

TRAIL TIMES

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Mission: To represent and promote trail and mountain running.

Becoming a Race Director

by Steve Brookman

Becoming a race director was not my intention, but a few years ago as a major marker in life was rapidly approaching — the big 5-0 — I became one. I was really just trying to get that “x” in the box. The box being a marathon that I never got around to running when younger. Also a prime motivator was to have an excuse to get out of town — preferably way out of town — to avoid the requisite and embarrassing “surprise” party that announces to all that you’ve been able to hang around for a half century.

Since my big day was in August and I don’t tolerate running in heat very well, I needed to find a marathon up north — preferably way up north. It just so happened that there was one on my birthday that met those requirements — the **Yukon Trail Marathon**. The race would definitely qualify as being up north and would get me way out of town. So let the training begin.

Having never entered a race before or done any serious distance running I had a LOT to learn. I had been jogging since my college days, so I had some base. However, anything more than about five miles was beyond my comfortable huffing and puffing zone. An experienced runner mentioned to me that since it was the Yukon **TRAIL** Marathon that it might be a good idea to train on **TRAILS**. I hadn’t really locked onto the trail aspect until then but it seemed logical. I was in luck as there was a county park near our house (Lee County’s Caloosahatchee Regional Park in Alva, Florida, which is located approximately 15 miles east of Fort Myers) with miles of nature

and winding mountain bike trails. So it was off to the park.

Wow! Running in the shade of beautiful oaks, limbs heavy with Spanish moss, along the soft twisting paths through thick forests of cabbage palms and sharp-edged saw palmettos, startling feral hogs, deer and even an occasional bobcat or gopher tortoise; now this was running! I had found my niche, and it sure beat running along the ragged shoulder of a hot, paved country road with crazy bubbas in pick’em up trucks buzzing by turning all kinds of wildlife into road splatter.

On the park’s north side the trails transformed into a twisted maze of single-lane dirt paths with a heavy dose of roots thrown in. These trails were maintained by a certifiably insane group of mountain bikers who obviously put no value in life or their well being. Their trails repeatedly cut up and down steep berms, with low overhanging branches threatening to bonk your noggin while gnarled roots reached up to grab you if you let your attention stray for even a second. This was great! You couldn’t get bored running like this. Sprained ankles, skinned knees, bruised body and ego, yes, but bored, no way.

After running through this enchanted forest of exotic Brazilian Peppers I felt I had to share this experience. Why should only crazed mountain bikers have this much fun? So I approached the local track club and county park staff and proposed that we put on an event to promote both trail running and use of the park to let others have the opportunity to “hug a root.” After taking members of the track club along one of my favorite trails they were sold. Contracts were signed and the **River, Roots & Ruts Trail Run** was born.

So now this newbie marathoner was also a newbie race director. How difficult could it be? I had an experienced track club that could take care of registration, timing, and posting results. The county park would host the event, handle parking, coordinate a lot of the administrative details, and handle most logistics. I read up on race directing, researched the Internet, and copied helpful checklists. I started designing T-shirts, awards, and plotting the course through the best and toughest parts of the park. I was excited, somewhat scared, but ready to go. Would this work, would runners come out to a remote park early on a Sunday morning in January to run 13.1 miles? More importantly, would enough runners come to pay for all the stuff I was putting on the county’s tab?

While I wasn’t expecting things to go perfectly for the inaugural running, I really didn’t expect the best part of my new course to vanish before I even had it published! During a practice run I was about to enter my favorite trail section, but instead of a dark, lush jungle, I was hit with blinding sunlight and utter devastation! I couldn’t believe what lay before me; 100 acres of nothing but tree stumps, mounds of mulch with not a tree left

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Contributors to this issue of *Trail Times* include:

Green Lakes Endurance Runs
Todd Baum

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Steve Brookman

Winterfest
Laura Clark

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Clayton Gillette

Catalina Island
Amanda Reyes

Waterfalls
Dr. Victor Runco

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Send your comments to:
American Trail
Running Association

P.O. Box 9454
Colorado Springs, CO 80932
(719) 573-4133 phone
(719) 573-4408 fax
trrunner@aol.com
www.trailrunner.com

Workouts – Solo, or with a Group

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A recent discussion about trail running in a group (ie: two or more people) led to the following suggestion. Set guidelines for a workout in advance of heading out on the trail with your friends. Consider these three types of workouts:

The “A” level workout — Deemed a truly social run or outing and therefore all runners stay together maintaining the pace of the slowest runner in the group.

The “B” level workout — Social run with a caveat. Runners may go at their own pace, but must wait for the slower runner(s) at all junctions or questionable intersections on the trail and also wait if a runner has to stop and shed clothing, adjust a hydration pack, or take a bathroom break.

The “C” level workout — No rules run. Everyone agrees to run at their own pace and may or may not run with one another. If you feel good, go on. The social aspect is at the start of the run when runners mingle for a few minutes to visit before tackling the workout.

Instituting this type of plan will avoid confusion about the effort or intent of the run and will remove the possibility of hurt feelings when a slower runner is left by themselves on either an unfamiliar trail, in the dark, or without supplies.
Enjoy the trails!

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GOALS OF ATRA

- ◆ Compile & publish a comprehensive listing of nationwide trail running events
- ◆ Educate and provide information about our sport to the rest of the outdoor community, to the media and to non-running entities that have similar goals and objectives
- ◆ Organize ATRA sponsored & supported events
- ◆ Be sensitive to the environment.
- ◆ Provide a forum whereby the business of the sport can be discussed and organized
- ◆ Create & nurture alliances with other associations
- ◆ Develop recreational participation and provide opportunities for families to enjoy our sport through events and clinics

standing with the exception of a few scraggly slash pines that could audition for a Charlie Brown Christmas. It looked like a Walmart superstore would be opening at the park soon.

This wasn't a case of rampant commercial development or vandalism, but of land management. The Brazilian Peppers are a nuisance and a highly invasive exotic species and the county was doing its best to control them. Of course, I had wished they had picked some other place or time, but now I was faced with my first RD crisis; laying out a new course.

Luckily, the park is large and I found some other trails to replace at least the distance, if not the magic, of the original route.

The first River, Roots & Ruts went off with barely a hitch. Even without a sponsor we managed to break even and got some great reviews. We discovered that trail runners are a different lot. They loved to hate the course and though many "hugged roots," we had no serious injuries. Now with a bit of confidence we decided to do it again and began planning for next year's race. While it was a lot of work, it was also very rewarding to be able to put on an event that so many enjoyed. Many were first-time trail runners and most had never been to the park, and many would return to run with us again and again.

I discovered that race directing has its other moments too. While the RRR was growing quite a following and continued to get great feedback, there were a few *issues*. One year a rival track club's star runner went off course and was in tears crossing the finish line, not in first place as she should have been. That resulted in a shouting match, a thrown finisher's medal and I received some very rude e-mails from that club. It had me



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questioning why we were volunteering to take such abuse. Vowing not to quit on a losing note, we refined the course and marked every conceivable place where a runner could veer off the intended route.

After the start the next year, I was boasting to another volunteer how well we had marked the trail and that no one could possible go off course. Right then, we looked up and saw about 20 runners heading toward us at what should have been mile 12, and this was just five minutes after the start. We yelled, the runners yelled and put their hands up in the air and danced in frantic circles, while my stomach sank. How could this happen? I pointed to an adjoining trail that was close to where they should have been at that point in the race. And then I thought about digging a big hole, jumping in the river, or perhaps hightailing it out of the county, if not the country. I dreaded meeting them at the finish, but again trail runners proved to be an amazing lot. They took it all in *stride*, with a few mentioning that their time would have been better if they hadn't run the extra mile or two, but

hey, it was a TRAIL run. (I learned later that someone at the county assigned a marshal, unbeknownst to me, who ended up misdirecting runners over a blocked intersection.)

A few years ago we went "green," offering organic cotton shirts and race bags printed with natural inks, essentially eliminated paper registration, and offered a ride-share program. Awards were custom-made from recycled glass hung on lanyards hand cut from old race blankets. The runners loved this aspect of the run as it complemented the run on the nature trails. We had the seventh running this past January and with a great group of now-experienced staff and volunteers, we were able to put on our best effort to date.

We had a capacity crowd and even with the economic downturn and pullback from sponsors we were able to donate a record amount to the volunteer organizations that help us put on the event.

If you would like to experience the course runners love to hate, and possibly hug a root, put Sunday, January 11, 2011, on your calendar for the eighth annual River, Roots & Ruts. But don't wait until the last minute, as we expect to reach capacity and close registration early.

Since that first marathon, Steve has done 14 marathons (four last year) and managed to qualify for Boston the past three years. Next year he plans to get back on the trails more often. Contact Steve by e-mail at: Race Director@RRRTrail.com or by phone at 908-236-2122.

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One fine Sunday last August, I stopped at the Canadian border. There was no Homeland Security, there was no fence nor guard station — not even a stop sign. Yet, there I was and I stopped, if just for a bit.

My companion on this fastpack journey (one could hardly call it running) was a gentleman from Ashland, Oregon, by the name of Ric Sayre, who took the obligatory photos of me standing — grinning foolishly — at the northern terminus of the Pacific Crest Trail. I was 2,627 miles (or thereabouts) and a whole lot of lifetimes removed from the large concrete wall that stands behind the southern terminus at the Mexican border, near Campo, California. It's a trail that connects extremes — a unifying path in our human need to simply get there — wherever that is — once in a while. And I was there, where I'd set out to be, finally.

We had started this final stretch of the trail's seemingly endless winding ribbon at Stevens Pass, over 185 miles to the south, just five days earlier. We'd hoped to arrive in time to get 10 or 12 miles under our belts that evening, therefore shortening each day's run a bit and making it less stressful finding a place to camp each night. But, after some car trouble, we didn't arrive at the trailhead until midnight.

Our journey would now average 32 miles a day and would cover terrain not unlike the High Sierras. In fact, the guide book mentioned it was second only to the High Sierras in difficulty. Major storms in previous winters had wiped out bridges and covered the trail in avalanche debris around the west side of Glacier Peak. We'd skirt the east side, adding seven miles to the overall mileage. Furthermore, the new trails were not maintained nor even constructed to PCT standards, and a couple were little more than goat paths. Grades were steeper, maintenance in places was nonexistent, and they had tossed in a couple of thousand extra feet of climbing, just for grins, we figured. This journey would test us each day, running into the night to get in our miles and crashing restlessly along or on the trail, aching legs, feet, and hips unable to find that comfortable position to let us catch much sleep.

Our first day found us moving along on pace, a bit pokey in places, but overall, with a net gain of over 2,000 feet in elevation, a good day. Without available access to natural breaks in the long wilderness stretches, we carried home and hearth on our backs to survive these four days, then two more, in the wilds of northern Washington state. Moving past the aquamarine jewels of Cascade lakes, crossing ridges and watershed meadows, we moved steadily toward Glacier Peak and the start of the detour. An unlikely patch of blueberries provided a delicious dessert after freeze-dried rations, and as the night grew dark, the full moon's rising disc found us bedding down along the trail at the Indian Creek junction, where we'd awaken and leave the comfortable conditions of the familiar PCT for secondary trails.

The trail was head high in grasses and shrubs, the tread was a rocky gutter punctuated by marshy seeps and root step-offs knee-deep or higher, and the grade, though downhill, was punishingly steep. "Ah, another fine adventure to be in," I softly cursed as I ricocheted from root to boulder down the trail, wishing for the occasional timber stand to stride through as we crossed one avalanche track after another. The bottom couldn't, nor did, come too soon. And yet, surprisingly, I just couldn't find myself out of sorts — I was happy to be out, challenging my body once more. We were alive and we were feeling it with every breath of mountain air and every wince of trail pain. How could we be anywhere else at this time? This was living, to proceed toward an attainable goal that at

times seemed simply impossible, and yet each time we lifted our knee, we secured a victory.

Soon after crossing the Snow River on a bridge and arriving at a trailhead, we began the slow and steady ascent through the Boulder Creek drainage and Boulder Basin to Boulder Pass 3,500 feet above us. The trail grew progressively steeper. Southbound hikers told us that the trail wouldn't be too rough for a bit, and that we could rest assured that the detour was indeed passable, though dicey in areas. (Earlier scanty reports from the Forest Service had demonstrated once again that the people in the office writing the web site updates have little actual knowledge of what's real in the actual forest.)

The climb out of Boulder Basin was just another in a long series of such climbs, though the biting flies and thick brush kept us cussing continuously. We reached the ridgetop and enjoyed a bit of rest in the afternoon sun, before plunging down the winding, serpentine switchbacks into the Napeequa Valley 2,500 feet below. Arriving at a glacial stream with no bridge, a stout stick was needed for a wading staff for the icy crossing. The chill waters cooled our overheated legs and allowed us some numbing relief before we began our final climb of the day. A long glacial valley, this Napeequa River area could have been in the Alps or Alaska as easily as in northern Washington. Fireweed lined the willow-shrouded banks and the waning sunlight slanted across the upper end of the valley, warming the glacially carved rocky peaks in its glow. After taking some photos, we started the ascent of the north wall, knowing that sunlight would be fleeting and darkness

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Spring Trail Running Weekend

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To reserve your place, contact Terry Chiplin on 970 586 4432

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We look forward to seeing you!

would soon overtake us. We'd seen traces of switchbacks from the far side of the valley, but they all appeared to lead nowhere. As we climbed, we soon found out why — the trail generally degraded to a mad scramble as it wound in and out of alder and willow thickets along the seeps of the mountain's face. It was four-wheel-drive time. On hands and feet, we clawed, pulled, and huffed our way up the hill, finally collapsing on the ridgeback at dark while a full moon was already rising up in the sky. Cold and windy conditions made us anxious to move on, but if the trail down the other side was anything like the trail up, we knew we'd be better off where we were. Another uncomfortable night, squeezed between two rocks to keep from rolling off the ridge, was our reward for the hard climb. We had lost ground on our expected pace, we were anxious about how the trail might degrade even more, and yet I remained surprisingly optimistic. I had been here before, it seemed, and it had worked out then. I found myself smiling in spite of my uncomfortable sleeping arrangement. Dawn would come soon enough and with it, enough light to scramble down the hill.

Day three started as the moon set over the ridge we'd scrambled over on our way out of Boulder Basin the previous day. Looking back across the nether depths of Napeequa River Valley, we quickly packed and got moving to ward off the morning chill. Today promised another long downhill, then a long climb up the Chiwawa River over Suiattle Pass into Agnes Creek.

By now, hot spots were forming on our feet, and our shoulders and hips were chafed under the constant load we carried. I had stubbed a toe early on and now the toenail was rather discolored. In two days we'd meet our support crew — Phyllis — with supplies and the promise of one night away from the trail.

The Chiwawa River had a downed spruce log to cross and soon we were loping easily up a 3.5-mile stretch of gravel road. Another climb out of the watershed was uneventful; the major avalanches had been cleared and we had but a brief bit of scrambling fully laden over downfall timber before we left the valley and headed down steeply to cross Miners Creek before climbing sharply to head back down again to another branch of Miners Creek. Here we crossed the Suiattle River watershed and headed uphill through its pass, crossing into the east Cascades valley of Agnes Creek, a major tributary of Lake Chelan.

Sunset found us climbing again as we wound DOWN the valley, this time to be inspired by the ramparts above icefields lying in glacial cirques. As the sun was setting, ominous clouds rolled in, splattering us briefly with rain. Losing the trail off and on in the snow and outwash areas as it got dark, we soon bedded down in timber, our first really nice camp. We were almost back on schedule and tomorrow's trail promised a long descent and a long ascent.

It was on day four that I hit my frustration point. After awakening at about 5,000 feet in elevation, we ran a pretty good trail down along Agnes Creek, stopping for breakfast in a stand of

red cedar. The trail continued with a few uphill around steep-sided canyons, but for the most part, a good steady drop, and we were making our best time of the trip, even getting in a shuffling run when the trail allowed. As we approached the 1,500 feet elevation and the environs of Lake Chelan National Recreation Area and North Cascades National Park, the day had heated appreciably.

The canyon structure was reminiscent of the Illinois River Canyon, with steep metamorphic rock walls and a decidedly rougher trail. We stopped for a breather at Stehekin Guard Station, where tour buses run most PCT through-hikers down to the long ferry ride across Lake Chelan. They spend a night or two lodging in fine luxury before being delivered to Rainy Pass, thereby skipping 18 miles of the hottest, rockiest trail in Washington state. We should have emulated them rather than envying them. The guide suggests skipping this bit of trail, but having a certain foolish sense of integrity — if not common sense — Ric and I began a steep 500-foot climb, only to drop back down 400 feet. We soon learned that this would be the pattern for the next 17 miles.

After crossing Bridge Creek on a horse bridge, we faced another hot, rocky climb along the north slope of the canyon. This way we could enjoy the afternoon sun more directly. Soon, we came to a series of avalanche chutes and their brushy trails that had been reconstructed many times (or not). In just such a chute, hearing noise in the thick brush to my left, I paused. And none too soon. A young grizzly tumbled into the trail in front of me, and like so many cartoon characters, spun his legs like wheels in gravel, attempting a purchase on the trail to carry him to parts yon and hither. We were both a bit amazed; I could only stand and gawk at his golden mane as he fled down the trail. We struggled

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along, watching the mileage shrink to Rainy Pass. Our shuttle driver, Phyllis, would meet us there and we'd spend a night at a motel, if possible, or at least at a real campground. And we hoped she might hike down the trail some to lift our spirits for the last bit of what was becoming a death march.

As we left North Cascades National Park, and re-entered Wenatchee National Forest (or maybe it was Okanagan by now), we got the royal Forest Service trail experience — the grade suddenly pitched up at 20 percent or better right into more avalanche brush. What a demoralizer! The closer we got, the worse the trail was. We were getting quite tired, but we continued. Crossing Bridge Creek for the last time, we met. She offered to shoulder my pack for a bit and I made no argument. I long ago lost any false pride in this endeavor and welcomed the relief. Less than a mile and we were at the trailhead. We headed to Winthrop looking for accommodations, finding that Friday night in this wannabe Sisters did not bode well. So, we backtracked to a campground and after a delicious pasta dinner, laid back to enjoy the black bliss of closed eyelids.

It was with a sense of excitement that I awoke on day five even though it was dark and I hadn't slept too well. I didn't want to wake Ric, but I also wanted to be done. We were on the trail in good time and had but three more major climbs between us and Canada. We would tackle two today, splitting the last 70 miles roughly in half. The early going offered a good grade on an excellent trail with low cloud cover to keep us cool. Passing through Daredevil Pass, we emerged into a world of stark, steep mountains, but the trail remained steady, with a quick descent down a sharp hogback before leveling out on a long traverse across the slopes. I expectantly watched for mountain goats, for this had to be their territory, yet I saw none.

The wildflowers were in stunning glory, and the biting flies of the last few days were absent. My spirits remained high, as we dropped down to cross the Methow River and began the penultimate climb, back up to 6,500 feet and a low spot in the ridge called Windy Pass and a spot to sleep one more time under the stars.

We toiled along into the late afternoon as our packs began to take their toll on our tired backs and shoulders. Cresting, or so we thought, we began a long traverse into Summit Prairie along knife-blade ridges, and around plump, steep-sided peaks. A tempting shortcut on the Slate Peak Lookout Road beckoned, but we stayed true to our calling, then cussed every step around another mountain that tripled the length of the bypass. Then we began another climb and a series of traverses to finally arrive, as it grew dark, in Windy Pass. Too tired to cook dinner, Ric bedded down under the small spruces of this high pass. We expected rain — the pass was cloudy, but strangely windless. Just one more night on the trail. And all we wanted was sleep and an early start.

The good news? We got an early start. The penalty? Little sleep. We were on the trail before 5 a.m., headlamps shining, making progress along the ridge and then gradually down into Holcomb Pass, where we'd start the final climb before reaching Canada.

Arriving in the pass after daybreak, I prepared some breakfast as Ric grabbed some necessary shut-eye. I sensed we were down to our last remnants of adrenaline, and a long day was in store. I reminded myself how important patience was and we proceeded at a pace we could sustain. Another disappointment waited as we regained ridge height. Due to many landslides and

avalanches, the trail had been rerouted off the summit, down a series of long switchbacks to the valley below, then up another set of switchbacks to regain elevation and pass through yet another gap in the ridge. It was beginning to seem that northern Washington was just one set of switchbacks after another, and I began to hope that Canadian trail builders had never heard of such a thing. Climbing through that last pass, and traversing that last gentle climb, we arrived atop Washington's highest point on the PCT, a windy, unnamed ridge near Three Clowns Peak, at 7,127 feet. It was all downhill to Canada, steep switchbacks at first, then a long trail down another valley, Castle Creek this time. A too-short rest preceded our long descent, but soon we were under way.

I really have little recollection of that last bit of trail before the border. It was downhill; it was uneventful. One steep set of switchbacks and around the last corner I froze — there was the sign, "Welcome to Canada."

Waiting until Ric stepped up beside me, I grabbed his hand, and we stepped across the border together. We took a few pictures and we sat down, he in the U.S., me in Canada. Although we were at the terminus of the PCT, the end of the run was still 8.1 miles away. The first four miles was uphill on poorly maintained single-track trail, with a surprising set of poorly constructed switchbacks.

Late in the day we arrived along the Simalkeen River, where the last mile of trail in Manning Provincial Park seemed much longer. It was time to shower, eat, and head back to the States.

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When you drive to a trailhead for your run, what do you do with your car keys? We asked trail runners and got these responses:

- I normally slip my key against my ankle and under the ankle support I wear. I use one of those old-fashioned non-plastic coated keys for this purpose. When I am wearing my Hammer shorts, I slip the key into the snapped pocket and DO NOT put anything else in that pocket, lest the key slip into the mud while I am going for a gel. My Race Ready tights have a lot of pockets, but none of them are latched so I don't trust them for that purpose. I also have one of those neat expandable waist packs, just big enough to hold a cell phone and gel. When I use this I always brake to a standstill when retrieving an item as I don't want the key to escape. Best solution is to bring along a friend and splurge for two keys, then if one gets lost, you have a backup. *Laura Clark*
- My wife and I are both trail runners, and I am a race director for a half-marathon trail run here in West Virginia. We can run out of our door, but more often we drive to different trails for variety and scenery. We are also whitewater kayakers, and all whitewater kayakers usually stash their keys on the car somewhere! We have three vehicles and they all have a certain place where we put the keys. Even our kids know where the keys are; we sometimes take them on runs with us. *Donnie Hudspeth*
- I detach the car key and slip it into my Nathan handheld or zip-closed key pocket...or I stuff it in my glove...works great! I don't trust anyone in a parking lot. *Kristin Zosel*
- I stuff it in the pocket of my handheld water bottle (only have an electronic key — bulky but it does fit). *Pam Pedlow*
- If I have my bike rack on my car, I put my keys in the tray of the bike rack. If no bike rack, then I put them on top of my tire. Sometimes if I'm meeting a friend, I'll leave my keys on her tire. I really don't like to carry keys with me and we live in such a safe community that I don't worry about leaving my keys near my car! *Gina Miller*
- For short runs that don't require a handheld water bottle, I just carry the whole key ring with me in my right hand. It's an easy habit left over from my days of living, and running, in Chicago. If I'm using a handheld, I take my car key off the ring and put it in the handheld's zip pouch. I leave the rest in my car. *Heidi*
- I once put my key into my glove thinking this was the safest place. I stopped to take photographs at the turnaround point with my running partner — about 45 minutes into the run. Unbeknownst to me, I left the key (which perhaps fell out of my glove) on a rock where the photos were taken. After taking the photos, we ran back to the truck. About five minutes from the parking lot I felt in my glove for the key and it was gone. I thought I dropped it on the trail (which was covered in snow). My running partner and I ran back on the trail with our eyes focused on the snow looking for the lost key. I got all the way back to the point where the photos were taken and there it sat on



a rock. The 45-minute run turned into a three-hour effort. Now I let my running partner carry the key. *Nancy*

- I take just the remote “fob,” zipped in my back pocket, leaving the rest locked inside the car. If it's going to rain much, I put the fob in a Ziploc bag. Most short runs are straight from the house, though, so the car is not a factor. I have two open space preserves within a quarter mile, so I'm very lucky. *Mike*
- I put a split ring on my key, to which I attached a diaper pin, which is strong and rustproof. I can then pin it anywhere on my clothing that I choose (usually inside a pocket) or I can stash it in my bottle belt. By pinning it in, I am not afraid of losing it if I fall. *Roddie Larsen*
- Every once in a while, a product comes along that so elegantly solves a problem that you have to think, “Why didn't I think of that?” I have repeated this epiphany for the last two weeks as I've tried out The Hitch Safe — a small combination lock that fits in the trailer hitch of your car/truck to stash keys. If ever there was a product made for trail runners, hikers, and outdoor enthusiasts, this is it. And I have been pleasantly surprised at how much it comes in handy. Check it out at <http://runtrails.blogspot.com/2006/03/great-product-idea-hitch-safe.html>. *Scott Dunlap*

2010 Vail Rec District La Sportiva Vail Mountain Trail Running Series

RUN WILD THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS!

June 19 5 p.m.	LaSportiva Beaver Creek Summer Solstice Trail Run
July 3 8 a.m.	LaSportiva Vail IMClub Trail Run
July 10 8 a.m.	LaSportiva Half Marathon Trail Run
Aug. 1 8 a.m.	LaSportiva Berry Picker Trail Run
Aug. 15 9 a.m.	LaSportiva 10K @ 10,000 Feet Trail Run
Sept. 12 10 a.m.	LaSportiva EverGold Trail Run

For more information and to register, contact:

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Catalina Island is a must-visit location for every trail runner that loves scenic routes. Catalina Island is one of the best-kept secrets in trail running because most runners: (a) have never heard of the island; or (b) have never run a trail race on Catalina Island.

Catalina Island hosts up to five races a year, each giving runners a first-hand tour of the island's breath-taking interior, something that is not accessible to the public without permits.

The top two events held on Catalina Island are the Catalina Eco Marathon, held this year on November 13, and the Avalon 50 Mile Benefit Run, held January 15, 2011. Both races offer different distance races to choose from including a trail marathon, 10K, or 5K during the Catalina Eco Marathon, or 50 miles at the Avalon 50 Mile Benefit Run. Each race benefits local island charities including the Catalina Island Conservancy.



About Catalina Island

Santa Catalina Island, often called *Catalina*, is an island located 22 miles off the coast of Southern California. Catalina is part of the eight Channel Islands along the California coast. It is the only island with a significant permanent civilian city. Avalon is the larger tourist city and there is also the unincorporated town of Two Harbors. Catalina is culturally split between tourism and conservation of the island's interior and wildlife.

Why Catalina Island?

When it comes to outdoor recreation and hiking, Catalina Island can not be beat. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the Trans-Catalina Trail hiking route, used in both the Catalina Eco Marathon and the Avalon 50, "Spotlights the dramatic changes in elevation and different ecosystems of the island's interior, where most tourists never venture." They also describe the island as having, "Muscular peaks, scalloped beaches, lush ravines, and grasslands enlivened by an array of spring flowers."

By limiting permit distribution to the public, the conservancy

protects the more than 200 miles of trails from about one million tourists that visit the island each year.

Only an hour boat ride out of Los Angeles, this island makes visitors feel as if they are hundreds of miles from shore. Catalina Island offers Southern California weather, a small town feel, a short travel time, making it ideal for any trail race "weekend getaway."



The Catalina Eco Marathon and Avalon 50 courses traverse the terrain and are like no other, showcasing unbelievable vistas and trails that set runners up for ideal vistas of the Pacific Ocean. These races are in a great location, have great weather, are affordable, challenging, fun, and picturesque.

The challenge lies in the hilly courses with frequent elevation changes, yet can be conquered by both the "tennis shoe" hiker and the experienced trekker. The beauty lies in the scenic terrain that can offer buffalo and wildlife sightings and views of the Pacific Ocean from both sides of the island. The volunteers help implement unique themes at each station, showing runners that they enjoy sharing their island.



Catalina Island is one of the most underrated islands off the coast of California and offers an unforgettable experience. Trail runners that have experienced the island continue to return and give positive reviews; those that haven't been told the secret continue to miss out on what is being called "the secret gem of California trail racing."

ATRA is a proud member of the following organizations

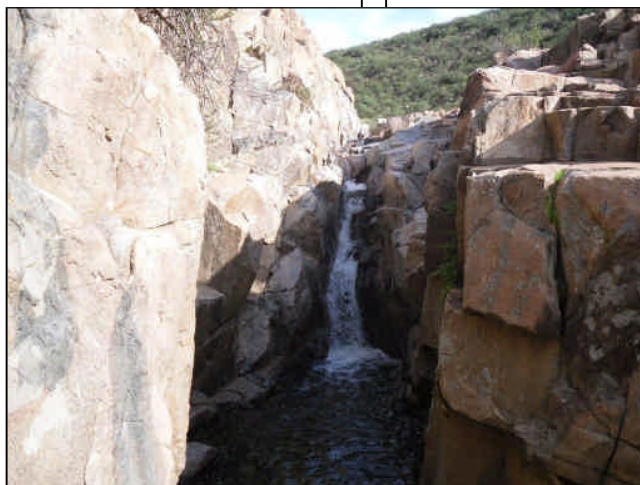


You would not normally associate San Diego with waterfalls. However, this year on Thanksgiving we had a terrific downpour. The next morning my running partner, Paul, and I set out to find a “fabled” single track that led to a waterfall. I had read that during the right conditions San Diego actually had a waterfall with a pool at the bottom that you could leap into. Well the idea of finding the new trail and the promise of discovering a jumpable waterfall were enough for us. We met up with our running group, the San Diego Dirt Devils, and headed out. With fifteen of our members showing up this was sure to be a very fun run. I led the way out on the fire road and soon spotted the not-so obvious single track on my left. Taking it toward the rising ridges to the south, I continued, gradually gaining altitude while hugging the rolling hills to my left. I eventually spotted the canyon I was looking for at mile two. As promised, there was an old barrel full of bullet holes in the southern gorge. This was the landmark I was looking for.



Heading south we snaked our way through the canyon

huffing and puffing as we continued to gain elevation. As we made our way over stream beds and weaved through wet brush I was thinking how unusual this was for San Diego, a sea-level town and more or less a desert. This terrain was more green than most of the places we ran and we were still gaining altitude. At mile three at about 800 feet we reached a switchback that allowed us to survey the incredible views in the canyon we had just run up. We ran up the remaining 200 feet and crested the top — 1,000 feet in 3.3 miles.



Now the fun would begin. I knew the rest of the way would be downhill and the waterfall — if it actually existed — would be approximately three miles away. I led the group down the backside of the hill, trail-surfing switchbacks and avoiding the random mountain biker pedaling uphill toward us. I asked a few if they

had been to the waterfall. The only response was, “Waterfall?”

We continued down pristine single track, over wet and dry stream beds, all of us commenting on how we did not care if there was a waterfall or not. This was one of the most diverse trails we had ever run, right in the heart of San Diego. Just then I spotted a small rocky entrance to a canyon on my left. This could be it! I was told that the waterfall was in a gorge with lots of rocks and boulders and that is exactly what we saw...and heard.

I led the group through the rocky gorge and toward the sound of rushing water. Scrambling over the boulders toward the sound of crashing water the group was extremely excited. We found it! It was much bigger than any of us had expected and as promised dumped into a rather large, deep, clear pool. Dirt Devils immediately began to strip away technical shirts and kicked off their trail running shoes. Paul was the first to jump in. Leaping from a six-foot-high boulder he hit the water with a splash, and a scream. One by one we followed, some of us doing cannonballs. When I hit the water I know why Paul yelped. It was COLD! What a great way to refresh during a run.

We all reluctantly donned our clothes and vowed to make this one of our regular runs. It was only two miles back but the last two miles were as enjoyable as the first six. Single track trail, boulders, stream beds and changing terrain led us eventually to a footbridge over rushing water and past a crumbling dam that was built in the 1800s on the San Diego River. We paused to admire the old dam watching the water gush through the broken center and laughing about our waterfall jumps.

It was only a mile back to the cars and we headed off, crossing the stone bridge that traverses the river. After crossing, we steered back up the trail toward the parking area. When we arrived at our cars no one wanted to leave. We stood around talking and reliving our new “run and jump waterfall eight-mile loop.” Now, every time it rains and the waterfall is flowing, we head back to run our favorite local trail.

Samuel Fuller School Trail Races— 1 mile, 5k, 10k May 8, 2010 Middleboro, MA

“Adventurous course through beautiful conservation land. Wind through the forests of Pratt Farm, across fields, over streams, past ponds and bogs.”

www.samuelfullerschool.org

During the weeks leading up to Winterfest, I lobbied Gerald, our local groundhog. I made sure his hole was clear of debris and dropped tempting morsels down his tunnel. I knew exactly what veggies he favored since he had spent the previous summer tunneling under our garden. I figured he owed us.

And sure enough, at the appointed hour, Gerald emerged from his bachelor's den, saw his shadow and gratefully returned for a six-week nap. In hindsight I'm guessing that it wasn't his shadow that scared him, but the bitter cold. And perhaps I was asking too much. Gerald's job description was to barometer between winter and spring. It did not, technically, include the precipitation factor. Perhaps that would have required an extra bunch of carrots.

Predictably, Winterfest dawned frigid, bright and clear. A perfect winter day. Gerald had followed the script but neglected the postscript. His interpretation of the contract encompassed only temperature, not precipitation, leaving us with a frozen landscape dusted with imaginary snow. The heavy rain preceding the deep freeze I had so zealously lobbied for had left the park knee deep in water, which naturally froze once rumors of Gerald the Groundhog began to surface.

Fellow Western Mass Athletic Clubber Richard Chipman had previously explained that last year's ice storm damage was only the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. This winter we could expect to see a lot more fallen branches on the trail, victims of weakened tree systems. The Winterfest course got its share, only this time they were entombed in layers of ice, partially submarining to the surface, ready to trip an unwary runner. Usually when you kick a stick or a pine cone it politely moves aside to let you pass. But these embedded landmines were serious contenders.

And speaking of pine cones, has anyone noticed how many there are this year? I would like to think that Mother Nature, knowing it would be virtually impossible for mammals to dig out buried food stores without a snow buffer to soften the earth, littered the ground with a ready supply of pine nuts. I just wish she had stayed clear of the trails.

Earlier in the week, I had asked Patrick Pipino, our faithful supplier of Ben & Jerry's coupons, to become a major sponsor and layer the course with vanilla ice cream. But Pipino, a runner himself, regretfully declined, fearing that hungry runners would stop for a snack thereby dashing everyone's hopes of a PR. He had a point.

Running in a race as a race director brings a different perspective. Besides being worn out from marking the trail, lugging equipment and attending to endless details, it is easy to neglect that last-minute snack, warmup or clothes check. I marvel at how Bob and Denise Dion can do so well at every race when, after ensuring that everyone has functional snowshoes, they barely have time to make it to the starting line. I always seem to have difficulty separating Laura the RD from Laura the snowshoer, wavering my focus back and forth between the two. Just as I get into the groove, I'll come to an intersection and do a course marshal check. Or I'll notice a marker that has fallen in the line of duty and stop to reposition it. Or I'll step outside my running self and just be so glad that everyone is having such a good time. It's a different experience and one that I relish.

Meanwhile, back at the finish line a different drama played out. Conscious of the extreme cold, I kept the chronoprinters indoors until the car was warmed up and ready to go. But I did not take into account that our morning house temperature hovers between 45 and 50 degrees. The printers were cold to the touch and remained so. Under fire, one refused to start while the other kept running in first place until it ran out of paper. Finally, John Couch helpfully unloaded the batteries and cuddled them for a few minutes. So the race was recorded by a mixture of modern timing devices, a stopwatch and old-fashioned clipboard tick sheets. Amazingly, John Couch, Peggy Huckel, and Jan Roth were able to reconstruct everyone's true time to within a split second or so.

Truthfully, after marking the course on Saturday I did not want to run. I felt discouraged that we would not be able to give folks a quality event. It amazed me that people as close as Albany expected snow, trusting Jeff and I, as resourceful race directors, to procure some. But I guess with the erratic snow coverage this year, who could blame them? But once registration began and people did see the conditions, there was no grumbling. Everyone was just happy to be outdoors and glad to have an opportunity to enjoy the day. And once the race began it truly did not make any difference. I flew through, seemingly unaware of the frozen pitfalls so evident when Jeff and I were plodding along marking the course. It truly was a winter festival, with or without deep snow.



USATF Mountain and Trail Championships 2010
Open and Masters' Championship Competition

USA Half Marathon—June 13, Bend, OR

USA Mountain — Mt. Washington — 50th Anniversary* — June 19, Gorham, NH
**Also the 2010 U.S. Mountain Running Team Selection Race*

USA 100 Mile Trail — July 31, Burning River, OH

USA 15km Trail — July 31, Spokane, WA

USA 50 Mile Trail — July 31, Crystal Mountain, WA

USA 10km Trail — August 28, Laurel Springs, NC

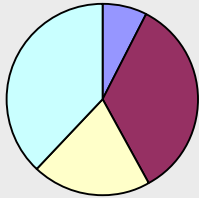
USA 50km Trail — September 25, Willamette Pass, OR

USA Trail Marathon — November 6, Ashland, OR

Watch for details on a USATF Sub-Ultra Grand Prix Series for 2010, www.usatf.org.

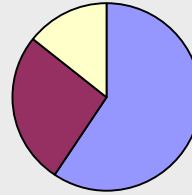
Survey Results February 2010—more than 300 responses!

How many years have you been running on the trails?



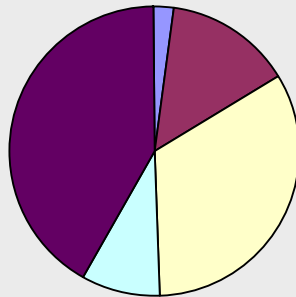
- Less than one year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- more than 10 years

How many trail races do you run each year?



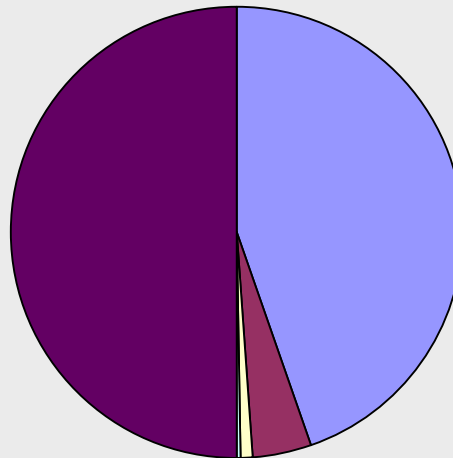
- One to 5
- 6-10
- More than 10

What is your favorite trail race distance?



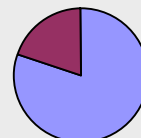
- 5k or shorter
- 5k to 10k
- 10k to Half Marathon
- Marathon
- Ultra (more than a marathon distance)

What is your favorite type of trail?



- Single Track
- Wide Path - dirt and/or gravel
- Fire Road
- Open Fields
- Mix it up - single track, wider paths, meadows

Do you wear trail-specific running shoes when you run on trails?



- Yes
- No

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<p>HELL MICHIGAN - 09.11.10 50 MILE 5 PERSON RELAY 50 MILE AND 50K ULTRA</p>	<p>GREEN SWAMP FLORIDA - FEB. 2011 Full & Half Marathon 50 Mile 5 Person Relay 50 Mile and 50K Ultra</p>

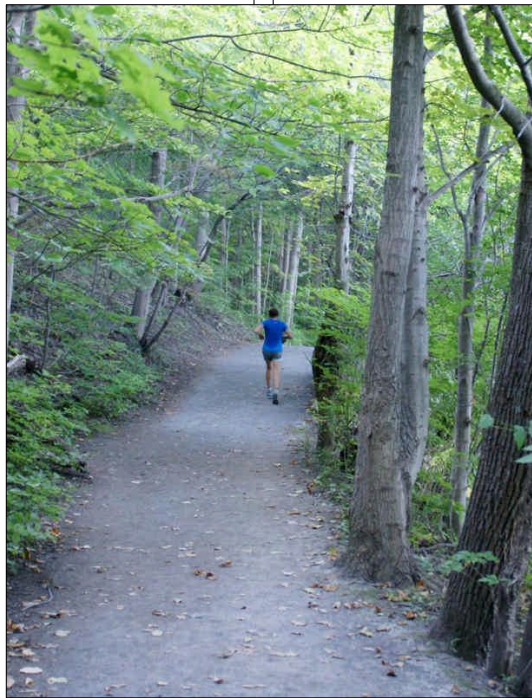
www.danceswithdirt.com
For more information, call 734-929-9027
or email events@runningfit.com

The Green Lakes Endurance Runs (GLER) provides an invitation to run my favorite trails of Green Lakes State Park in upstate New York. The designing of the races in a place that I know and love is a way to offer others those same feelings and experience Green Lakes the way that I have for my entire running life.

The park is at its best during the summer, making fond memories of long summer runs on warm humid days, steep forest trails, and rolling meadows with wild flowers. The "Serengeti" is the local nickname for these meadows which are busy with white-tailed deer and other wildlife.

GLER has always had a subtext of trail stewardship and respect for the park. This beautiful park with 1,756 acres of old growth forest withstands over a million visitors a year. Golfers, campers, swimmers, as well as trail users make their imprint annually. My hat goes off to the park employees who do what is necessary to keep the park wild and beautiful.

The Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) designated the 2010 Green Lakes Endurance Runs 100km Trail Race their New



York State Ultra Championship. This is an honor for the race, now in its fifth year. It is great to see the RRCA supporting trail and ultra competition.

The state park and GLER's history is marked with many running highlights such as international ultrarunning star Valmir Nunes who pushed the 100km course record down to a scary 8:22 despite 4,000 feet of gain and loss. It was on the trails of Green Lakes that local runner Jill Perry transformed herself into a 24-hour national champion and Umstead 100-mile record holder. The park's trails also changed local ultrarunner Matt Chaffin from a five-hour 50km runner to a member of the 2009 USA 24-Hour Team.

The race field has grown as our sport has grown. The 2009 event filled a few days in advance of the proposed date of closing registration. So, don't wait too long to experience GLER. To register, go

to www.gleruns.com. There are no membership or residency requirements.

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ATRA Announces Corporate Sponsor

OrthoLite signed a corporate sponsorship agreement with ATRA and as part of the agreement, becomes the official supplier/provider of *insoles* for ATRA. You will notice the OrthoLite banner on the calendar pages Online at www.trailrunner.com and inclusion of ads in this and upcoming issues of *Trail Times*. Be sure to visit www.ortholite.com to learn about these versatile insoles. If you are a Facebook member, be sure to add OrthoLite as one of your “friends.”



Trail Race Statistics

	2007	2008	2009
Number of races (US and International w/confirmed dates)	1,418	1,675	1,923
Number of International races	207	237	352
Number of races providing participant data	658	650	819
Total Participants* (US and International)	177,217	185,715	230,340
New Races in the year listed	77	90	108

* Not all races supply participant numbers

ATRA members at the \$35 level receive a one-year subscription to *Trail Runner* magazine.

www.trailrunnermag.com

TrailRunner
One Dirty Magazine

ATRA members receive *Running Times* as part of their annual membership
www.runningtimes.com

RUNNING TIMES

March Marathon Moments

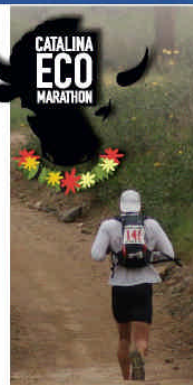


Win a free entry to the 2010 Catalina ECO Marathon!

* Post your favorite marathon or half marathon moment on our Spectrum Sports facebook fan page. Include race name, date, your favorite thing about the event, or a photo.

* Fans will vote for their favorite marathon moment. The moment with the highest number of votes wins!

* Postings must be made by March 20th. Voting begins March 1st and ends April 4th.



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