

Ultrarunning World

ROAD, TRACK & TRAIL ULTRA DISTANCE NEWS

ISSUE 5 FEBRUARY/MARCH 2011



William Sichel
Photo: Alan Young



The Druid
Challenge



4Deserts
Grand Slam



La
Transtica

Great stories plus the best Ultrarunning Calendar in print - over 600 events in 2011 & 2012

ULTRARUNNING WORLD

Issue: 5 February/March 2011



Frederick Davis III , New York 2011

Photo by Prabhakar

Self-Transcendence

Progress is self-transcendence and self-transcendence is undoubtedly true perfection according to me, perfection is self-transcendence, perfection is constant progress which is always transcending itself. Otherwise, if I say that this is perfection, you will say no, something else is perfection. So there will be no end to our dispute. My perfection need not be your perfection, but my self-transcendence will always give me satisfaction and your self-transcendence will always give you satisfaction. Where there is continuous satisfaction, glowing satisfaction, illumining satisfaction, we have to know that that is perfection. Perfection is in the satisfaction that glows and grows inside our hearts.

Sri Chinmoy

In The Next Issue

A major theme in the next issue of Ultrarunning World will be solo runs - Journeys across Wales, Canada and a project along the Silk Road will accompany articles on events nearer to the UK.

News of recent publications and new races as well as a look at some of the major events in the Ultrarunning calendar will mean a bigger issue for April May.

If you would like to contribute news, articles or photos of ultrarunning events please send email to the address below. If you would like to promote your events or products related to ultrarunning, very reasonable rates apply and at the same time you will be helping to finance a better production plus the possibility of a reasonably priced print version.

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Welcome to the March/April 2011 edition of Ultrarunning World. This issue I am very grateful to be able to share personal experiences from some wonderful ultrarunners.

I would like to thank the contributors to this issue for their kind permission to use the material included here. Without material and generosity such as this, the magazine wouldnt exist.

Alan Young, athlete/manager/handler extraordinaire, has been extremely kind in giving me permission to use his photos again. Alan helps several runners and gets to see a lot of races around Europe and has a website: www.dionnetworks.com/

Thanks are due to Richard Meade for his story about the Druid Challenge and to the RD Neil Thubron for his support.

I am very grateful to Lucy Rivers Bulkeley for writing her article for me. She is a courageous and very impressive woman. I look forward to hearing more of her running adventures

Race director Bernard Marchal is helping hundreds of children through his solidarity work in Costa Rica as well as providing a running challenge in a beautiful part of the world.

Don Winkley runs all the time long or short, a man who is crossing the races off his bucket list. I love listening to Don's stories and I am grateful he lets me use his writings in this publication

Many thanks to Prabhakar and Alakananda for their photos.

Abichal Sherrington

Cover photo by Alan Young:

Email the editor at: mail@ultrarunningworld.co.uk



La Transtica 2010

Story & Images Bernard Marchal

On November 12th the first team from the organization left San José to carry out the last reconnaissance on the areas affected by the heavy rains of the end of October.

The situation on the ground was not brilliant but solutions were found, and alternatives were validated in order to be able to cover the 5 stages in total safety.

In San Jose, the rest of the organization focused on the final preparations before the race, on the clearance of our donation through customs and on the validation of the solidarity projects.

November 18th, 9 AM:

A Press conference followed by a briefing between organization and runners - 48 participants (including 8 women) representing 7 different nations, USA, Sweden, Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands and of course Costa Rica.

The organization team, from France and Costa Rica was composed of 20 members, including two doctors, two French physiotherapists and 7 firemen and were reinforced as in 2009, by a dozen Firemen from the "Cuerpo de Bomberos de Costa Rica" with their vehicles and logistics. One of our doctors ran the race with the runners to take care of their safety.

On the solidarity aspect of the race, the container with the donation from Monoprix, 1,300 kg of school stationery arrived at Puerto Limon and we worked actively on its custom clearance with the assistance and the support of the French Embassy in San José, the ministry of Tourism (ICT) and the ministry for the Sports (ICODER) in Costa Rica.

In addition, the 1st Challenge Technip Humania, organized by the Company Technip France and its employees to finance the solidarity projects carried out by the association El Niño during La Transtica 2010, was an exceptional success as they collected nearly 9.000 Euros.



An extra 2.000 € will be added from benefit collected by associations El Nino and CG Sport Vent, at races they organized in France, "La Free Ride Classic Mandelieu", "Le Trail des Illuminés" and "Le Trail des Balcons d'Azur" as well as a donation of \$940, from profits of the sale of T-shirt,s carried out by a couple of runners - Amalric and Lejosne.

In the afternoon, the first donation of educational and exercises books to the library of the School "Finca la Caja", which takes care of 1,800 children from the disadvantaged district of La Carpio. This donation was financed with more than \$7,000 from funds collected by the 1st Challenge Technip Humania.

3 Laptops, a donation of the Company Thales Alenia Space, was also given to this school, including one for the association Voz of Carpio which works for the rehabilitation of this district.

November 19th: Prologue

After a transfer to Manuel Antonio, it was time for the prologue - 2 loops of 3 km on the beach of Manuel Antonio.

The sun was shining on the beautiful setting where some watched and others ran, ending with a victory on the Extreme course by Roini Villegas (CR), winner in 2009, in 23'34", before Vincent Rivoire (FR) and Richard Finot (FR).

On the Adventure course, David Loutzenheiser (USA), finished 1st in 26'09" in front of 5 runners within a minute!

The competitors had a swim in the warm water of the Pacific Ocean, before benefitting from a last night of comfort at the Parador hotel.

During the dinner, an electro cardiogram (Hospital of Cannes) and a laptop (Thales Alenia Space) was given to the representatives of the dispensary of Londres, in prolongation of our 2008 and 2009 aid.

November 20th: Stage 1: Paquita - Selvita - Napoles

The departure of the Extremes was at 9:18, for 38 km and 1,740 m of positive altitude gain.

A small group formed at the head of the race with Vincent, Roini and Richard. The course followed tracks along plantations of palm trees, long interminable straight lines under a white sun, the heat was suffocating, the organisms suffering terribly and the gaps started to widen. The part which followed became more undulating with the first ascents and gradually brought us into the tropical jungle.

The Adventure departure was at the PC2, at 10:21, for 19 km and 1,375 m of

positive altitude gain. The serious things started, with a slope of 1,600 meters. The weather was changing quickly and the rain made its appearance, refreshing the organisms. The rain intensified and the end of the course alternated with soft and severe slopes.

Vincent Rivoire (France) won the Extreme stage in 4h05, followed by Roini Villegas (CR) in 4h14 and by Christophe Traina (BEL) in 4:39, the 1st woman, Isabelle Moes, finishing in 5h39.

In the Adventure race, the gaps were tightened, Anthony Didion was 1st in 2h34, in front of David Loutzenheiser (USA) in 2h37 and Bernie Sandoval (CR) in 2h42, the 1st woman, Francoise Leroi, finishing in 3h02.

In Rancho Guayabal, our camp in Santa Maria de Dota, a fire and a good soup welcomed us. It was true that the transition with the Hotel from the day before was huge!

November 21st: Stage 2: Santa Maria de Dota - Ojo de Agua

The Extremes started at 8 a.m., from the village of Santa Maria de Dota for the stage considered to be most difficult considering its impressive 2,720 m of positive difference in level and 1,310 m of negative difference in level.

As a starter, a first 15 % slope makes the difference, Vincent is testing Roini all along the 15 km covered to reach the first pass and the PC 2 from where, at 9:40, the start of the Adventure race took place.

An interminable descent to the village of Providencia, to arrive at the PC 3, before tackling the last difficulty of the day: 12 km and 1,140 m of positive difference in climb which brought all the runners to the altitude of 2,950 meters.

The rain made its appearance, the more we climbed the more the weather became colder, and the more the rain and the wind intensified, the air rarefied...

The competitors were quickly transferred on their arrival to the village of Esperanza, our bivouac place for the night.

Vincent Rivoire won the stage on the Extreme course in 4h47 and increased the gap with Roini Villegas (CR) in 4h56 and Christophe Traina (BEL) in 5h23.

On the Adventure course, Bernie Sandoval (CR) in 2h25 took again 1 min to Antony Didion (FR) in 2h26 and David Loutzenheiser (USA) in 2h29.

After a collation and a hot soup, a donation of 40 school kits was made to the school of Purisil. The dinner was prepared by the local community. The weather was cold and wet, it was very difficult to be dry and to dry our clothes.





La Transtica 2010 & Solidarity

During La Transtica 2010, and for the third consecutive year, El Niño has been able to complete a large number of solidarity actions in Costa Rica and far exceeded its original goals.

In addition to the school supplies (worth € 10 000) carried by sea to Costa Rica were added over 11 000 Euros spent locally to buy school and educational books, additional school supplies and materials to cover the school playground in La Esperanza.

In continuation of our work in 2009 and based on the needs identified by Elena Arias, we were able to perform throughout La Transtica 2010 many donations.

We have been able to distribute to a dozen communities, 6 laptops, an electrocardiogram, 182 school kits, 1,400 kg of school supplies (over 1,500 books, 1,000 reams of paper), materials for the rehabilitation of the school of La Esperanza.

In total 850 children were helped through this donation through the support and the contribution of the Companies Technip, Thales Alenia Space and Monoprix.

This latest donation closes Transtica 2010 which has been outstanding, both athletically and in humanitarian terms.

November 22nd: Stage 3: Esperanza - Kiri Lodge - El Humo

The first difficulty of the day was to get dressed, because of our cold and wet clothes...

Right before the departure, we were warmed by the songs of the children of the school to which we had just given the school kits as well as materials for the restoration of the dilapidated buildings of this school.

The profile of this stage looked easier, but did not reflect the difficulties that we had to face. During the briefing, the organization warned us that it would be necessary to manage de-escalation on a single track full of traps: mud, roots, thorny vegetation, and steep slopes.

We started with a steep climbing slope of 3 km, to reach 2,850 m, before facing a first downward portion, then in the 6th km, we entered the famous single track, the vegetation changed, we were penetrating to the real heart of the "Tapanti", and to add more pain, it started to rain. The slopes were very steep, the ground was an extremely slippery spread of mud and roots, and it was necessary to be very careful before clinging to the branches because some were strewn with spines....

Down again to a river crossing secured by a rope before a small but heavy rise through the jungle... really hard... Another descent, through the plantations

of coffee-trees to reach PC 3, which was the finish line for the adventure race.

For the Extreme runners another slope before the last long and interminable 11 km descent, to reach the arrival at El Humo...

Providing an exceptional effort, in the last descent, Roini Villegas (CR) filled the gap he had on PC 3 and crossed the finishing line 1st, covering the 42,1 km of the day in 4h06, 1min before Vincent Rivoire (FR) in 4:07 and more than 30 minutes on the other runners, ensuring 2nd place on the scratch.

In the adventure race, Bernie Sandoval in 2h25 took 11min off Antony Didion (FR) in 2h36 and was now 1min below Antony Didion, still leader on the scratch.

We were lodged cordially by the villagers: smiles, good meal and local dances afterward. We went to sleep relatively early because the next day was a night stage, the alarm clocks were programmed for 2:30 AM for a departure at 3:45 AM...

November 23rd: Stage 4: El Humo - San Pablo

3:45 AM, everybody looked tired whilst we were leaving - a short walk to the real departure which was at the exit of the village. The pace was good, first slope, a muddy descent followed a little road section to join the PC1. A few kilometers later, three Adventure runners were leading the race in the heavy night, fighting for first place on the scratch.

It was on the beginning of a slope towards the top of the Cerro Atirro, through a sugar cane plantation, that the sun rose, revealing a sublime campaign. Arriving in Pueblo Nuevo, we crossed a suspended bridge before starting a long slope towards the village of El Silencio, PC3, km 23,7 and finish for the Adventurers... It started to rain once again, a last pass for the Extremes, before going down to the village of Pacayitas, to the PC4, then the last 9.5 km up and down to reach El Humo.

Vincent Rivoire (FR) managed this 4th stage, covering the 41.2 km in 4h04 taking another 10 minutes to Roini Villegas (CR) in 4h14 and 23 minutes to Richard Finot and Christophe Traina in 4h27.

On the Adventure, Bernie Sandoval in 2h19 took 1st to Antony Didion (FR) in 2h20 and was now 1st on the scratch. We slept in the classrooms of the school of San Pablo and during the meal a donation of school kits was organized.

November 24th: Rafting

Adrenaline was guaranteed today during the rafting on the Pacuare River with rapids class III to IV! We embarked on rafts of 6 with a coxswain guide, who explained the safety instructions and the 4 basic moves: Forward, backward, hold the strings, and protect ourselves in the boat ... He also explained the attitude to have if we fell into the water.

The scenery while rafting was simply unique - impressive waterfalls, lush tropical vegetation and the power of the water transported us into a fantastic and magical world.

November 25th: Stage 5 Playa Negro – Manzanillo

After breakfast another donation of books (financed by the 1st Challenge Technip Humania) and of a laptop (Thales Alenia Space) for the library of the community of El Yüe who lodged us.

The day before, in the evening, the container of 1.300 kg of school stationeries shipped from France, was delivered. After the moments of emotion shared with certain competitors during the unloading of the container at the end of the evening, Sylvain, Max and Elena spent the day sorting and preparing the donations of the evening for the schools of Panama.

The runners joined Playa Negro at 4 km, for the last stage of the race.

First withdrawal, on medical advice; everybody was sad for Eric Martinez who would not be able to make it.

The sun was shining and even before starting running, we were suffering from the heavy heat.

The departure was given at 8h38 on the beach, and everybody realized immediately how difficult the day was going to be, as it was necessary to make a considerable effort for each stride.

The first kilometers were really hard,

trying to find the best path on a beach, cut by a refreshing river crossing.

At the 9 km point, the first check-point and 4 km of macadam before going back on the beach, another river to cross, a few more kilometers on the beach until PC3 in Manzanillo before starting a last loop of 3.3 km for the Adventures and 11.6 km for the Extremes in the muddy jungle around Manzanillo, marshy part, sticky mud up to the knees ... then back to the beach of Manzanillo, to finally reach the finish line...

Last moment of emotion for the organizers and runners who waited and encouraged all the runners until the last of them crossed the finish line.

In the evening, the French ambassador, invited us for dinner, where the awards ceremony took place, as well as a last donation for schools of communities living in Panama.

Vincent Rivoire (FR) finished 1st on the Extreme race, covering the 196 km and 6,855m of positive difference in level in 20h00 in front of Roini Villegas (CR) in 20h27 and Christophe Traina (BEL) in 20h42.

The 1st woman, Isabelle Moes 5BEL) finished 14th in 29h58 in front of Naiti Del Sante (SWE), 18th in 32h41.

Bernie Sandoval (CR) finished 1st in the Adventure race, covering the 116 km and the 3,950 m of positive difference in level in 12h11'19", 53 seconds in front of Anthony Didion (FR) in 12h12'12" and David Loutzenheiser (USA) in 12h49.

The 1st women Francoise Leroi (FR) finished 10th in 14h33 in front of Odile Lejosne (FR), 18th in 15h27 and Dominique Garcia (FR), 20th in 14h36, the last runners finishing in 19h00.

Conclusion:

The 48 runners entered in La Transtica 2010 discovered, through the stages

proposed, a varied course which brought them from the Pacific coast to the Caribbean coast.

They were faced with numerous changes of weather conditions, often rainy, alternating heavy and moist heat of the plains, refreshing tropical rains, wind and icy rain of the high forests. They were involved in the solidarity aspect of La Transtica through the various donations, lots of emotional moments that we shared together. They were welcomed, lodged and celebrated by the local communities, sharing time and privileged to meet the lifestyle of different communities living in Costa Rica.

The 2010 organization, building on the experience of previous editions, has been particularly effective, responsive and allowed all riders to fully live this adventure within conviviality and in full safety.

Our objective "The discovery of a country and its way of life through a sporting event with humanitarian goals" was largely achieved, at the price of the enormous and effective work of each member of the organization.

The group of the 48 runners of 7 different nations was also largely involved, each one bringing their own touch, carrying out their challenge and thus contributing to the total success of this Transtica 2010.

The good and friendly feedback which we received, during and after the race, gave us the daily motivation and energy necessary to build this success.

We, the 80 runners and organizers were happy to have had the privilege of sharing this huge edition of La Transtica.

La Transtica 2011 will be held from November 23rd, 2011 to December 3rd, 2011 and will be limited to 60 participants.

www.latranstica.org

