



Running Briefs



Running Club North
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

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Trail series to debut in 2008

By MATIAS SAARI
(OUTGOING) Running Briefs editor

After running several trail races this summer that are part of the Alaska Mountain Running Grand Prix (and having more fun training and racing than ever before), it struck me that there's no reason Fairbanks can't have an off-road running series as well.

Several trail races, such as the Chena Hot Springs Run & Soak, Musk Ox Run and Granite Tors Trail Run, have long been staples of the local running calendar, while other races can be created that are close to town (Birch Hill and Moose Mountain) or on mountains within about 100 miles (Donnelly Dome and Mount Healy).

The only criteria I foresee for the series is that none of the events can duplicate the Flint Hills Cup Series and that no pavement is included (except for crossing Ballaine Road in the Musk Ox Run, if that were part of the series!).

The series would have a primary sponsor and prizes at season's end. I envision six races, with points tallied for the best four results. Runners would thereby not be penalized for missing up to two races (as they essentially are in the Flint Hills series).

My hope is that having the incentive of a series (and new races that offer different terrain) will substantially increase turnout for trail running events in Fairbanks. The AMR Grand Prix events last year drew from 60 competitors (the Matanuska Peak Challenge near Palmer) to 600 (Mount Marathon in Seward).

There's plenty of room for growth in Fairbanks area trail runs, which often entice only about 20 runners while several hundred turn out for newly established 5-K road races.

Before deciding which races will be part of the series, I would like to gather feedback from the running community. Please check six of the following events (if you wish, number them in preference from 1 to 6) or suggest others that might warrant consideration.

Candidates for the series, with turnout the last time the race was run in parentheses:

- ___ 13th Musk Ox Run, 11.5 miles (38 in 2006)
- ___ 16th Chena Hot Springs Run & Soak, 8.5m (38 in 2007)
- ___ Granite Tors Trail Run, 15-mile loop (19 in 2007)
- ___ 9th Ester Dome Ass Kicker, 6.75 miles (27 in 2007)
- ___ 3rd Tour de Murphy Dome, 10 miles (17 in 2007)
- ___ Moose Mountain, ski hill climb and gradual trail descent (potential new race, would be held on a weeknight)
- ___ Birch Hill 10K (would be held on a weeknight)
- ___ Donnelly Dome ascent, about 1,800-foot vertical gain over 1.5 miles (potential new race; 15 miles south of Delta Junction)
- ___ Mount Healy partial ascent, about 1,600-foot vertical gain over 1.25 miles (potential new race; beginning at Bison Gulch parking area off Parks Highway, 100 miles south of Fairbanks)
- ___ Sugarloaf Mountain ascent, about 2,500-foot vertical gain over two miles (potential new race); from Grande Denali Hotel opposite Denali National Park
- ___ Other _____
- ___ Other _____

Additional comments:

Please send feedback by e-mail to
matiasalaska@hotmail.com or by snail mail to

Matias Saari, 5721 Cascade Road, Fairbanks AK 99709.
See you on the trails, and in the mountains!

Running Briefs is published four times a year, preferably in January, April, July and October. Virginia Parrish has mercifully agreed to become the new editor after it became painfully obvious to the outgoing editor that full-time sportswriting and newsletter publishing were not compatible. Send contributions to:

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He did it! 50 states, 100+ marathons

By **BOB HILDEBRANDT**

When I started running again as an adult, I only wanted to lose weight and improve my overall health. I had no idea of how many races I would run. The 5-K's and 10-K's led to longer races and eventually to the marathon.

My journey down the marathon trail began with the Snowgoose Marathon in Anchorage on the 16th of August, 1993. I had no idea what to expect. I was surprised. I enjoyed my first marathon, finishing in 4 hours, 29 minutes.

One marathon led to another: the Equinox here in Fairbanks, Portland (Ore.), crowded Los Angeles, foggy Big Sur, the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. I was getting hooked. I was enjoying the journey. In October, 1997, while running the Mount Rushmore Marathon in South Dakota, which just happened to be on my 49th birthday, I met a group of runners from a new organization: the 50 States Marathon Club.

The goal of the group was to complete a marathon in all 50 states and DC. So I decided to give running 50 states a try. At that time a mara-

thoner had to have run a marathon in 20 different states before being able to join. I reached state No. 20 with the Volcano Marathon on the Big Island of Hawaii in July, 2000.

Some of the marathons I have run more than once. Others only once. I ran Roswell, N.M., in the desert heat. Tupelo in hot and humid Mississippi. Coeur d'Alene in the rain. Steamtown in an early snowstorm in Pennsylvania. The Avenue of the Giants Marathon through the mighty redwood forests. The list goes on. All were interesting.

While running the Yakima River Canyon Marathon in eastern Washington I met another group of marathoners. This was the 100 Marathon Club. Now I had two goals. Running a marathon in all 50 states and DC, plus completing at least 100 marathons. I wanted to reach both goals before I reached the age of 60.

Along the way, some of the marathon trips turned into vacations with my family. Both of my children became marathon runners. They used to watch me run, now they run marathons with me. My son, Dietrich, joined the 50 states club in October,

2005, after we both ran the Breakers Marathon in Rhode Island on a Saturday and then Mystic Places Marathon in Connecticut the next day.

Of course this summer the marathons continued. On June 16, I ran Grandma's Marathon in Duluth, Minn., for the third time. This was marathon No. 100 for me. I had reached one of my goals. A week later Dietrich and I ran the Mayor's Marathon in Anchorage. This was Dietrich's 29th. After that I did Humpy's in Anchorage on Aug. 19, the Equinox in Fairbanks on Sept. 15, and the New Hampshire Marathon on Sept. 29.

At the age of 59, I then gained my 50th state at the Mount Desert Island Marathon in Bar Harbor, Maine (in a time of 6:21:25).

Along the way I have had support from many people. No. 1 has been my wife, Patsy. Without Patsy's help I never would have made it. Also my son Dietrich and daughter Kyndall. And support from my marathoner nephew, Fast Eddie Hahn, has also been great.

I may have run more than 100 marathons in all 50 states, but the journey is far from over.

Lanford wins, Henry survives, Rorabaugh just shy

Jane Lanford had run all 10 marathons that Alaska had to offer.

Then the Kenai River Marathon was added.

Lanford not only ran the race from Kenai to Soldotna and back on Sept. 30, she won it.

Lanford claimed the women's division in 3:43:02 and finished fourth of 12 marathoners. Sixty-eight runners, including those in relays, participated in the second annual event.

"I figured I had to run it so I could still say I'd run every marathon in

Alaska," Lanford said via e-mail.

Other Fairbanksans participating included Kathi Stevens, second woman in the half marathon in 1:58:04; and Steve Bainbridge, ninth in the half marathon in 1:34:03.

Race officials plan to have the marathon certified next year, which would make it eligible as a Boston Marathon qualifier.

That could be beneficial to Fairbanksans, such as Darren Rorabaugh, aiming to qualify for America's oldest and most famous mara-

thon.

Rorabaugh, running with wife Susan Faulkner at the Portland Marathon on Oct. 7, came up just short of his 3:30 qualifying goal, finishing in 3:33:17. He reportedly was on pace past the midway point before vomiting.

That same day, Chris Henry finished the Chicago Marathon in 5:28:39. Running and walking in oppressive heat, he thankfully was not among the casualties (one dead and hundreds hospitalized).

What's your fitness level, really?

By LAUREN PAYNE

Are you trying to improve your cardiovascular performance, train for a race or lose weight? Have you logged hours of running just to find you have an injury before a big event, or do you feel you lack enough time to train effectively and efficiently for your goals?

Many general training techniques exist to increase personal fitness. Take interval training, for instance – a popular technique among runners seeking to enhance their aerobic capacity. Some runners train incorrectly, using intervals as a personal contest to see how fast they can run each interval. This, in turn, can lead to counterproductive results and injury. So how can you figure out your personal aerobic capacity? Get your VO2 max tested.

VO2 max is considered the paramount measuring tool of personal fitness. Your personal VO2 max refers to the maximum amount of oxygen consumption your body uses for exercise. Since the body uses oxygen to help convert food into energy, the more oxygen you can consume, the more energy, power, or speed you can produce. Testing for VO2 max measures the maximum amount of oxygen a person can consume in one minute per kilogram of body weight. The test not only measures peak VO2 max levels, but also gauges anaerobic threshold and the precise amount of calories burned at all exercise heart rate levels. Generally, more fit individuals have a higher VO2 max value and are able to train at higher intensities. Studies show VO2 Max levels can be increased by using various training techniques.

Knowing your personal VO2 Max can be a very beneficial component of any training or weight loss program. Once you're aware of your peak VO2 max, you'll know the tar-

get heart rate range in which your body primarily burns fat stores. This will help you devise a training program exclusively for your goals. Being aware of your anaerobic threshold, the point at which lactate begins to accumulate in the bloodstream, allows you to train at high intensities while still staying aerobic. Knowing your corresponding heart rate for your anaerobic threshold gives you a convenient way of monitoring your workouts. You can train your body to remove lactate better, thus raising your anaerobic threshold.

Furthermore, knowing the amount of calories you burn at different heart rate levels allows you to keep track of calories burned during long steady workouts as well as shorter more intense workouts. This is beneficial for anyone trying to lose weight, or even those who are trying to maintain or gain weight. If you know how much energy you are using, you'll be able to properly fuel yourself, whatever your goals. For those who often work out indoors on gym equipment, it's a more precise method of calculating calories burned than relying upon the rough estimates provided by the cardio machines.

Are you committed to improving your performance and reaching your goals effectively and efficiently? Personal fitness knowledge gained from VO2 max testing may be the answer for you. To make an appointment or inquire about cost, contact Adient Orthopedic Physical Therapy at (907) 455-4401.

Lauren Payne, 23, was born and raised in Fairbanks. A certified personal trainer, she is active in a variety of sports, especially running. She earned a Bachelors of Science degree in Health and Exercise Science with a concentration in Health Promotions from Colorado State University. She is currently an intern at Adient Orthopedic Physical Therapy.

Snowshoe— *from page 4*

one choice, a 12K, bringing all of America's best together in one race. Perhaps inspired by Kastor's race, Dathan Ritzenhein, or Ritz, took off like the starter's gun had real bullets. He held a 10-second advantage on Alan Culpepper and Adam Goucher until the 9K mark. The two experienced former CU Buffaloes dropped the younger former Buff Ritz and it became a two-man race. Culpepper pulled away on the final lap and sprinted to victory in front of a hometown crowd.

Early the next day we drove the couple hours to the Beaver Creek Resort, hopped on a couple chairlifts and found ourselves at a 10,000-foot high starting line with 400 other snowshoers.

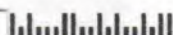
The course was treacherous—long hills, lots of single-track surrounded by deep snow on either side making it impossible to pass, and even some thigh-deep powder sections for the leaders—oh, and our good friend, the altitude. Needless to say, there was some major walking involved.

Unfortunately, at the awards ceremony back in "The Village", none of us cleaned up on any of the \$5,000 in prize money.

We did have some respectable finishes, however: Liz placed ninth with a time of 1:17 (keep in mind—10,000ft!), Kevin also placed ninth in 1:02 and Chad placed 11th in 1:03:55. I had the most fun, rolling in at 1:30 and enjoying every moment of it. Ben was unfortunately unable to race due to injury and assumed the duties of cameraman.

Overall, our trip was a success, and while we lacked the altitude training of the competition, and therefore ended up with bouts of rib-breaking coughing, it was certainly worth it.

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All in a weekend: watching the pros, snowshoeing at altitude

By VIRGINIA PARRISH

(Incoming) Running Briefs Editor

Outgoing editor's note: this article was submitted by the incoming editor to the outgoing editor about six months ago. Through no fault of the incoming editor, it wasn't published, but considering that snow is again on the ground, the article still seems appropriate, so the outgoing editor has decided to run it.

Arriving in Denver amidst the multitudes of downhill thrill- and SUV-seeking skiers, Chad (Carroll), Kevin (Brinegar), Ben (Nelson), Liz (Anderson) and I found that all of us and our gear fit into a compact Dodge Neon. We were there for one thing, well two things, well three things, but none had to do with the ski slopes: the USTAF Cross Country Champion-

ships, the Jeremy Wright North American Snowshoe Championships, and some warmer weather.

It was a trip on a whim—five mileage tickets purchased a week and a half before the big cross-country event. There was no way we could miss America's best: Dathan Ritzenhein, the Culpeppers, the Gouchers, the Torres brothers (my favorite), and Deena Kastor—all battling it out at altitude.

The course wound around a public golf course in Boulder. When we arrived, the sun was shining and the course was clear of snow but extremely muddy. We saw many people lose their spikes in the "mud pit" that was a spectator favorite.

There was no entrance fee but for the financial health of the USATF there should have been. The announcer threw out an estimated to-

tal of 10,000 spectators—undoubtedly most of whom came from closer places than Fairbanks. It was an excellent spectator course, as the 2,000-meter laps allowed us to see the race in three or even four different spots per lap if we ran.

The women's race, an 8K, came first and was a take-all for Deanna Kastor. She led from the gun, and while Shalane Flanagan tried to hang on in the beginning it was quickly apparent that the race was Kastor's. Her finishing time of 26:47 was more than a minute ahead of Flanagan.

The men's race proved to be more of a fight. In past years, the championships offered the option of a short course and a long course. This year, however, there was only

(See SNOWSHOE, page 3)