

ZUMBRO 100 MILE ENDURANCE RUN



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Epic Weather Yields - Runners Shine

Story by Zach and Jen Pierce

Photos by Zach Pierce, Jason Husveth, Scott Mark, Cheri Storkamp & John Storkamp

The third edition of the Zumbro 100 Mile Endurance Run brought with it none of the epic weather that has plagued southern Minnesota over the past year. As runners gathered at the start area of the Zumbro River Bottoms State Wildlife Management Area on the Zumbro River, they were greeted by crisp morning air, a beautiful sunrise, and lots of friends. There wasn't a cloud in the sky.

The Zumbro river valley, which extends across southeastern Minnesota, was the site of unprecedented rains which resulted in a devastating flood last fall - decimating the small nearby town of Zumbro Falls. This picturesque town is home of the outgoing race director and local trail racing godfather, Larry Pederson, and his wife, Colleen. Their home and numerous outbuildings on their property were severely damaged by the flooding, as well as their neighbors, the Eversmans, who are fixtures at the Zumbro 100 and Superior 100 race aid stations. There was a huge, heartfelt outpouring of support from the running community on several weekends to help clean up the giant mess, repair buildings, and clean and salvage Larry's gigantic collection of woodworking materials which he annually uses to hand-craft the finest finisher's awards anywhere. Additionally, there was a benefit run held last fall at local running hotspot Afton State Park to help defray the costs associated with the flood.

In addition to last year's flooding, this winter brought epic snowfall totals across Minnesota. There was real concern that the trails (which normally would be snow-free and dry by this time) could be a mess of snow and mud for this early season race. A group of volunteers camped out the weekend before the race to gather firewood, begin race preparations, and get in some trail running. They reported miles of mud and snow - some snow was still quite deep. Conditions weren't looking promising for the race but the two days leading up to the race brought an incredible change in the conditions. Moderately warm, dry weather melted the majority of the remaining snow and dried up the trail. The volunteers that marked the trail reported lots of mud and snow, but by race morning, there was very little that wasn't avoidable on the trail.

The Zumbro 100 was born out of an annual underground spring "fat-ass" run, that for years was organized by outgoing race director Larry Pederson. Larry, with help from wife Colleen, has also directed the In Yan Teopa 10 Mile Trail Race and one of the original trail 100's in the United States, the Superior 100. Larry also founded the local trail running group Upper Midwest Trail Runners (www.umtr.net) and was its president until stepping down to vice-president this year. With this very full volunteer schedule, Larry used to swear he'd keep the Zumbro "fat-ass" informal and not turn it into a race, but eventually the temptation to showcase the incredible beauty of his home turf got the better of him and the Zumbro 100 was born in 2009. This year Larry announced that he'd be handing the leadership of the Zumbro 100 and the Superior 100, 50 and 26.2 mile races to faithful Superior 100 volunteer and friend John Storkamp, an accomplished local ultra-runner who, with the help of his wife Cheri, also directs the popular Afton Trail Run 50K and 25K Races.

Zumbro has drawn a small but growing group of hearty runners over the past few years who appreciate its many challenges. This year's starting field of 25 runners included entrants from 5 states. The terrain enticing the runners to toe the line is rugged single track that sees as much

horse use (during the summer months) as it does foot traffic, making for sometimes difficult footing. There are many steep hills as the trail continuously goes up and down the walls of several deep valleys within the management area. These hills experience erosion from horse traffic and are covered by many loose softball size rocks and leftover fall leaves. The bottoms of the hills and valleys are often covered in beach-like sand that makes for slow going and problems for runners' feet. This was exacerbated greatly this year by the flooding which dumped truckloads of sand in many areas, turning seemingly random places in the woods into long, surreal beaches. Lastly, this race is challenging due to the time of year. Especially for local runners, this means peak training during the coldest and snowiest months of winter.

This year's race was once again the kickoff to UMTR's Gnarly Bandit Ultra Race Series. This series challenges participants to complete five 100km to 100 mile races over the season. This year's series has grown in part due to new sponsorship by Wilderness Athlete which has brought a pot of prize money to be split amongst the finishers. Two time Gnarly Bandit finisher Daryl Saari, as well as several other series hopefuls were on hand to kick off the series at Zumbro.

The Zumbro 100 brings out a disproportionately large number of volunteers to supporters. Being the first race of the spring season in the area, many local runners suffering from cabin fever come out to volunteer, cheer, pace, or just get out for a loop of the 20 mile course. This gives the event a very warm family-reunion-like feel. This year's race brought out a remarkable two to one ratio of volunteers to runners. Every runner got personal attention at each of the five aid station stops throughout the loop. Runners were also treated to many great homemade foods at aid stations run by veteran aid station volunteers such as Maria Barton, Jennifer Pierce, Heidi Pederson, and the Eversman family. Many volunteers have staked out regular positions and enjoy coming back year after year.

This race has a special place in my heart as the inaugural running of this race in 2009 was also my first 100 mile race and finish. A surprising number of runners over the history of this race have attempted this as their first hundred mile race. Many, like me, have viewed the race as an early season opportunity to make a first attempt at the distance, with plenty of time in the year for subsequent attempts. A surprisingly large percentage of those people pull it off in their first attempt. I attribute this phenomenon to the large amount of support this race receives from the local running community and highly recommend that people considering the race in future years put their doubts behind them and take the plunge.

With floods and snow out of the equation, the running was top notch and there was no shortage of notable performances. Course records were set in both men's and women's categories. In the men's race, Adam Schwartz-Lowe avenged last year's DNF by taking the lead mid-way through the first loop and never giving it up. As the race progressed, Adam opened a larger and larger lead over the competition. During the fourth loop, when we mistakenly thought second place might have made up some time, Adam dropped the hammer and just about lost his pacer, namely me. Adam made very short work of aid station stops and was still flying down the hills this late in the race. Aided by what can only be described as the running shoe industry's backlash against the minimalism trend, Adam seemed un-phased by the rocky descents in his thick soled Hoka's. After wearing me out as his first pacer, he nearly wore out his second pacer Chris Koch on the final loop. Adam finished in 21:53, besting incoming race director John Storkamp's previous year's course record by nearly 90 minutes. Second place was taken by Matt Aro in 23:03, who ran a strong and steady race and also came in under last year's course record. Third place was taken

by the talented Shane Peltonen in an impressive 23:27, after he was able to recover from several bonus miles added by missing a turn early in the first loop.

The women's field was shallow in numbers but deep in talent. Three time finisher from Tennessee, Susan Donnelly, ran her (Zumbro) personal best. Susan came in first woman and fourth overall, while setting an impressive course record of 26:13:36. This improved upon her previous time on the same course by nearly four hours. Although Susan is from Tennessee, she is considered an honorary local. She participates in many of our events, and last year was awarded special recognition for finishing her tenth Superior 100 mile race, an incredible achievement. Second place was taken by Zumbro newcomer Kathy Jambor in a time of 30:14. Despite sustaining an impressive gash on her knee (which post-race required a quick ER visit) third place was taken by prolific local runner Lynn Saari in 31:43. Lynn is also a three time finisher at Zumbro who lives in the nearby Rochester area and is a fixture at most Midwest races.

Other notable performances included newcomer Matthew "The Project" Schafer finishing Zumbro as his 2nd ever race (his first being a small local half-marathon). Midwest ultra-running fixture John Taylor finished his 30th 100 mile race while Susan Donnelly completed her 44th 100. While everyone was in awe of the new course-records along with other incredible performances, milestones and achievements - upon crossing the finish line, the ever positive and humble Rob Apple was asked how many ultras this Zumbro finish made for him and we were floored when he stated a whopping 587 ultras with 49 of them being 100's!

The Zumbro 100 Mile Endurance Run may not be a large race yet, but it's a truly great experience for those looking for an early season event. The energy, support, race direction, and location are all first class. This race has become a must-do event for numerous runners that have been hooked by its beauty, ruggedness, and charm. Zumbro is an amazing place to witness the epic forces of Mother Nature and to see the indomitable spirit of the ultrarunner shine.

11. Curtis Eppley, 44
12. Bryce Astill, 29
13. Cory Johnson, 46
14. Phillip Graham, 47
15. Carter Williams, 53
16. Phil Lowry, 44
17. Ashley White, 30
18. Kendall Wimmer, 46
19. Brian Hamos, 47
20. Mark Colby, 42
21. Christina Bauer, 31, AZ
22. Justin Nelson, 34
23. Matt Connors, 33
24. Shaun Christian, 38
25. Tom Remkes, 49
26. Derek Ward, 38
27. Chad Carson, 51
28. Clark Hirschi, 47
29. David Nielsen, 39
30. Kirk Denning, 46
31. Amy Lim, 29
32. Molly Gross, 29
33. Daniel Widerburg, 37
34. Trevor Jones, 24
35. Davy Crockett, 52
36. Brian Harward, 37
37. Joe Martel, 52
38. Robbie Asbell, 36
39. Sarah Evans, 38
40. Keith Barton, 54
41. Jennifer Jurynec, 34
42. Craig Green, 37
43. Brett Andersen, 36
44. Roger Adams, 50
45. Betsy Johnson, 35
46. Andrew Cooper, 38
47. Seth Hales, 27
48. Amie Blackham, 32
49. Jeremiah Wassom, 33, CA
50. Mark Heaphy, 48, MT
51. Scott Kunz, 29
52. Cody Haycock, 33
53. Barry Miller, 53
54. Reed Neubert, 46
55. Paul Atkinson, 36
56. Jessica Laroche, 32
57. Stan Sieverts, 37
58. Jill Bohney, 46
59. Jeremy Smith, 32
60. Dan Nielson, 22, ID
61. Bryan Bozung, 23
62. Jeffrey Holdaway, 52, VA
63. Colby Allen, 36
64. Daniel Ihnat, 45
65. Dan Haesloop, 51, WA
66. John Wallin, 50
67. David Turok, 44
68. Ian Farris, 29
69. Darrell Phippen, 33
70. Mori Hannemann, 45, NV
71. Marc Sanderson, 40
72. Rodger Smith, 40
73. Steve Kirkland, 47
74. Heidi Bennett, 34
75. Sue Lee, 43
76. Todd Cook, 42
77. John Sieverts, 52
78. Ryan Lauck, 30
79. Andrea Martinez, 32
80. Rachel Adams, 35
81. Chris Christian, 35
82. Jacob Ku, 36
83. Jim Milar, 48
84. Carl Tippetts, 58
85. Matt Pulsipher, 46
86. David Rose, 38
87. Raymond Overson, 38
88. Eric Vogel, 50
89. Paul Killpack, 42
90. Holly Trapp, 40
91. Brent Bell, 54
92. Matthew Baird, 37
93. Jason Wassom, 31
94. Michael Hunter, 42
95. Caleb Manscill, 28
96. Angela Hanks, 39
97. Gina Ovard, 45
98. Christian Froerer, 42
99. Dale Fleckenstein, 47, NC
100. Bob Adler, 55
101. Deanna Morley, 44
102. Bronson Kelly, 39
103. Traci Wimmer, 47
104. Brian Tavoian, 47

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- 11:04:18
- 11:08:40
- 11:10:02
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- 14:01:50
- 14:02:47
- 14:05:35
- 14:07:54

105. Tony Christensen, 47
106. Vince Romney, 47
107. Terry Foust, 48
108. Robert Jones, 52, ID
109. Jeremy Cummings, 35
110. Clyde Weller, 47, CO
111. Kacey Lish, 40
112. Martin Yablonovsky, 39
113. Blaine Nelson, 42
114. Phil Trapp, 43
115. Jeff Stowell, 49
116. Mudnguts Miller, 59
117. Gene Griffiths, 47, WA
118. Bonnie Mason, 43
119. Lori Pratt Smith, 57
120. Matthew Bero, 36
121. Karen Helfrich, 44
122. Adam Rogers, 40
123. Randall Davis, 47
124. Michael Cummings, 62
125. Devin Gardiner, 33, CO
126. Steve Westlund, 60
127. Shay Johansen, 56
128. Jason Marschner, 34, MI
129. Troy Robertson, 46
130. Scott Buchanan, 35
131. Shawna McKenna, 47, AZ
132. Allie Wood, 50, MT
133. Colleen Ford, 49
134. Carol Maack, 45
135. Niels Bigler, 44
136. Colby Manscill, 26
137. Christy Jo McFarland, 36
138. James Bawden, 58
139. Donovan Sarka, 52, AZ
140. Moira Kryger, 38
141. Jed Jorgenson, 36
142. Zeth Turner, 34
143. Thomas Thiede, 46
144. Gregory Stevens, 49
145. Kara Barney, 23
146. Quintin Barney, 51
147. Stephen Jones, 45
148. Nathan Broadbent, 35
149. Jesse Manscill, 24
150. Joshua Floyd, 34
151. Ernie Floyd, 56
152. Brian Rush, 53
153. Julie Dolan, 44
154. Rick Gates, 54
155. Brent Rutledge, 54
156. Matt Carter, 37
157. Mike Fitzsimmons, 42
158. Kevin Pinder, 47
159. Adriane Frehner, 36
160. Turdl Miller, 42
161. Karen Warner, 40
162. John Byrge, 44
163. Andrew Barney, 38
164. Matthew Christensen, 47
165. George Sunderland, 55
166. Ben Treasure, 27, VA
167. Michael Hilmer, 42, CA
168. Eric Eide, 48
169. James McGregor, 68
170. Elise Harrington, 55, CO
171. Carolyn Lockett, 44
172. Ed Green, 61, CO
173. Stan Ricks, 55
174. Phil Mendoza, 53
175. Dawn Bentley, 42
176. Margaret Heaphy, 55, MT
177. Celeste Collman, 57
178. Amy Perez, 34
179. Dave Loveland, 49
180. Vicky Anderl, 49
181. Jamie Remkes, 50
182. Ron Remkes, 54
183. Gary Wood, 71
184. Ryan Mangrum, 37, CO
185. Thomas Shreeve, Jr, 46
186. Grant Holdaway, 80
187. Wendy Holdaway, 55, MEX
188. Ben Nielson, 24, ID
189. Dorrell Henderson, 63

THUNDERBOLT CREEK 50K HELENA, MONTANA JULY 2 | ▲ 2,2

1. Donald Demetriades 4:48:19
2. Justin Klebe, 38 5:05:53
3. Spencer Plumb, 29, AZ 5:14:25

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4. Jenny Pierce, 28
5. Chris Mottola, 22, FL
6. Mike Agamenoni
7. Ian Farris
8. Erin Clark, 34, UT
9. Scott Blum
10. Virginia Kosman
11. Brenna Boyd
12. David Hirschfeld, 46
13. John Dayton, 40
14. Toni Broadbent

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- 5:40:41
- 6:02:53
- 6:21:23
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- 7:45:48
- 7:54:19

TO BONE AND BACK 40 MILES | IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO JUNE 25 | ▲ 2,1

1. Chad Coon 5:53:23
2. William Mandler 6:09:53
3. Jason Jones 6:41:42
4. Dave Wright 6:58:08
5. David Tarkalson 7:06:55
6. Stephen Hansen 7:38:34
7. Terri Angell 7:47:46
8. Ace Jenks 7:58:13
9. Jared Jenks 7:58:13
10. Jennifer Saunders 8:12:16

ULTRAMARATHON PRE DETI 50K | BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA JUNE 25 | ▲ 1,2

1. Sean Kennedy 4:50:50
2. Tim Waz 4:53:32
3. Giancarlo Rodriguez 5:30:11
4. David Stoppenhagen 5:32:50
5. Marie-Ange Smith 5:32:54
- Ling Dao 5:32:54
- Eddie Demasi 5:32:54
8. James Thomas 5:45:31
9. Chad Cooper 6:05:35

YANKEE SPRINGS TRAIL RUN 50 MILES | MIDDLEVILLE, MICHIGAN JUNE 4 | ▲ 3,3

1. Marc Melville, 37 8:15:13
2. Ben Vanhoose, 29 8:29:40
3. Eric Blackwell, 39 9:34:35
4. Laura Waldo, 47 10:19:50
5. William Leuter, 48, IL 11:40:53
6. Marit Janse, 50 13:10:26
7. Bill Sparling, 60 13:10:27
8. Brian Steinberg, 32 13:17:27

ZUMBRU 100 MILES | WABASHA, MINNESOTA APRIL 8 | ▲ 4,4

1. Adam Schwartz-Lowe, 38 21:53:05
2. Matthew Aro, 26 23:03:32
3. Shane Peltonen, 37, WI 23:27:40
4. Susan Donnelly, 48, TN 26:13:36
5. Ruben Anderson, 30, WI 28:59:01
6. Jordan Hanlon, 27 29:34:36
7. Rob Apple, 49, TN 29:53:21
8. Daryl Saari, 48 30:07:35
9. Kathleen Jambor, 45 30:14:43
10. Bob Murphy, 52, NE 30:15:28
11. Vince Gerber, 55, CO 30:17:14
12. John Taylor, 50 30:21:53
13. Lynn Saari, 42 31:43:37
14. Erik Dalgaard, 44 32:06:22
15. Matthew Schafer, 38 32:32:09
16. Brian Van Beusekom 33:25:45

