

WORLD'S ULTIMATE RUNNING RACES



*500 Races,
101 Countries,
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Gorski Maraton Slovenia

Mountain

The Julian Alps provide the course for this 37.5km event with climbs of 2,500m and descents of 2,800m

Starting at a mountain hut on the pass of Petrovo Brdo (803m), the route follows the trails and hunters' paths that pass through the forests and pastures of these stunning limestone alps to the race high point of Čez Suho (1760m) just below the summit of Crna Prst. From there the route descends to the valley at Hudajužna – the lowest point in the race at 361m – before an ascent once again almost to the summit of Porezen (1590m), a gruelling climb of 1,230m in 6.5km. Beyond this second summit, the trail passes over Trtnik pastures to finish at Podbrdo (520m).

In 2011 this event hosted the World Mountain Running Association's Long Distance Challenge.



Competitors take on steep inclines

Statistics

Location

Petrovo Brdo to Podbrdo

Distance

37.5 km/23.3 miles

Ascent

2,500m

Descent

2,800m

Terrain

Good mountain trails

Climate

16 to 22°C

Record (male)

Marko Subic
03:21:52 (2004)

Website

www.gm4o.si/english

Women's Mini Marathon Ireland

Road

The biggest running event of its kind for women in the world, with over 750,000 participants since it began

The emphasis in the Women's Mini Marathon is on completion rather than performance. Participants run without pressure and are simply asked to get fit enough to complete the 10km. Runners, walkers and joggers are all welcome to take part.

The Women's Mini Marathon is one of the first races of its kind in the world and has spawned a series of similar events across the world: London, Glasgow and Oslo are among the cities that now stage their own all-women's races.

When the event began in 1983, it was virtually unknown for Irish women to train in public in towns and cities; now, hundreds of thousands have taken part, and raised more than €1,300,000 for charity. In fact,



the race is Ireland's biggest single-day charity fundraiser and women from all walks of life take part. (Coincidentally, the race's inaugural year of 1983 also brought the staging of the first-ever Women's World Marathon Championship.)

The race starts in Fitzwilliam Square and heads southeast along Leeson Street to Stillorgan Road before the turn along Nutley Lane to join the Merrion Road, taking runners back into the city centre and the finish at St Stephen's Green. Although the field is primarily domestic, the course attracts the elite: Ireland's great distance runners Sonia O'Sullivan and Catherina McKiernan have won here three and four times respectively.



Thousands of female runners compete annually

Statistics

Location

Dublin

Distance

10 km/6.2 miles

Terrain

Tarmac

Climate

12 to 18°C

Record

Sonia O'Sullivan
00:31:28 (2000)

Competitors

40,000

First run

1983

Website

www.womensmini-marathon.ie

Knee Knacking North Shore Trail Run Canada

Ultra-trail

The rain forest of the Pacific Northwest is the setting for this ultra, run over trails, roads, rocks and roots

The route follows the Baden-Powell Centennial Trail from Horseshoe Bay to Deep Cove, along the edge of the mountains that surround Vancouver's North Shore. With a climb to 4,000ft at Black Mountain, there are spectacular views along the route. The trail is very technical in some sections.

After the high point, a descent of 7.5 miles on technical ground, and with some small



ascents, to join the cross-country ski trails that skirt the city. The course joins road at the Cleveland Dam, from where it climbs again along a contour following tracks above Vancouver.

With the amount of technical descent, especially through the trees and over roots, some runners may find this race is well named.



Raised roots of Baden-Powell Centennial Trail

Statistics

Location

Horseshoe Bay to Deep Cove, British Columbia

Distance

48.3 km/30 miles

Terrain

Forest trail, rocks and road

Record (male)

Aaron Heidt
04:39:52 (2009)

Record (female)

Suzanne Evans
05:18:57 (2006)

Website

www.kneeknacker.com

Grintovec Mountain Race Slovenia

Mountain

One of the steepest races in the calendar of the World Mountain Running Association

Runners start at an elevation of 600m at the hamlet of Kamniška Bistrica which lies below the Kamnik-Savinja Alps. Grintovec is the highest mountain in this range, at 2,558m.

The course heads uphill along a steep dirt trail, first by a gorge then on stabilised scree to Korsko Saddle. Runners are then in spectacular, unspoilt alpine terrain, running



on grass, dirt and rock before the long, final ascent across a high scree field to the top of Grintovec.

This race has appeared in the World Mountain Running Association Grand Prix series. New Zealand champion Jonathan Wyatt is the course record holder with his time of 1:15:43, set in 2007.



Grintovec

Statistics

Location

Kamniška Bistrica, Kamnik

Distance

9.6 km/5.6 miles

Ascent

1,970m

Terrain

Rough technical mountain trails

Climate

12 to 26°C

Record (male)

Jonathan Wyatt
01:15:43 (2007)

Record (female)

Anna Pichrtova
01:31:17 (2007)

Competitors

300

First run

1998

Website

www.kgtpapez.com

Delhi Half Marathon

India

The elite race that draws in the world's top professional runners with a \$25,000 first prize

The course starts at Nehru Stadium and is fast and fast, with winners of the men's race tending to finish in less than an hour. The race for non-elite runners is the event's 6km Great Delhi Run. There is also a 4km senior citizens' run and a 2.5km wheelchair race. As part of the fun side of the event, organisers arrange a run-in-costume competition.

The event's sporting celebrities have included Australian former cricket captain Ian Border, American heptathlete Jackie



Joyner-Kersey and Australian sprinter Cathy Freeman.



Nehru Stadium

Statistics

Location

Delhi

Distance

21.1 km/13.1 miles

Terrain

Tarmac

Climate

18 to 28°C

Record (male)

Deriba Merga
00:59:15 (2008)

Record (female)

Mary Keitany
01:06:54 (2009)

Competitors

30,000

Website

www.procammrunning.in

The International Smarna

Gora Race Slovenia

Mountain

The International Smarna Gora is Slovenia's oldest mountain race

Smarna Gora mountain outside Slovenia's capital Ljubljana is the venue for this race which starts at the base of the hill and finishes on the summit.

The course through pretty countryside is fast and changes constantly: there are two significant climbs in the 710m ascent but a longer descent of 350m, is tough. Some sections are technical and the narrow trails through the woods can be steep and rough.

The top mountain runners regularly



compete here, including Jonathan Wyatt, Marco De Gasperi, Mitja Kosovelj, Andrea Mayr and Anna Pichrtová.

The event has hosted the World Mountain Running Association's Grand Prix final since 2002.

Statistics

Location

Ljubljana

Distance

10 km/6.2 miles

Ascent

710m

Descent

350m

Terrain

Woodland trails and rock

Climate

11 to 16°C

Record (male)

Jonathan Wyatt
00:38:14 (2002)

Record (female)

Andrea Mayr
00:46:24 (2009)

Website

www.smarnagora.com

Grand Canyon Ultra

USA

Ultra-trail

The Grand Canyon's untamed and isolated North Rim is the venue for this tough ultra marathon race

Competitors in this new Grand Canyon race are self-sufficient and carry their own food, water and mandatory gear, with water stations available and medical support along the route. The race runs along the North Rim trail that crosses some of the higher plateaus, confronting runners with steep climbs up the canyon's five-million-year-old rock layers.

The route follows trails through the Sabab National Forest bordering the Grand Canyon National Park at an altitude of between 8,000ft and 9,000ft. Scenery along



the route is spectacular, with ponderosa pine and aspen, wide, grassy valleys with streams, all interspersed with hills and ridges. The only road across the plateau stops abruptly at the yawning gulf of the canyon's edge. Ten miles away as the crow flies but over 200 miles by car is the South Rim which can be seen from the route, and beyond that, the San Francisco Peaks, Arizona's highest range.

A marathon run also takes place at the same time as the ultra.

Statistics

Location

North Rim, Northern Arizona

Distance

125.5 km/78 miles

Terrain

Trails, rocks and mud

Climate

8 to 29°C

Competitors

50

First run

2010

Website

www.acrossthedivide.com



Grand Canyon