

Superior Trail 100 Mile Lives Up to Its Name

by Stan Wagon

The Superior Trail 100 Mile lived up to its name. But which name? The Superior Hiking Trail was truly superior: there were sections that provided miles of fabulous trail running on a good surface and there were sections that had more roots, rocks, and various other obstacles than is usual for a trail race. Overall, the combination was excellent, at least for those whose training includes a good dose of rough and rocky trails. But the weather on race day was more aptly described by the trail's acronym, SHT. The light rain at the 5:00 a.m. start turned into a steady downpour that lasted until mid-afternoon. This ten-hour soaking turned the runners' feet into a spongy mess, and did not do good things for the trail. But the temperatures were not too low, so in some ways the weather conditions were pleasant. And when the rain finally stopped, the conditions were fine.

The course starts in Silver Bay on the north shore of Lake Superior and, after a short road section, heads north on the Superior Hiking Trail towards Grand Marais. The hiking trail is a new point-to-point trail that follows the ridges and summits just inland from the lake. Next year's course will be a little different (harder) because the stretches on paved roads between miles 21-28 and 90-95 will be replaced by new parts of the SHT that weren't yet completed. The second half of the course is tougher than the first, both in amount of climb and trail quality. Factor in the darkness and tiredness, and it is easy to see why many runners had a hard time keeping up the three mph that would

have been required to keep them ahead of the wolf (the cut-off times).

One unique feature of the course is a 70-yard-long beaver pond area at mile 73 that requires a canoe to cross. An expert paddler was placed there during the night and he took each party across in a Forest Service canoe.

North Dakotan speedster Dave Wrolstad led the race to the 50-mile point, where he was passed by Regis Schyvers. Schyvers led all the way to the Cascade River aid station (81.5 mi) before being overtaken by Robert Stavig and then Wrolstad. These two had each gotten lost on a ridgetop where some ribbons had been removed by campers, but they both recovered after running about a mile extra. Stavig went on to finish strongly and earn the only silver buckle of the year. Wrolstad was left to battle it out with Roland Martin for second; he won that position with a strong finish, but missed silver by less than two minutes.

Remarkably, Stavig won the race with neither pacer nor crew. He had placed six drop bags, and apparently he put the right things in each. His training was light: about 50 miles a week with one 40- and two 30-mile runs in the weeks prior to the race. Earlier this year he finished fourth at Old Dominion.

There were several women from several states entered, but when the fog settled only one state was represented. The three women finishers, Susan Gimbel, Nancy March, and Suzi Thibeault were all from California. Gimbel went off-route once or twice and took more than a few spills, but she held together well for a clear victory

among the women. The Superior Trail is much tougher to run on than California trails, but evidently experience over the distance counts more, perhaps even a lot more, than experience with rocky trails. For example, this was Suzi T's 15th 100-miler without a DNF.

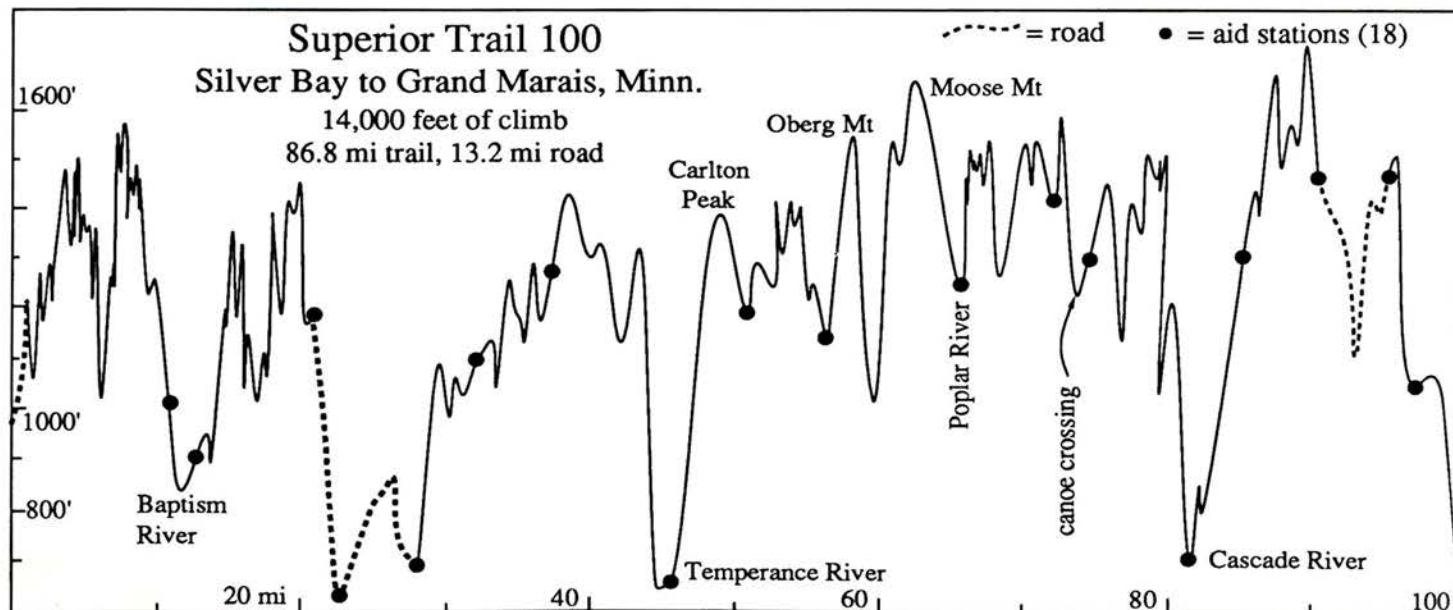
This was my first trail 100, so I found myself asking my trail companions several questions early on. Chief among them were:

- Is it possible to run for 24 hours in soaking wet shoes and socks and not get blisters?
- Is it possible to pace oneself so that one feels fresh after having run 70 miles or so?

The experienced runners assured me that the answers to both questions were yes. I had my doubts, but continued to slog on optimistically. By race's end I believed that affirmative answers were correct, even though I failed to prove it. Blisters did develop, but they were not severe. And although I felt reasonably fresh after 50 miles, I could not say the same after 70.

I had trained hard and wanted desperately to finish. Since four mph for 50 miles followed by three mph for the second 50 brings one home in 29:10, that seemed like a good plan. In part because of the eight miles of road in the first 50, the four-mph part seemed quite easy (50 mi in 12:20); the rest of the plan was harder, but feasible. One big advantage for me was that I had run miles 50-90 during a summer weekend. Being familiar with the second half of a trail ultra is a real plus. By knowing where the hard sections were, I wasn't surprised by them and could pace myself accordingly.

My training program was perhaps a little unusual. I spent August in Colorado and hiked/ran for several hours a day on mountain trails. Because I have always been weak on the uphill, I concentrated on those, climbing over 90,000 feet in 30 days. It seemed to work. In retrospect, the only thing I would change was the type of walking I



did. Although I walked lots during the month, the type of walking I was doing is different than the sort that gets done in an ultra. One walks more aggressively in an ultra than when on a hike, and it should be practiced. Otherwise the 50 or 60 miles of fast walking can cause problems. At least, I think that was the reason for a tendon problem behind one knee that made the last 15 miles pretty miserable whether I walked or jogged.

This was a first-time race, so attention was naturally focused on questions such as: Was the time limit reasonable? Is the course well marked? Are the aid stations adequately spaced and stocked? How's the crew access? In almost all details the organizers performed well: the aid stations were well stocked and there were plenty of them. The course was well marked with ribbons and glow sticks. The field was small, which made crew access easy at the many road crossings. And the awards ceremony was done with style, brevity, and excellent food, much appreciated by those who had finished only a few hours earlier.

The organizers are serious about turning this into one of the country's fine trail 100s, and I encourage anyone not afraid of rugged trail to give it a try next year. The time limit will probably be increased (from 30 to 34 hours), but the course will also be a little harder. How fortunate we in the U.S. are to have both the trails and the dedicated

organizers necessary to put on so many first-rate 100-milers.

Superior Trail 100 Mile Endurance Run

Silver Bay to Grand Marais, Minnesota
Sept. 14, 1991
14,000' climb; 13 mi on road, rest on trail

1. Bob Stavig,42	23:08:57
2. Dave Wrolstad,32,ND	24:01:38
3. Roland Martin,42, NV	24:30:34
4. Michael Crofton,41	24:57:58
5. Brian Patterson,32	25:41:12
6. Jeff Hagen,41,CA	26:24:59
Tom Knutson,41	26:24:59
8. Susan Gimbel,44,CA	26:49:49
9. Roland Ring-Jarvi,41	27:43:15
10. Thomas Andrew,48	27:43:19
11. Richard Letourneau,43	27:54:26
12. Jeff Goldstein,34	27:55:23
13. Tim Brown,52	27:58:19
14. Dan Doty,38	28:22:15
15. Grant Christopher,40	28:41:30
Kevin O'Grady,32,OH	28:41:30
17. Roger Dupey,40	28:45:04
18. Stan Wagon,40	29:04:30
19. Edwin Korkia,53	29:09:29
20. Christopher Nybo,28	29:20:03
21. Eugene Curnow,47	29:23:31
Bill Curnow,26	29:23:31
23. Daniel Whittemore,39,NH	29:23:57
Nancy March,44,CA	29:23:57
25. Suzi Thibeault,44,CA	29:28:59
26. Dick West,50,MI	29:29:10

27. Tom Glaeser,36,WI
47 starters

29:31:32

The inaugural Superior Trail 100 Mile was very successful in that it allowed 47 starters the opportunity to run through rain-drenched, rocky, root-strewn, muddy terrain, with steep climbs, steep descents and — yes, even cross a beaver pond in a canoe! Of those 47, 27 made the 30-hour cut-off, with one under 24 hours — a better than 50 percent completion ratio.

It was further successful in that all aid station volunteers and medical personnel were well coached and very gracious, and they did an outstanding job of taking care of the wet, mud-splattered, weary runners, both during the heavy daytime rain and the foggy night. They deserve a hearty thanks.

So why was this inaugural 100-mile so successful in spite of heavy rain, fog, and extremely slippery trails? Simply because it was conceived, planned, orchestrated, and directed by experienced and accomplished 100-mile ultrarunners who went over every inch of the course to provide for the safety and well-being of the runners. A heart-felt thanks to all for a job well done. What a course!

Edwin O. Korkia
Tom Andrews
Eugene Curnow
Roger Dupey
Bob Stavig

Send
Check
To:

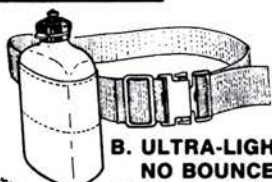
Angeles Pack Co.

370 West Colorado St., Arcadia, CA 91007
(818) 447-0584



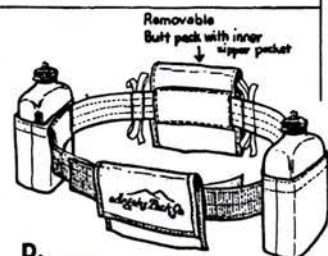
A. STANDARD PACK

- 2 - 21 oz. Bike Bottles
- 7 1/2" X 5" X 3" Backpack
- Velcro Fasteners. Padded Back
- Inner Zipper Pocket



B. ULTRA-LIGHT NO BOUNCE BOTTLE/PACK

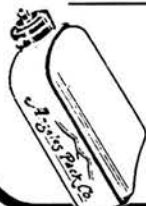
- Pack Doesn't Bounce.
- Wedges Tight On Hip.
- 2" Web & Quick Release Buckle.



D. RACE PACK WITH REMOVABLE BUTT PACK



- ### E. STANDARD RACE PACK
- 2-21 oz. Run Bottle, Pack & Candy Pack
 - 7 1/2" x 5" x 3" Back Pack with Padded Back
 - Inner Zipper Pocket
 - Velcro Fasteners



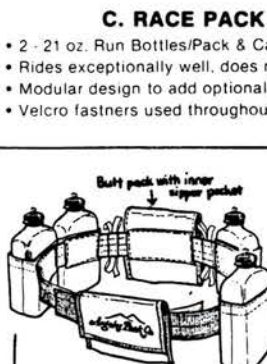
G. HAND HELD RUN BOTTLE



H. HAND HELD BIKE BOTTLE



I. HAND HELD BIKE BOTTLE WITH SLEEVE



F. FULL RACE PACK

- 4 Run Bottle Pack
- 1 Candy Pack
- 1 Butt Pack



21 oz. NO BOUNCE RUN BOTTLE

- Fits Hand or Hip
- Does Not Leak
- Bike Bottle Cap

K. FOR YOUR HEALTH

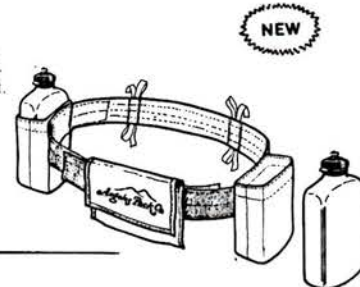
Km is a liquid blend of 14 different plants each rich in vital nutrients: vitamins, minerals and essential trace elements.

It Works!

- Angeles Crest 100 Mile Endurance Run Sponsor
- Retailers welcome
- **PACK CONSTRUCTION:** • Constructed from waterproof 1000 denier, Cordura nylon • Sewn with tough bonded polyester thread • Reinforced at seams with box stitching at stress points • Zippers are self healing nylon coil YKK • High density, open cell, moisture resistance foam used in padded back
- **HAND-HELD BOTTLE CONSTRUCTION:** • 1/4" double-sided neoprene with Velcro adjustment
- **SLEEVE CONSTRUCTION:** • 1000 denier Cordura nylon.

C. RACE PACK

- 2 - 21 oz. Run Bottles/Pack & Candy Pack
- Rides exceptionally well, does not bounce.
- Modular design to add optional equipment.
- Velcro fasteners used throughout.



ITEM	Price	Qty
A. STANDARD PACK	45.00	
Additional Bottles:		
21 oz. Bike Bottle	4.00	
28 oz. Bike Bottle	5.00	
B. ULTRA LIGHT NO BOUNCE BOTTLE/PACK	17.00	
C. RACE PACK	42.00	
Additional Equipment:		
21 oz. No Bounce Run Bottle	5.00	
Candy Pack	8.00	
Large Candy Pack, 50%		
Larger (Not Shown)	11.00	
No Bounce Run Bottle/Pack	13.00	
Removable Butt Pack	13.00	
D. RACE PACK with REMOVABLE BUTT PACK	50.00	
E. STANDARD RACE PACK	55.00	
F. FULL RACE PACK	70.00	
G. HAND HELD RUN BOTTLE	9.00	
H. HAND HELD BIKE BOTTLE	8.00	
I. HAND HELD BIKE BOTTLE WITH SLEEVE	11.00	
K. Km 32 oz. BOTTLE no tax	36.00	
Calif. residents 8 1/4% sales tax		
Postage & Handling	3.00	
TOTAL		