

Cross Country Runners Pass Through Joplin

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Reported by: Allison Croghan, ACroghan@KSN16.tv



JOPLIN, MO -- "Incredible, we live in Europe, we learned of course, this tragedy, but it's incredible to pass here," a runner said as he passed through the tornado destruction in Joplin.

It's day 39 of a 70 day race that started in LA and will finish in New York next month. Fifteen runners from six nations are competing.

After staying overnight in Miami, the group set out Tuesday morning for Carthage.

Laure Magnan is the LA-NY Footrace organizer. "Everybody on the race is really disturbed to cross Joplin today and to see what has happened for the population of your city," Magnan said.

The group averages 45 miles a day. Many runners prepare for years to get ready for the hike across America.

Italo Orru is from Italy.

"I found this race two years ago, so I've been training," Orru said, "and I think that it is very very beautiful."

The runners must maintain a pace of 3.5 miles per hour to stay in the competition.

"I'm sure that they will really enjoy it, even if it's so crazy, and so hard, and so hot," Magnan said of the race. "They really enjoy to cross this continent in running."

Organizers say the runners were so upset by what they saw in Joplin, they decided to make a monetary donation to the local school district.

"In Europe we talk about this tornado, and we saw a few pictures on the television," Magnan said. "It's not the same thing when you are at the place."

Besides the destruction in Joplin, runners say they love seeing what America is really like.

"I make pictures," Orru said, "I am a photographer and I like to see all of the typical of the country."

The group will stop in Carthage Wednesday night and resume the race at 5 a.m.

Their next stop is Springfield and they should be in New York by August 27th.

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