



Hardrock Hundred Mile Endurance Run

July 13-15, 2001

by [Matt Mahoney](#)

Hardrock results: 118 starters, 64 finishers within the 48 hour cutoff. Karl Meltzer won in 26:39, about 3 hours off the course record. Hans Put was 2nd in 28:42. Betsy Kalmeyer was 3rd and 1st female in 29:58 in a time that would have broken both the mens and womens record 2 years ago. There was a course change, descending Handies Peak via Grizzly Gulch instead of Upchuck Ridge due to permitting problems because of the new wilderness study area. This is an easier descent, but it's hard to see how this could have accounted for more than a one hour difference. We also ran in the easy direction (IMHO), with most of the passes being steep climbs on trails and easier descents on dirt roads. There was not much snow. Virginius Pass was a mix of snow, mud and rocks on a 45 degree downslope. We rappelled down the first pitch with a rope rather than glissade.

I finished in 45:00, a bit disappointed since I ran 42:17 in the "hard" direction last year, but happy to finish. I had climbed hard up Oscar's Pass (the 3rd of 10 major climbs), about 2000 ft/hr from 10000-13000 ft, and I think this caused some mild pulmonary edema that added an hour to each of my next 3 climbs. At the start of each climb, I had a wet cough, and I had to take rapid, deep breaths just to go half as fast as people that hardly seemed to be breathing at all. As I ascended, the cough would go away and I would actually increase my pace near the top. For instance I climbed Virginius Pass (#4, 8800-13000 ft, 4-7 PM) at 1500 ft/hr, and started passing people after Mendota Saddle. On Engineer (#5, 7700-13000 ft, 9PM-2AM) it took 4 hours to climb 4000 ft, but only 1 hour for the last 1400 ft. The problem magically went away at Sherman (#7, 9600-13000, 11AM-1PM). I was able to climb faster while taking normal sized breaths. I have had this problem before, costing me 2 DNFs at Leadville, and also 2 other times at Hardrock, but recovering each time after about 18-20 hours during the race. I hesitate to call it pulmonary edema (which is fatal) but it has some of the symptoms, and it is a common problem with no name that I know of. It is like calling an altitude headache "mild cerebral edema".

I took 2 3-minute naps at 6AM and 10PM on the second day. I found that I could sleep in a sitting position with my head down, going immediately into a dream state and waking up on my own. I would do this to get rid of hallucinations due to sleep deprivation. To stay awake I took 3 Mountain Dew's on the first night, and 2 + 100 mg. caffeine on the second night.

There was a huge thunderstorm with cold wind and stinging hail mixed with rain about 5PM on day 2. At the time I was in the Pole Creek basin approaching Maggie Gulch, a broad, open meadow with no trees. Since there was no protection from lightning (several air to air strikes within 500 ft.) I just kept moving as hard as I could to prevent hypothermia. I had a nylon jacket that was waterproof, but I discovered that my nylon pants were not. I had on all my clothes: 2 shirts (synthetic T shirt + long sleeve polypro), knit hat, polypro gloves, and short tights under my long pants, and shoes (Merrill Sprint Fade, designed to be worn without socks). The shoes have very good traction on wet rocks. I was warm enough only if I kept moving.

I did not have a crew or use drop bags. I didn't intend to have a pacer, but Rock Cogar paced me from Grouse Gulch (the last 46 miles, or 23 hours). He has run 100 miles faster than that, but said this was just as hard. During the first night (Ouray to American Basin) I stayed with Leslie (Hunt) Trammell. She had planned to run with her husband Kerry, but he dropped (for the 3rd time) at Ouray with a bad knee. The last 2 years she dropped with him, but this time she wanted to finish. They both had pacers waiting at Grouse, so I got Kerry's pacer.

I sprinted hard at the finish, trying to break 45 hours, but missed it by 3 seconds. There were lots of places where I could have made it up, like the over 3 hours at aid stations. For most of the race I was more interested in being comfortable than fast, which I think is key to finishing this race. For the first few aid stations, I was in and out quickly, but I cannot eat while climbing or running very fast, so later I would sit at the aid stations until I was done eating. I ate

most of what they had, 2 turkey or roast beef sandwiches each day, plus lots of snack foods and whatever electrolyte drink they had (Succeed). I got most of my water from streams, untreated. I never had any stomach problems, but I think it is impossible to replace all of the 15000 or so calories that you burn during the race. 3 weeks ago when I left Florida I weighted 164 lbs. Now I weigh 157.

I had considered dropping at Sherman (70 mi) due to an inflamed tendon on the front of my left ankle that made it painful to run or walk downhill. Ibuprofin didn't help. But I was 5 hours ahead of the cutoff with no other problems, and I found I could relieve the pain if I landed flat footed or on the ball of my foot instead of the heel, so I continued this way for the last 16 hours.

This race knocked out a lot of good runners. Hans Dieter Weisshaar, who finished 20 100 milers last year including Hardrock, missed the 44 hour cutoff at Cunningham (91 mi) by 6 minutes. Aki Inoue of Japan, who ran about 24:30 at Massanutten, dropped at Sherman (70 mi), after vomiting throughout the race, suffering from inadequate acclimation and jet lag. Robert Youngren and Jim Musselman, also unacclimated, dropped at Grouse (57 mi). Eric Robinson, who ran 9 summits at Nolan's 14 last year, had only 6 days acclimation and dropped at Sherman. Same for Gordon Hardman, who had many good Hardrock finishes and 7 summits at Nolan's 2 years ago. Bob Boeder, who finished 4 minutes ahead of me at the Leadville marathon last week in 6:14, dropped at Grouse. Sue Johnston, last year's winner, left Enginner (50 mi) at 8 PM, and dropped 7 miles later at Grouse at 6:30 AM. The worst was probably Randall Dunn, who missed the 48 hour finish cutoff by 71 seconds.

I enjoyed the [Outside article "It's gonna suck to be you"](#), even if it was a bit exaggerated. Beware, though. Sports Illustrated and National Geographic were both filming the race this time. I think the low key days are over.

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