



Mile Markers



We Give You the Run-Around

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On Ultrarunners

The common John Doe street folk inevitably ask "Do you get a runner's high" as soon as they find out that you are a runner. To those of us that run this is an innocent and simple but dumb question. Similarly, many runners ask me "What's it like to run an ultra" as soon as they find out that I'm an ultrarunner. Thus, I thought I'd use this forum to give a brief view to the uninitiated of what its like from the inside to be a ultrarunner and to do ultras. I will limit this first enlightening passage to things that I have found in common in the personality makeup of the ultrarunners that I have met.

First, ultrarunners LOVE TO RUN. Ultrarunners have type A obsessive/compulsive personalities and an addiction are probably the more correct words, but there must be an element of enjoyment and pleasure or we wouldn't do it.

Second, (and a very close second) ultrarunners have a warped sense of humor. You must be able to laugh at yourself when things have gone to hell in a hand basket at four in the morning.

Third, (and battling it out for second place) ultrarunners use warped logic freely and naturally like it was perfectly rational.

Fourth, ultrarunners have no dignity. There is some sort of synergy between this and a warped sense of humor.

To illustrate these last three intertwined perverse aspects of an ultrarunner's way of feeling and thinking:

Ann Trason, record holder of virtually every woman's world ultra record ran her first ultra while training for a marathon. Her reasoning was something like this. I figured that if I could run 50 miles then I should be able to run a marathon.

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THE FINAL WORD

Michael and Graydon, the verse crew,
They come well-prepared to the word zoo.
Poetic go-getters,
They're clearly my betters,
But they will run dry before I do.

(anon)

Ultrarunners (continued)

The now probably most famous quote from ultra running occurred at the Wasatch Front 100 Endurance Run. A back of the pack runner, who obviously had too much Coke Cola at a late night aid station, blitzed the course to the next aid station faster than any runner on the course except the lead runner. When asked about this by the aid station personnel, he proudly exclaimed "I was passing rocks and trees like they were standing still".

There are a multitude of stories about the performance of bodily functions gone awry. The classics being; The trail runner who has not seen another human in two hours but as soon as they pull down their pants for a pit stop, around the corner comes the local girl scout troop. Or the unfortunate runner who has found the necessity of practicing projectile vomiting over the inside curb of a 440 track just when the local TV crew shows up to film a 24 hour run.

There are ultrarunners who run in place in a sauna for 2 hours a day, 4 days a week, for 4 months, each year just to get ready to run 148 miles across Death Valley in August. Even I, as a fellow ultrarunner can see that these people's reasoning ability is a half bubble off center or else they have a slight obsessive streak in their personalities.

Each year sometime after Christmas, there are a whole series of informal ultras all across the country for runners who have over indulged themselves during the holidays. The general name for these runs is the Fat Ass 50's.

Virtually every ultrarunner has had a case of the highly contagious sickness known as Birthday Run Syndrome. This disease usually strikes on a runner's 40th or 50th birthday and sometimes has resulted in 50 people gathering to run 50 miles together. Several now famous ultras got started this way, including our local BB 50, meaning Brad's birthday 50 miler.

If you don't see the perverse humor in these examples, don't take up ultra running.

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July Movie, August Barbecue

A video and slide show from this summer's Eco-Challenge, in which Strider Carl Gable participated, will be on the program for the July meeting. The meeting will be on the second Tuesday of the month, as usual--July 11--and the place is Graydon Anderson's house, 2902 Corte del Pozo.

To get to Graydon's house from Rodeo Road, turn left on Yucca and then make three lefts in a row. His telephone number is 438-1872.

The potluck is at 7 p.m. and the meeting is at 8 p.m.

Looking ahead a bit, the August meeting will be at the home of Jim Hannan, 151 E. Barcelona Road. Jim's phone number is 986-0218. The potluck will be a barbecue, and the date is August 8.

Just In From Taos....

Among Striders competing in the Taos 1/2 marathon on June 18 were Chester Rail, who covered the distance in 1:59:20 and placed third in the 50-59 category; Carl Gable, whose 1:28:02 made him the 14th overall male finisher; Barb Dutrow, who ran a 1:31:40 to place second overall among women; and Mike Guttman, who ran the course in 1:50:20.

Donna Berg ran the 5K but left before getting any results. It was "a beautiful morning" in Taos the day of the race, she recalled.

Ultrarunners (continued)

I totally forgot one of the more obvious aspects of ultra running until I had already written this and had to go back and insert it. You have to have an endurance type attitude to be an ultrarunner. Running 100 miles is a lot like living 100 years. You run 100 miles one step at a time. You live 100 years one day at a time. Most people don't give a lot of thought to how they are going to pay the bills more than one year in advance. Most ultrarunners don't think much further than the next aid station. Ultra running is an older person's sport. The average age of the entrants at Leadville is usually over 45. When you have sat down at the dinner table at 6 o'clock every night and put food on the table for the kids for 18 years or have paid the house note on the first of the month every month for 30 years, then you are sort of ready to run ultras. This long term dedication to what you are doing is absolutely necessary to be an ultrarunner. We in the ultra running scene find that young whooper snappers, while they may have a lot of speed, have short attention spans. This is not good in ultras, particularly for something like 48 hour track runs.

I have saved for last what I have found to be probably the best aspect of ultra running and the people who do it. Ultrarunners are a community. Ultrarunners uniformly have great admiration and respect for each other. There is almost NO machismo, better than thou, or one-up-man-ship in the sport and the life style it requires. There is competition, intense competition, but it seems to engender this sense of mutual respect. There are probably at least a dozen occasions now where the lead runner was starting to fall apart. The second place runner caught the leader but instead of passing *him* stopped and walked with them till the leader could recover. Then they went to the finish line together, holding hands out of total mutual respect for each other. The best ultra running woman in the world will sit at a table and talk with the slowest nobody from nowhere and there is nothing but mutual respect between them. We have all been there and had it happen to us. There is nothing but sadness when another runner DNF's.

This brings me to the question "Why do you run ultras"? The one single overriding reason is probably this sense of community. During an ultra you develop an incredible depth of camaraderie with your fellow runners and a deep sense of sharing an intense common personal experience. The other runners are your friends. This is why you come back again and again, To See Your Friends and share another experience with them.

To give you a sense of what it is actually like to do an ultra takes an entire discussion of its own. I will leave this for next month's pearl of wisdom.

Until We Meet Again
Run Long And Have Fun

--Jim Fisher

----- Wednesday Runs

The Wednesday runs from the Plaza, as announced last month, are now held at 6 p.m., summer and winter. The gathering place is by the Palace of the Governors, on the corner across the street from the Plaza clock. Everyone is invited.

Upcoming Races

July 9, Dino Dash, 5 and 10 K runs, 5K race walk, 1-mile fun run/walk. NM Museum of Natural History and Science, Albuquerque., 8 a.m. 841-8837.

July 15, Los Alamos 5 K run/race walk, 20K run. 7:30 a.m., Sullivan Field. 662-5665.

July 16, Wings of the Southwest Wind Messenger and Po'Pay 10K, 5K and 1-mile children's run. Santa Clara Pueblo, 8 a.m. 982-6761.

July 22, Women's Distance Festival, 5K, Albuquerque, 881-6136.

July 22, Run for the Mountain, 5 and 10K runs, 3 and 5K walks, Albuquerque, Gil's, 268-6300.

Aug. 6, Sylvia Pulliam Memorial 5 and 10K runs, Salvador Perez Park, Santa Fe, 8 a.m. 473-7220.

Aug. 12, Making Strides Against Women's Cancer Runs, Las Campanas, Santa Fe 5K run for women only, 6 p.m.; open 10K run and 2-mile fun walk, 6:45 p.m. 988-5548.

Aug. 13, La Luz Mountain Run, 9 miles, 865-8612.

Aug. 19, Los Alamos Triathlon, 12.4 mile bike ride, 400 meter swim, 3.1 mile run, 662-8034.

Aug. 26, Eldorado 5K run and 1 mile run/walk, 8 a.m., Eldorado subdivision. 466-6563.

Aug. 27, Steve Gachupin 1/2 marathon, Jemez Pueblo, 834-7392.

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Report from Cerrillos

Devil's Throne
Satan's seat
aching feet
woozy heat
(says Tom Day)
racing herds
many yards
trailing rails
rusty nails
hard cow turds
cattle guards
silver screws
running dues
bottle glass
broken browns
turquoise blues
demon scheme
perverse verse
words prevail

-- Michael G. Sutin

THESE TRIATHLETES ARE TOUGH

The current issue of Runner Triathlete News, published in Houston, covers five states, including New Mexico. The magazine often runs complete race results from New Mexico races.

The publication also has some articles of local interest. The current issue, for example, lists trails in each of the states it covers. Included in New Mexico trials is the Atalaya Trail, described as a 7-mile moderate-terrain trail. "Fairly easy trail that's close to the city and affords excellent views from top of mountain," the description says.

IT WAS STILL A PR, DAMMIT

Clear skies and cool temperatures are the rule in Roswell, NM in early December. And it is always flat. So it was that Saturday morning several years ago while I was warming up for a 10 km race with my host, a runner familiar with my modest abilities and with some of the other runners. He casually indicated to me those around us likely to be contenders to win. We were a small group, but I paid little heed to his tips for, although I had been training aggressively during the past several months, I had no expectations other than that supplied by the unquantifiable variable called enthusiasm. Running well was my goal, and I didn't care who else was there.

Through the first mile a man wearing yellow, white, and black, The Hornet, took the lead and set a pace which I accepted while settling into the race, but in the second mile he slowed ever so slightly and we ran abreast some distance. Our rhythmic breathing and the patter of our synchronized footsteps... was the only sound on that cool, still morning, and the effect was comfortably hypnotic. But I wasn't running to feel good, so I increased the pace. The Hornet slowly began to fade although I could still hear him. About the 3 mile mark the course made a right turn which allowed me to glance surreptitiously behind and to my surprise The Hornet, now lagging about 25 yards, was being chased by a Mr. Blue and a Mr. Red. Not overly alarmed my immediate concern was to maintain my somewhat uncomfortable pace which I did for the next half mile or so when the course made another right turn. Another discreet peek revealed that The Hornet had been eclipsed by both Mr. Blue and Mr. Red. We then faced a long straight stretch of road to beyond the 5 mile mark, and the only strategy left to me was to sustain my pace, which I did, for I didn't believe that I could increase it. I was wrong. With under a mile to go and another right turn I saw with a sickening jolt that Mr. Blue had used

the straight stretch to close slowly and silently to within 10 paces of me. Although when I began the race I didn't expect to win, nevertheless, having led or shared the lead for much of it I didn't want to lose and leave the winner with the illusion that he was a clever tactician. Goaded as much by fear as desire I focused every bit of energy I could muster toward speed and smoothness. After one last turn the finish was in sight, but I didn't dare look back for fear of what I might see. Sprinting the last hundred yards I finished in 38:16, about 15 seconds ahead of Mr. Blue.

Between gulps of air we congratulated each other on a good race. With the easy generosity of a victor I thanked Bill, for I learned Mr. Blue's name, for pushing me to a P.R. For his part Bill thanked me for pulling him to a faster time than he expected because, he said, "I just had a vasectomy on Wednesday."

John Carroll Pollak

----- -- Write It Down

The Striders have many good writers, but only some of them have written for the newsletter. Accounts of races, training, friendships and just about anything else dealing with running will be of interest to others in the club.

Mail your contributions by the 25th of the month to Tom Day, newsletter editor, 2260 Calle de Arce, Santa Fe, NM, 87505. Call me at 473-3159 if you have any questions.

And remember--if Shakespeare had waited until his plays were perfect, he never would have published anything.

....Also, Race Results

Don't be bashful--call or mail in your race results to the above phone number or address. The more the better.

Come Unto The Mountain My Friends

I invite you all my running friends to come up to the mountain this summer and meet my other friends.

I was just up on the trail on June 22 for the first time this summer. Due to late spring snow and heavy winter downfall, which the Forest Service just cleared, the trail is clean and fresh like I have never seen it before. The hurts of last year have been erased by the winter. The trail was not yet trompled by human feet, splattered by cow pies, or covered by the acid smell of horse nuggets. The late afternoon sun came thru the aspen trees on the corner in the woods where the tiny orchids are not yet up. I came to the Nambe Creek. It and all the creeks are bright, sparkling, and happy like I have never seen them before. Clear, clean, the late summer algae washed from the rocks. Then the tiny creek that I have been encouraging for 4 or 5 summers now, even when it totally dried up last summer. It is flowing full as it ever has, learning to be a big creek for the first time in its life. Around the corner and there's my friend Baldy, as beautiful as I have ever seen him. Rising against the sky gloriously in the afternoon sun, like an old friend that I had not seen in many years or many life times. Even though it was only last fall that we parted. On to the meadows. The tiny strawberries will soon be up. Then to two creeks in quick succession, bright, sparkling, happy, and rambunctious. Making all sorts of tiny new creeklets flowing down thru the woods, washing and polishing new rocks. It is almost like the mountain's way of caressing itself. Back again. I hear my silly friend the grouse. There he is, standing on a rock in a bend of the trail, doing his accordion thing, calling for women. He doesn't seem to know that human women are not what he wants and probably spent all of last summer without a partner. Poor silly guy. Stop by the tiny spring that I know. Gurgling under the rocks and bubbling up in the trail, where I found a small lost stuffed teddy bear last summer. A gift from the mountain that I could take home with me. I wonder what gifts I will receive this summer.

For these reasons and so many more, I invite you my running friends to come up to the mountain and meet my other friends.

--Jim Fisher

Strider Phones

President, John Pollak, 983-2144

Vice-President, Elaine Coleman, 983-9747

: Treasurer, Graydon Anderson, 438-1872

• Newsletter editor, Tom Day, 473-3159



CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION WAIVER

I know that running and volunteering to work in club races are potentially hazardous activities. I should not enter and run in club activities unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to my ability to safely complete the run. I assume all risks associated with running and volunteering to work in club races including, but not limited to, falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and/or humidity, the conditions of the road and traffic on the course, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. Having read this waiver and knowing these facts, and in consideration of your acceptance of my application for membership, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the Road Runners Club of America, the Santa Fe Striders Road Runners Club and all sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in these club activities even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver.

SIGNATURE

DATE

PARENTS' SIGNATURE if under 18 yrs. DATE

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State : _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Enclose \$15.00 for annual membership fees. Annual fees are due in January of each year, and membership runs through the end of December. If you are paying after July 1, the membership fees are \$7.50. Make checks payable to Santa Fe Striders and mail to P.O. Box 1818, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

Around the Old Campfire

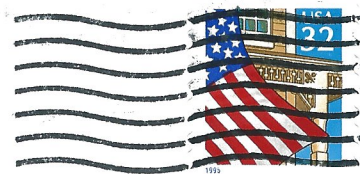
Each summer, the town of Red River hosts an 11-miler and a 5-K put on by Gil's. This year, the races were on June 25.

John Pollak, who likes to run the longer race, is wondering whether a group of runners might want to meet at Red River and camp out the night before the races in one of the area's recreation sites. Red River is a lovely setting for both running and camping.

We have almost a year to think about this, but it's never too early to put the bug in the ear.

Mile Markers

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