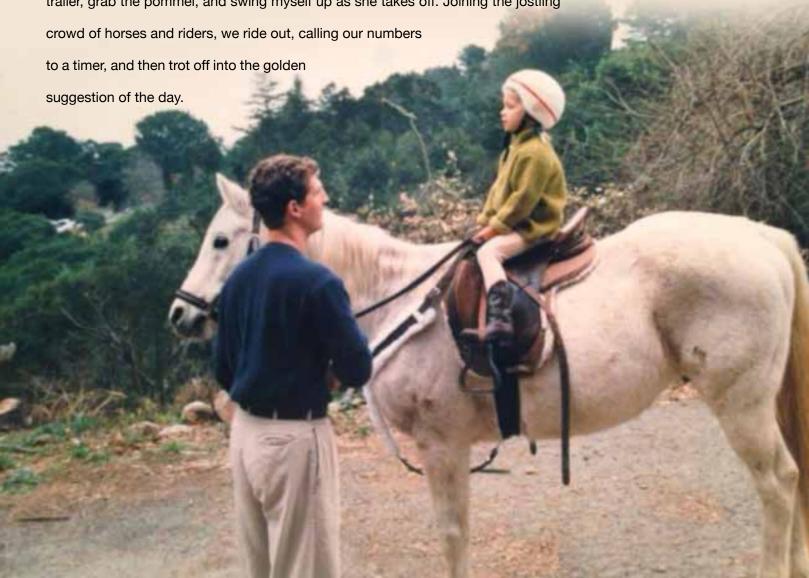
## While You Aire Sleeping

I'm racing Arabian horses across the Sierra Nevada (Part 1)

by Zoe Whittall

#### The Golden Suggestion of a Day

It is not yet dawn as we stumble out of the trailer. A huff of warm breath greets me and I run my hands over her warm, quivering coat as we make these final preparations before setting off into the trees. I fumble in the dark with the blanket buckles, pull off the light sheet, and trade that nighttime cover for a leather SR saddle. Once the girth is loosely fastened and the breast collar secured, I make my way back to the trailer to fuel myself with a Clif Bar. A few minutes later, I am back at her side, bridle hanging over my shoulder. She readily accepts the bit, twirling away as my stiff fingers tug the girth strap tighter. She is ready to go, and has no time for these technicalities. Finally, once all tack has been checked and re-checked and my helmet pulled down over my hair, I lead her away from the trailer, grab the pommel, and swing myself up as she takes off. Joining the jostling





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#### **Endurance Capital of the World**

Auburn, California has often, and rightfully, been called 'the endurance capital of the world'. Thousands of miles of single track trails disappearing into the wilderness of the Sierra Nevada range have earned the place its reputation, and annually hundreds of endurance athletes – bikers, swimmers, runners, and horse



riders – congregate in Auburn to compete in a multitude of endurance events, such as a section of the Amgen Tour of California bike race, the 100 mile Western States Endurance Run, and the 100 mile Tevis Cup endurance horse ride. Endurance horse riding, at its simplest, can be defined as a competitive long distance sport in which a horse and rider attempt to cover a course of between 50 and 100 miles within a prescribed amount of time. The winner is the duo with the fastest time, but in this sport, racing won't always get you to the prize and experienced riders generally ride to complete rather than to win. The sport is much more than a race from start to finish; it is a grueling journey of partnership between horse and rider, forged through common experience, the overcoming of danger, and the building of trust over many dusty miles. Riders log hundreds of hours in the saddle in preparation for a race and throughout the competition they must remain finely attuned to their horses. A misstep, a disinterest in eating, an abnormally stiff gait, are all potential danger signs that must be noted by the rider to avoid having the horse "pulled" – disqualified from the competition for lameness, an excessively high heart rate, metabolic issues, or signs of exhaustion. In fact, the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) motto is "to finish is to win".



I first heard of this sport when I was six or seven years old and my father started riding at a barn called Bay Laurel Arabians, where the focus was to train horses and riders in preparation for the Tevis Cup. The Tevis is the toughest endurance ride in the United States, first held in 1955 when an Auburn banker, Wendell Robie, initiated the contest. That first year, Robie and a few friends set off on the trails of Lake Tahoe and arrived, one day later, 100 miles west in Auburn. Since that first successful completion, the ride has been held under a full July or August moon nearly every year. Over two hundred riders enter, but fewer than half typically finish, their horses pulled along the way for fatigue or lameness, disqualified for being overtime, or, in some cases, unable to finish due to disaster.

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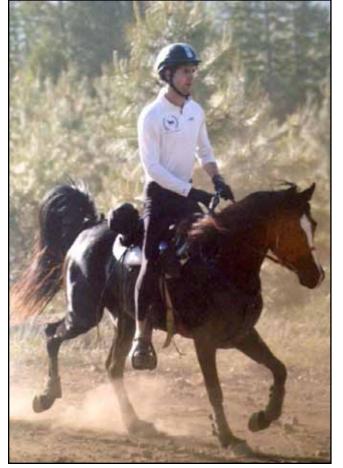
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In the 2002 ride, a local horseman I know, Jon Stevens, was riding his grey gelding Spider. They had completed the majority of the ride and were moving along the California Loop, an area of steep switchbacks reached by all but the fastest riders after nightfall. Horses have stronger night vision than humans and the riders must trust them along the narrow cliffs on this section of the ride. Spider was going strong when suddenly his hoof slipped off the trail and he went over. He and Jon both tumbled off the side of the trail, disappearing into the dark. Jon dropped about 40 feet before being able to grab a tree branch to break his fall. Spider fell 750 feet down, rolling, bouncing and sailing straight past other riders on the dark switchbacks below. Everyone expected him to be dead and a search party only went out from the finish line early the next morning. After searching a few hours, Stevens, who was part of the search crew, saw, to his amazement, Spider, standing on a ledge, straining his neck to reach an enticing patch of grass. A dead rattlesnake lay smitten at his feet.

Others have not been so lucky as Stevens and Spider. In 2009, my dad and I were crewing for an out-of-state rider, meeting him at various checkpoints to provide food, water and support. Riders who are not local, and have not trained their horses on the vertiginous canyons, are often unprepared for the extreme elevation changes. Descending from Robinson Flat at 6,730 feet to El Dorado Creek at 1,700 feet, they do not know or are not able to get off of their horses and run the trail. They become passengers instead of partners and their horses can get sore and tired. When they have to climb out of El Dorado Creek to Michigan Bluff, 2,000 feet of single track switchbacks,



their horses can become stubborn and unwilling to continue. This is likely what happened to my rider or one of the riders in front of him. The circumstances are still not entirely clear, but several horses bunched, making them more vulnerable to kicks. The riders tried to separate them but they were on a steep, narrow, snaking precipice, and our rider's horse stepped backward off the cliff. We were first notified that there had been a casualty on our team, and only later was that notification clarified as an equine casualty.

At Bay Laurel Arabians, my father started training for endurance rides on the nearby trails of Tilden, Sibley, and Redwood regional parks that constitute only part of the 1,250 miles of trails in the San Francisco East Bay Regional Park District's 119,000 acres. I had been riding his grey Arabian gelding, Quincey, since I was two, and, at eight, began formal dressage lessons in the arena.



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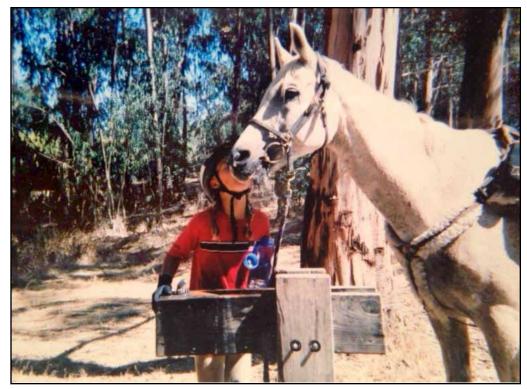


I quickly learned that arena riding was not for me, and when I was about nine, I started heading out with my Dad, Quincey and other Bay Laurel horses and riders into this vast park network. There I began endurance and trail riding, and learned much of what I know today about horses and riding at the hands of Bay Laurel trainer Rose Marie Hoffman. Many a night, my father and I returned to our house late for dinner, flecked with mud and smelling like horses. My mom would look at us, shake her head, and once again reprimand us for missing dinner, being out too late, and not calling her to let her know we were safe.

Soon, my dad began competing in endurance rides. I went along sometimes to crew for him at the rides, holding his horse at vet checks or bringing him and the horse water and food. The mood around the ride camps, a combination of excitement about the upcoming event and a general sense of camaraderie, was infectious, and soon I wanted to try an endurance ride. When I was ten, my dad loaded Quincey into the trailer and brought me to a thirty mile limited

distance ride, our first endurance event together. Rides of fewer than 50 miles are not considered "endurance" rides but are introductory "limited distance" rides, or simply "LD".

Once the ride began, I quickly realized that I had underestimated Quincey's race brain. As soon as we hit the trails and he saw the thirty odd other horses that made up his competition, the docile old campaigner turned into a



single-minded racer. He wanted to be first, and thirty miles and six hours of fighting this fiercely determined nine-hundred-pound animal left me with little inclination to do another ride. Eager to form a father-daughter endurance riding team, my father tried to change my mind, but after one more LD spent fighting Quincy and my dad's persistent (and very strong) encouragement, I quit. I stopped riding for a while, working around the barn and handling the yearlings and young horses instead. I had given up on our dream of endurance riding together for a while, but not forever. My father continued to ride with Bay Laurel Arabians and entered Tevis. I often crewed for him and other Bay Laurel riders. By the time I was fifteen, I knew I wanted to try again.



## COLUMBIA COUNTY, Jeorgia

by Randy Du leau

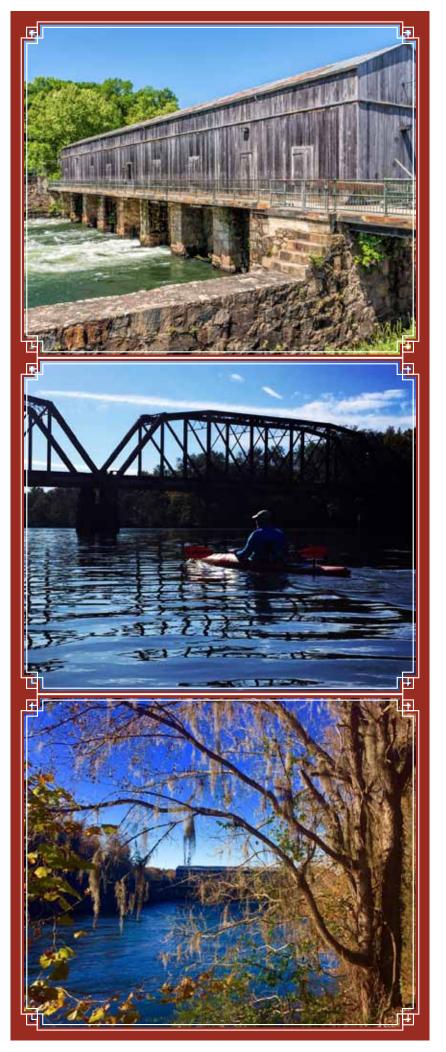
Columbia County, Georgia is located about two hours east of Atlanta. Made up of five communities – Appling, Evans, Grovetown, Harlem, and Martinez – the county is typically referred to as the bedroom community of Augusta, its neighbor to the east, most recognized for The Masters golf tournament. While not as immediately recognizable as Augusta, Columbia County is the 35th fastest growing county in the United States; recognized as the one of the top places to live in the country; and quickly becoming known as one of the best places in the southeast, if not the United States, for outdoor enthusiasts.

To the north, Columbia County is separated with neighboring South Carolina by the 72,000 acre man-made reservoir, Clarks Hill Lake, and also the Savannah River. With so much water, the county is naturally a major destination for anglers who are drawn to the area for great bass fishing. Clarks Hill Lake has been the site of numerous fishing tournaments, and is a favored location of major tournament promoters such as the BFL, FLW and ESPN Bassmasters.



FOR THOSE OF US WHO LIVE TO RIDE MORE,
THERE IS NOW A TIRE SEALANT BUILT BY RIDERS
TO DO JUST THAT.





While the lake and river provide such a massive presence in the county, outdoors fun is not limited to the water. Columbia County boasts a significant park system anchored by the 1,900-acre Mistletoe State Park and Wildwood Park, a 975-acre county park, both situated in Appling along the shores of Clarks Hill Lake. In addition to the lake activities, both parks feature excellent camping facilities and hiking and mountain biking trails. The US Army Corps of Engineers also manages several parks, campgrounds, and the extensive trail system, the Bartram Trail, that snakes along the shores of the lake.

Wildwood Park has the distinction of being Mecca of sorts for disc golf. While the Greater Augusta area is acknowledged worldwide for the greatest golf tournament in the world, The Masters, Appling holds the distinction of being the home of the International Disc Golf Center. Managed by the Professional Disc Golf Association, the IDGC is home to three 18-basket championship disc golf courses, a museum dedicated to the sport, as well as the Disc Golf Hall of Fame.

With such a vast natural landscape, special events are a regular occurrence in Columbia County. In addition to the aforementioned fishing tournaments, sports promoters are now taking advantage of the beautiful and challenging terrain. Columbia County is annually the site of a



Climbing El Cap, trekking through Borneo, mountain climbing in Patagonia, navigating the rivers of Vietnam, racing bikes across the Andes—every challenge forced Rusch to reinvent herself and grow stronger.

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number of triathlons, trail races, and other events.

The Benderdinker paddle and food festival kicks off the outdoor "season" in Columbia County. Over a thousand paddlers annually descend upon Evans to celebrate "silent sports and slow foods" in this unique event. Participants enjoy the six-mile paddle along the Savannah River tributary "Betty's Branch", all while enjoying local music and locally sourced foods. After getting off the water, the festival features more food and great live entertainment.

Over Memorial Day Weekend, Papa Joe's Banjo-B-Que offers a great respite from all the great physical activity. The annual bluegrass festival is held at the Lady Antebellum Pavilion at Evans Towne Center Park and features a great array of bluegrass and Americana acts. Past performances have included the Avett Brothers, Old Crow Medicine Show, and Trampled by Turtles. This May Feature acts will include Willie Nelson and Family, Old Crow Medicine Show, Steep Canyon Rangers, and many other great artists during this fun celebration of food and music.

In June, Wildwood Park is home to the annual sports festival, the Wildwood Games. This multisport competition features marathon mountain biking, trail running, open water swimming, and disc golf. In 2015 and again this summer, the mountain bike race is recognized at the USA

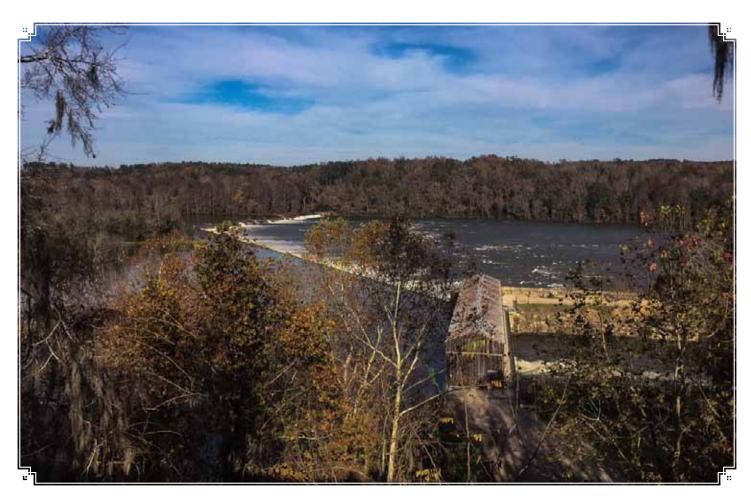


Cycling Marathon Mountain Bike National Championship. For the 2016 event, competition organizers will add BMX and skateboarding to the schedule, although these events will take place down the road in Evans at Blanchard Woods Park.

Last November, REV3 Adventures brought adventure racing to the lake with their Bartram's Wildwood Adventure Race series at Wildwood Park. The event which incorporates mountain biking, paddling, and trekking virtually maximized the local resources of the area with a venue that stretched from Wildwood Park to Mistletoe State Park to West Dam Recreation Area.

This October REV3 Adventures in partnership with the USARA will stage the USARA Adventure Race National Championship in Columbia County. The course will incorporate many of the natural wonders of Columbia County and will challenge the elite athletes with an epic adventure.

With so many resources and many great events, Columbia County is quietly becoming a major southeastern destination for a diverse group of outdoors enthusiasts. By hosting high profile events like the USA Cycling and USARA Adventure Race Nationals, the community's abundant and diverse natural resources are challenging the nation's top athletes. However, the fun is not limited to podium seekers. Weekend hikers, kayakers, music lovers, and recreational bikers can also find significant enjoyment in this great expanse just two hours from Atlanta. www.choosecolumbiacounty.com



### USARA Adventure Race National Championship

### Columbia County, Georgia: October 14 & 15, 2016

4/23/16

Salina KS







#### PRESENTED BY



Off Road Rage	4/23/10	Salina, KS
Smith Rock Spring Sting	4/24/16	Bend, OR
MISSION AR	5/14/16	Cloverdvale, IN
Blue Ridge Mountain AR	5/21/16	Blue Ridge, GA
Longest Day	5/21/16	New Paltz, NJ
Happy Mutant Iowa	5/27/16	Ottumwa, IA
Rib Mountain Adv Challenge	5/28/16	Wausau, WI
Cradle of Liberty	6/4/16	Wagontown, PA
12 Hours of Wild Knoxville	6/4/16	Knoxville, TN
The Nomad	6/10/16	Colorado Springs, CO
Gold Rush	6/18/16	Sonara, CA
Uwarrie 18 AR	6/18/16	Troy, NC
Summer Solstice	6/19/16	Bend, OR
Stubborn Mule	6/25/16	Tomahawk, WI
Teton Ogrve	6/25/16	Driggs, ID
Hellbender	7/9/16	Rolla, MO
Sheltowee Extreme	7/9/16	Laurel County, KY
Rev3 Casper Strong	7/10/16	Casper, WY
Krista Griesacker	8/6/16	Hamburg, PA
The Bitter Pill	8/6/16	Bolton,VT
Never Summer Adventure Race	8/6/16	Grand Lake, CO
Calleva	8/7/16	Poolesville, MD
Search & Rescue AR	8/20/16	High Falls, NY
Thunder Rolls	8/20/16	Mt. Carroll, IL
Bend AR	9/10/16	Bend, OR
Mighty Mo	9/10/16	Beatrice, NE
No Sleep Adventure	9/10/16	Eddyville, IN
The Cauldron	9/10/16	Hawthorne, FL
Black Bear Adventure Race	9/10/16	McHenry, MD
Howl at the Moon	9/17/16	Hobe Sound, FL
CIA Central Indiana Adventure	9/17/16	Indianapolis, IN
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#### For 2017

Island Quest

Pisgah 26.2 AR

Coosa River Challenge

Off Road Rage

Happy Mutant Arkansas	10/28/16	Hotsprings, AR
The Fig	11/5/16	Slade, KY
Florida AR Championship	12/3/16	Titusville, FL
Happy Mutant Nevada	1/13/17	Laughlin, NV

9/24/16

9/24/16

10/1/16

San Juan Island, WA

Marion, NC

Wetumpka, AL

#### REGIONAL SPONSORSHIP

The first place coed team from each regional qualifying race will receive a \$400.00 sponsorship, provided by the regional qualifying race, to be applied to the team's entry fee for the USARA Adventure Race National Championship<sup>TM</sup>.