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LM to 1. Stage

Huntington Beach to Norco / 19.06.2011

73.5 km / 73.5 km complete

45.7 mi / 45.7 mi complete

14 Participants at the start / 14 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:52:06
2.	03	Gérard Bavato		8:06:02
3.	09	Yoshiaki Bando		8:12:46

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:52:06
2.	03	Gérard Bavato		8:06:02
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Show completed list

Sunday, June 19**Grey and Blue**

Dave Warady, winner of the Trans-America 1992 was the starter this morning of the 9th edition of a race by stage across the United States of America. 16 starters left the bracing air of Pacific Coast Highway at a fast pace.

American avenues are known for their length and straightness and so it was that the first turn took place just under 7 km (4.5 miles) and the second at almost 17km (10.5 miles).

The second part of the stage was run on a cycle path along Interstate 91, which threaded its way through a canyon. The organizing team was a bit stressed on departure day and I can imagine that it was the same for the runners, who after so much preparation and waiting could finally take up this huge challenge. The lead is quickly taken by Rainer, a champion and winner of such prestigious races as the Transe Gaule, the Trans Europe and the Deutschland Lauf.

He finishes ahead of Gérard Bavato and Bando Yoshiaki. It is difficult to describe everything and everyone in one day and one stage.

In any case, everybody arrived safely under the 13 hour time limit.

Markus and James started a bit too fast and had to slow down on the second part of the race, especially since the gray sky and cool air gave way to blue sky and blazing sun.

Otherwise, everyone seemed to find their own rhythm, at least for this stage. Philippe finished this first stage in 12H10', as deeply moved as he was tired.

Considerable weight gain last winter, as well as several operations over the past years left him with a certain amount of doubt.

He got himself into shape over the past six months, and set his goal to live a great adventure: to cross the American continent and see New York. We can already hear the call "New York" from « The Voice, » but this race can only be run one day at a time, without thinking what the day after tomorrow, next week or next month will bring. Norco, a horse community, is where the stage ends today.

This small city gives us the feeling that we are far from LA.

Tomorrow, Monday, a tough stage awaits our runners.

All reports of the 1. Stage

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All reports of the 1. Stage

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LM to 2. Stage

Norco to Hesperia / 20.06.2011

78.7 km / 152.2 km complete

48.9 mi / 94.6 mi complete

14 Participants at the start / 13 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:55:47
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:49:00
3.	13	Serge Girard		10:14:36

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		15:47:53
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		18:15:15
3.	13	Serge Girard		18:59:19

[Show completed list](#)

June 20

The Wall

A fearful day which we dreaded At sunrise the sky shows signs that the day will be hot, very hot, in the San Bernardino County of California The runners start at 5:30 after signing the departure list.

There are two difficult points during the day when we take 2 trails: the first at 900 meters is a matter of progression because it means following a river bed which René went ahead to clear, and at Km 64 where it is nice and wide but where the positive ascent is exhausting.

Peter had to carry his faithful friend "the Kick Bike" and Anneke her bike... The beginning of the race is not smooth because we are leaving Los Angeles and all the Interstate highways out of the huge city go our way to head east.

It's not a very pleasant way to start a stage. All the runners start more cautiously than normal.

They know this stage will lead to a 3rd and a 4th day and they must not use all their energy on the 2nd.

My fears vanish. BANDO Yoshiaki and Gérard BAVATO suffered from heat exhaustion, which forced them to reduce their average speed and an error in direction cost Gérard 8 km. We are sorry that Philippe gave up on the first part of Route 66.

There was panic when he lost his way and then became dehydrated and had to stop because of severe cramps.

It wasn't anymore a question of exceeding the time limit but his body just didn't have the energy needed on the

It doesn't anymore a question of exceeding the time limit but the day just didn't have the energy needed on the last 20 km to climb to the pass. In spite of the difficult stage, at the finish the runners are calm and almost smiling with satisfaction at having fought the heat, this mountain and almost all of them enjoyed the portion which resembled a jungle. Tomorrow, Tuesday, we will follow our runners' strides to Barstow. Leader : Rainer KOCH – 3 red lanterns, with the arrival of Mr. KOSHITA, Mr. ISHIHARA and Mr. TANAKA, our three senior runners, who arrive hand in hand with a smile on their lips a few minutes before the time limit: 14 hours today. Thanks go to Rainer for the great photos which are on the website today. Thanks go to David for the departure videos

All reports of the 2. Stage

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LM to 3. Stage

Hesperia to Barstow / 21.06.2011

76.3 km / 228.5 km complete

47.4 mi / 142 mi complete

13 Participants at the start / 13 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:42:32
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:26:40
3.	13	Serge Girard		10:00:00

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		24:30:25
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		27:41:55
3.	13	Serge Girard		28:59:19

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June Tuesday 21

Coming Soon

Coming Soon

All reports of the 3. Stage

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LM to 4. Stage

Barstow to Ludlow / 22.06.2011

81.9 km / 310.4 km complete

50.9 mi / 192.9 mi complete

13 Participants at the start / 10 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		10:31:25
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		11:36:50
3.	01	James Adams		11:42:36

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		35:01:50
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		39:18:45
3.	13	Serge Girard		41:40:16

[Show completed list](#)

June 22nd

King of the road

A convection oven...

Up to 117°F (47°C) in the shade – and on the road add 50°F (10°C); you will be “well done”

The wind is not refreshing; it burns and dries you out.

If you open your oven and put your head in you will feel like you are on old Route 66, which joins Barstow to Ludlow, but without the mountains!

Conditions are so bad that there are 3 withdrawals: Mr. Ishihara after 10 km, then Mr. Tanaka and finally Jenni at KM 42.

Jenni has had trouble eating since the start, especially the quantity and quality (calories).

She didn't eat the pasta that Alexandro offered her this morning during a halt in the shade provided by an abandoned filling station.

Like everyone else, she was wiped out by the heat and lastly, walking caused her pain in the pubic region, a memento of a fatigue fracture she suffered on the Trans-Europe in 2009.

This pain disappears when she runs but in the end the effort required to run has made many runners walk today and for Jenni it is too painful.

Not wanting to put herself at risk, she decides to stop.

But in the evening she decides to join the race the next day, even if it is outside the competition; what is most important is to see New York, even if a few kilometers are lacking.

To live this adventure is a unique experience, which means sacrifices and compromises: professional, financial and personal for all the participants.

So never mind the contest and the ranking.

This race is a personal challenge and the only adversaries are the body and the spirit.

A few stories:

Rainer suffers from the heat and had to slow his pace on the 2nd part of the race, but it's the same for everyone.

On the other hand, on this stage he drank 28 cans of Coke and I wonder how his stomach can put up with some many bubbles?

The majority of the runners have similar problems: nausea and the desire to vomit, which keeps them from eating properly.

Patrick seems to be in his race and at ease; however, at the finish he says that the last 16 km were very tough.

James continues to quietly jog along, always with a smile.

The heat doesn't seem to make much of an impression on him and he takes 3rd place in the ranking of this stage, even having stopped at Bagdad Café to eat French fries, of which he is particularly fond.

Markus was afraid he would not be within the time limit and arrived in 14H49'09, for a cut off time of 15 hours.

His smile of relief wiped away for a few minutes all the fatigue on his face.

Mr. Koshita seems incapable of being in a bad mood or grouchy.

Crossing him on the road he was pouring water over his head from his bottle and told me "it's raining," which set off a burst of communicative laughter.

How can one maintain such humor under such a blanket of heat???

Mr. Bando arrives 5 minutes before the cut off and falls to the ground as soon as he passes the finish line.

Finally, Gérard finishes at night to the applause of the few runners who have the courage to face the suffocating heat which is still present at 9:00 pm.

Gérard, who is first and foremost a competitor walked all day because of tendonitis and he will need to have patience and a strong morale to continue and not give in.

With the agreement of Rainer, the runners' representative, and the organizing team, Géard can continue his race, even if he exceeded the time limit by 20 minutes.

Such an eventful day makes me want to continue to tell stories and more, about what makes this such a great adventure.

I'm going to leave a bit of space tomorrow to talk about our Italian friends: Orru and Alexandro, whom I have not forgotten, even if their names have not appeared much in my comments.

In hardship relationships are being formed...it's the beginning of a fine story

All reports of the 4. Stage

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LM to 5. Stage

Ludlow to Amboy / 23.06.2011

45.5 km / 355.9 km complete

28.3 mi / 221.1 mi complete

10 Participants at the start / 10 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	05	Patrick Malandain		5:31:07
2.	01	James Adams		5:40:13
3.	13	Serge Girard		5:40:13

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		41:15:12
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		44:49:52
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		47:13:06

[Show completed list](#)

June 23

Histoire d'une petite étape

We will stay at the same motel for 2 days.

This motel has 10 rooms which can delight everyone with the blessings of air conditioning.

This is an old fashioned motel, with the cars parked right in front of your door, which is very convenient for all of us who have so much stuff in our vehicles.

Every evening the support crews and the organizers have to empty, clean, manage stocks and put everything in place.

So this morning, to be able to leave luggage in the rooms is a real pleasure.

The only inconvenience is that we will have to drive about 29 miles (46 Km) to come back to sleep and again to reach the starting point tomorrow morning.

The motel at Amboy has not reopened, which is too bad. Even if this is a short stage, it will be no less difficult because in spite of a good night and air conditioning bodies were roughly treated yesterday.

Many runners have intestinal problems.

The support crews have to be close to their runner, who at any time may need to get into a car to cool off.

There is nothing more comforting when you are living in a permanent state of discomfort.

So, you will say, they chose to be there.

Of course you are right but without feeling sorry for them, we have to watch over them like milk on the stove.

Even if you yourself are tired, you always have to give the energy and the support to your runner.

This is more than just the runner's challenge; it is also that of the support crew.

They form an indivisible team and share the success of this modern day conquest of the east.

You are probably wondering why this race is organized during the hottest months, in any case that has been so for the last 6 editions.

It's not because we are masochists and want to make this challenge even more difficult but we have to cross the southern portion of the Rocky Mountains and for example Markus, who lives in Colorado, tells me that snow fell there the first weekend in June.

American TV showed us that the slopes in Vail were open, to the joy of skiers. So snow can be late and runners cannot go through tunnels and run on toll roads; we have to go over passes which might be closed. Mr. Tanaka and Jenni started this morning and finished their day.

So even if they are outside the race, they remain in the race. Patrick is the first runner (after Peter and Anneke, both on their bikes) to cross the finish line.

James and Serge cross the finish at the same time and Rainer, who we were used to seeing first these past 4 days had some problems and paused several times.

He finished the race with Italo Orru. The temperature will continue to rise until Needles... caution runners!

Let's hope that this short stage will enable bodies to revive.

All reports of the 5. Stage

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LM to 6. Stage

Amboy to Fenner / 24.06.2011

64 km / 419.9 km complete

39.8 mi / 260.9 mi complete

10 Participants at the start / 10 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:33:26
2.	08	Italo Orru		7:43:22
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:09:29

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		47:48:38
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		52:59:21
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		55:26:06

[Show completed list](#)

June 24

Nothing change in the Mojave Desert

In the middle of the Mojave Desert our runners move ahead at their own pace. Rainer, after his heat exhaustion of yesterday, found ways to cool off his body during the race: ice in his over sleeves and keeping his head and the nape of his neck wet.

He has again taken control of the race and remains in first place, with a good lead over the second runner, Orru Italo, who after trying to adapt a cadence which was not his own seems to have found his own rhythm.

Finally, Patrick Malandain remains steady and stays cool in spite of the overwhelming heat.

More than anything, his morale is good because not only has he finished among the first 3 since the beginning, but because his wife, Fabienne, supports him with passion every step of the way. Generally speaking, for all the runners the main problem is digestion and nausea.

Solid food no longer goes down but in spite of this solutions have to be found for feeding and to accumulate energy.

It's a mystery. The runners are drinking 10 to 15 liters of liquid per day, depending on the length of the stage. Among the support teams, who are living the race from vehicles but also on the road to ensure that everything is OK, liquid consumption reaches 5 to 6 liters per day. Lips are chapped and skin is starting to be tanned for those who aren't covered from head to foot.

Some take breaks, some do not.

The runners at the top of the ranking prefer not to take breaks. Yesterday Alexandro did not feel well due to a sleepless night in his camper because the air conditioning was not working.

He took a ten-minute nap before starting again.

Yesterday he was hungry so ate some pasta during a refueling stop but at the finish he told us that he was having trouble eating a kind of muesli with dried fruit....conclusion: you have to eat what gives you pleasure, even if it's ice cream or a hamburger with French fries.

Everything you eat with appetite and which is not forced on you will go down well. By now you have understood that conditions are extreme and that quite a few of the participants now realize that even though they knew it would be hot, the temperatures in the Mojave Desert are beyond imagination.

For the runners who are outside the race, the organization allows them to run a stage if they wish even though their names do not appear in the ranking of the day or the stage.

Their personal rank appears in the menu "Runners" of the website on their personal page.

That way you can know which stages have been run from beginning to end by Philippe, Jenni, Tanaka or Ishihara.

Today Jenni and Tanaka threw in the sponge at km 39.

Philippe, who has not officially started again walked quite a bit with Gérard and Mr. Ishihara finished the stage in good shape. In the general ranking there is little change: Orru moved up one place to the detriment of Alexandro Bellini and Markus gained a few minutes on Bando, which enables him to be in 8th place.

All reports of the 6. Stage

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LM to 7. Stage

Fenner to Needles / 25.06.2011

64 km / 483.9 km complete

39.8 mi / 300.7 mi complete

10 Participants at the start / 10 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:13:06
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:29:49
3.	08	Italo Orru		7:29:49

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		54:01:44
2.	17	Anneke Kuiper		60:17:09
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		60:29:10

[Show completed list](#)

June 25

Last stage in California and the end of the Mojave Desert

At 5:15 in the morning, as every morning now, it's the time we meet.

Faces are tired, jaws are almost dislocated by yawns, which are as huge as the task: to run across the USA.

It's cool but in less than an hour the sun will be high and beginning to cook the asphalt, shoes and bodies. The Organization team, composed of Ann, René, Bertrand and David has founds its bearings and is now at the top.

The support crews and the runners are also running smoothly... This evening, 10% of this titanic undertaking will be behind us.

It's incredible how fast time flies... and yet on the road times seems to stand still and not want to move for some runners who are at the back of the pack. After going around a mountain and the Interstate at Km 50, US95 merges with the toll road.

Caltrans, the entity that manages the Interstates in California, formally forbade us to take the 6 miles for which, unfortunately, there is no secondary road.

The solution was to do 80 km more in order to skirt Laughlin by the north, but for 9 km we thought this was crazy. A trail exists but it is far from an ideal solution because the support crew vehicles could not accompany their runners for 15 km at the end of the stage and it was risky, especially because the trail was sinuous. Finally,

Sergeant McCallister of the California Highway Patrol in Needles gave us authorization Thursday afternoon. A shadow covered this passage of the toll road when a semitrailer hit the side rail just 400 meters after the entrance to be taken by the runners.

We had to stop Peter and the stop watch while the police and the maintenance crew cleared up the emergency lane.

Just as Rainer arrived, 50 minutes after Peter, the pavement is clear and the first runners take the toll road. Runners and vehicles have to follow some security rules and everything goes well. A runner in big trouble today, Markus, has not been able to eat anything since yesterday morning.

He had a case of diarrhea a good part of the day and even lay down for 20 minutes to try to recuperate.

The day is a long one because he exceeded the time limit by 2H27'. During the meeting, we discussed the time limits and their management.

Every morning the runners leave with a time limit which corresponds to an average time of 5.7km or 3.5 miles per hour.

I increased this time limit a bit because of the extreme weather conditions and to allow certain runners not to put not themselves in the red and endanger their health. However, all the runners who arrived after the cutoff times never asked the question whether they could continue the next day if they exceeded the cutoff time.

Their goal: finish and close their stage no matter what and afterwards we will see.

However, in the case of Markus, who experienced weakness today, I cannot, vis-à-vis the other runners, take the decision this morning to let him leave, if the other runners find it unfair.

Rainer, the runners' representative went around to all the rooms while everyone was getting ready, and the response is unanimous, OK, Markus can continue his race in the ranking. Our theory is that everyone can have a weak moment and perhaps another day a runner will be happy to benefit from this exceptional tolerance.

Naturally, we cannot allow runners to exceed the time limits every day, especially when the days are long like tomorrow.

And we cannot save the same runner every day.

We go on the principle that "Once doesn't make it a habit". On another subject, a theme which I feel I should mention today, feet!!!! Quite a few runners have blisters which are more or less serious, between pain and discomfort they are more or less easy to put up with.

Gérard now has large blisters under the metatarsus and the left tendon is inflamed.

Pain is permanent.

He can no longer put up with the pain while walking... My question: will the morale be next? All I hope is that the runners still in the race will hang in.

Most withdrawals take place in the first 15 days and on this crossing it is without doubt the most difficult portion, due to this overwhelming heat, even if we know that Oklahoma and Missouri will also be very hot. As I told Bando today at the finish line, while he was already talking to me about tomorrow, don't think about that, think about eating and sleeping well to recuperate and tomorrow will be another day.

All reports of the 7. Stage

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LM to 8. Stage

Needles to Kingman / 26.06.2011

82.5 km / 566.4 km complete

51.3 mi / 351.9 mi complete

10 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		9:12:39
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:43:20
3.	13	Serge Girard		11:33:36

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		63:14:23
2.	17	Anneke Kuiper		67:19:51
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		71:12:30

[Show completed list](#)

June 26

As beautiful as it is difficult

There was a full agenda for this morning's 15 minute meeting.

The intensity of these meetings varies depending on events the previous day and the day's stage. With almost 1300 meters of positive ascent over the day, it was another exhausting stage, even if the temperature was somewhat lower.

Our thermometer shows 37°C (98.6°F) in the shade. At km 2.4, mid way across the bridge over the Colorado River we entered the state of Arizona.

river, we entered the state of Arizona.

Then at km 15, the second change of direction lead us into the Black Mountains.

At the foot of this chain there is the small town of Oatman, where the prospectors pitched their tents to search for gold.

When Route 66 came through, the town had a revival in the 30's, even movie stars came to see it and Clark Gable and Carole Lombard spent their honeymoon there in 1939.

When Interstate 40 was built and swallowed up a good part of Route 66 Oatman lost a lot of its "splendor". Oatman is now a ghost town, where tourists throng to the only street and donkeys wander freely among the curious onlookers and cars.

It was today's attraction.

Rainer took the opportunity to eat strawberry ice cream and cameras were everywhere. Leaving the city the road becomes narrow and twisting and there is a steep climb to reach Sitgreaves Pass, where there is a magnificent view.

There is a short descent to the very "boring" Sacramento Valley.

This interminable straight line looks like it will go on forever before we pick up Route 66 again in the direction of Kingman. Arizona is in the same time zone as California so for the moment there is no time change. Today there are two withdrawals: Gérard Bavato at km 17. Blisters and an inflamed tendon prevent him from going on.

Since he fears infection he sees a doctor at the hospital.

Armed with a cortisone salve, he returned to his stopping place, with the intention of starting again; but he knows he will not be within the time limit (the cut off time has already increased by 1 hour, which takes us to 16 hours to run 82.5 km and remain in the race).

Unfortunately, Markus is not fast enough.

His time is more than 17 hours.

Hats off to Dan, his crew, who accompanied him on this very long stage.

Markus has decided to rest for 3 days. We now have 8 out of 14 runners still in the fray, not counting Peter on his kick bike and Anneke on her bike. Now Jenni, Philippe, Ishihara, Tanaka, Gérard and Markus will continue outside the ranking.

Their times on the stages they run will be posted on the website under their bib number.

You can continue to follow their progress, even if they are not in the general ranking. The runners are « wiped out, » the organizers tired, the support crews are also beginning to be extremely tired.

The heat and the wind give you a headache and rob you of your energy.

Even if today's stage was beautiful, as the days pass they begin to dip into our reserves, and yet there is still a long road ahead of us.

Tomorrow we will gain some altitude in the mountains, which we hope will bring us some coolness... The runners are drinking an average of 10 liters of liquid during the hours of the race (Patrick drank 4 liters and Tanaka 20 liters).

It is worth mentioning that Rainer, in order to rehydrate at the finish, after having drunk almost 10 liters of Coke during his 9 hours of race, mixed a can of Budweiser and a can of Coke.

He managed to convince us to try and it seems that it's very good.

Rainer seems to have an iron stomach, like James, who at the finish line ate a MacDo menu with a milkshake. No particular injury to mention, except that Orru is beginning to have a sore levator muscle.

All reports of the 8. Stage

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LM to 9. Stage

Kingman to Truxton / 27.06.2011

68.1 km / 634.5 km complete

42.3 mi / 394.3 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|---|---------|
| 1. | 06 | Rainer Koch |  | 7:35:05 |
| 2. | 05 | Patrick Malandain |  | 8:38:37 |
| 3. | 13 | Serge Girard |  | 8:57:32 |

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|---|----------|
| 1. | 06 | Rainer Koch |  | 70:49:28 |
| 2. | 17 | Anneke Kuiper |  | 77:04:05 |
| 3. | 05 | Patrick Malandain |  | 79:51:07 |

[Show completed list](#)

June 27

On the road again

This morning everyone is ready to leave at the same time.

That was not the case yesterday because Serge had a problem with anti-chaffing cream and a bandage and left 5 minutes late. The time runners lose in the morning counts against them but what is 5 minutes on a 70-day race?

Markus is dressed in « civilian clothes » and comes to applaud the start.

Yesterday when he finished, after 10:30 pm, he told me that he had reached his limit and that he would need a few days to recover from his stomach and intestinal problems.

He will re-join the race in 3 days, like Gérard.

Jenni seems to have recovered and starts this morning. There are 8 of the 14 runners still in the race.

For me it's a massacre and the morale is at half mast!

But this is a particularly difficult race: this evening the average mileage for the day is 70.5 km and we are suffering from killing heat.

At km 42, when I ask Rainer if everything is OK he responds "I'm still alive" (smile!) From the start the ranking among the competing runners becomes apparent: Rainer takes the lead, then Patrick, who started slowly today perks up, then Serge, who has a tendency to keep the same rhythm on the flat as well as on the ups and downs, next comes James, who is having trouble today, then Alexandro.

Places will change along the road and Orru is paying for having been a bit fast yesterday.

The pain in his left levator becomes more difficult to bear.

Bando, who always takes off like a rocket on the first kilometers seems resigned to holding the same rhythm all day, whereas Mr. Koshita brings up the rear with his camera in his hand and always wearing a smile. This evening James is very tired and his right levator muscle is painful.

He hardly touches his food and goes to bed very quickly.

Orru has trouble finishing his stage but as usual tells me "OK" = I'm fine. Alexandro, always with a smile, is pleased with his day.

His stages are very well managed with his crew and everything seems to be going well for him.

His physiotherapist has taped him on the left side to improve drainage. Among the runners who are no longer in the ranking, here is the situation: Jenni seems to be at ease and well; she runs quite a bit with James, who is not far from her.

Mr. Ishihara moves ahead and is in the lead of the Japanese team, in spite of the big stage he ran yesterday.

Mr. Tanaka stops at km 20 and, finally, Philippe has taken to the road again, with a fast start this morning, since he takes second place behind Rainer for the first 3 hours, then he loses a bit of ground, but he runs a very good race. We are now at an altitude of 1400 meters, there is an infernal wind blowing but it doesn't seem to bother the runners, especially because it's favorable on the home stretch Bando finishes less than 4 minutes from the time limit; his suffering is terrible to see. What a relief!

Everyone finishes – Another good day – We are looking forward to the coolness of the mountains.

All reports of the 9. Stage

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LM to 10. Stage

Truxton to Seligman / 28.06.2011

73.9 km / 708.4 km complete

45.9 mi / 440.2 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:05:55
2.	08	Italo Orru		9:01:26
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:12:02

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		78:55:23
2.	17	Anneke Kuiper		86:59:45
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		89:03:09

[Show completed list](#)

June 28

Wind and more wind

This morning at the start the temperature is agreeably cool and we are happy to wear a layer over our T-shirt.

The wind is against us and there are a few clouds in the sky!!!

The small motel in Truxton is rather old fashioned, the air conditioning is erratic but the important thing is to

gain time to recuperate and have a bed and a shower.

It's good, wherever possible, to end a stage where we sleep.

This morning, everyone is hale and hardy, ready for a new day.

I'm joking because the coolness is relative and our runners all look haggard, with bags under their eyes.

Even Mr. Koshita wears a sad expression; he who has always been as fresh as on the first day.

Nights don't seem to be doing him any good.

There isn't the eagerness to reach the starting blocks, like there was at the beginning.

This morning feet are dragging and many take off walking to warm up in the cool morning air.

It's difficult to imagine that Bando will be able to finish his stage or even do 10 km, so laborious is his start-up.

He is suffering from severe muscle pain above the knee.

Like previous days, the wind comes up at the end of the morning and does not let up all day.

It decreases the impression of heat, because at mid-afternoon the thermometer reads 97° to 100°F (36° to 38°C).

We are at an altitude of 1600 meters, on a plateau that is not as flat as it seems, with up and downhills made difficult by a headwind.

The runners are unanimous in saying the wind was very tiring and Patrick even told me that for him it was the most difficult stage.

There are lots of animals for us to see at the roadside: snakes, cows, does, squirrels, rabbits and marmots...

As he has been doing for 3 days, Rainer stops along the way to buy a fruit flavored ice cream and every day he takes hundreds of photos, which you can see on his website, with German and English captions.

Orru ran almost the entire stage in 2nd place, in spite of injured levator muscles.

Patrick continues to be happy to finish

Serge goes at his own rhythm.

He tells me that his legs don't hurt and feels that he has reserves, but he fears injury and measures his effort.

Always smiling at the finish, Alexandro was tired at the end by the up and downhills and the headwind; but everything seems to be going well.

James walked a lot because of the pain in the levator muscles but he is reassured because the severity of pain was not greater at the finish than when he started.

Mr. Koshita passed Bando at the end; he flirted with the time limit all day but Mr. Koshita, a finisher of "Run Across America" in 2002 has a lot of experience and I'm not worried about him.

Bando has a never failing determination and even though he was limping this morning, he told me « 100% I will be at the finished tonight ».

It's true, everyone arrived safely.

Peter is OK, even if this morning his face shows fatigue.

Anneka is once more Jenni's crew and the smile on their faces is a ray of sunshine that is good to see.

Philippe has run two complete, consecutive stages

Mr. Ishihara at the age of 66 finished his 3rd consecutive stage and his « team » told me that he is very good in mountain races.

He likes a climb.

Lastly, Mr. Tanaka stopped his stage earlier than planned, like yesterday, because of muscular pain in his calf.

News from Markus and Gérard.

Markus is better and will start the race at Ash Fork, Stage 12.

Gerard doesn't know when he will start again because his right foot is still very swollen and painful.

The team is OK.

With almost 18-hour days you can imagine there is fatigue but the atmosphere remains cheerful.

Tomorrow and the next day are two short stages of less than 50 km.

See you soon,

All reports of the 10. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 11. Stage****Seligman to Ash Fork** / 29.06.2011

49.4 km / 757.8 km complete

30.7 mi / 470.9 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		5:12:43
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		5:55:15
3.	13	Serge Girard		6:05:15

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		84:08:06
2.	17	Anneke Kuiper		93:16:36
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		94:58:24

[Show completed list](#)**June 29****Viva la siesta**

It was a short stage so everyone could have a nap. Around 2:00 pm Bando crossed the finish line, accompanied by René, who went on bike to meet him and give him some support.

Bando took the opportunity to speak a few words of French with René, who continued the conversation by teaching him a few words.

Peter was there, as was the team, to welcome our Japanese runner, who finished another stage within the time limit.

Bravo Bando! The team quickly put away the finish line, then we split into two groups: two of us left to mark tomorrow's 29 km route, and the three others left for Williams, 20 minutes away, to shop and connect to Internet.

When we got back, for the umpteenth time we turned out the truck.

"Turned out" the truck means to re-stock it and straighten it up.. We are constantly moving and we are not out of the woods yet. All the runners are pleased with their race and most of all to be able to rest all afternoon.

The motel looks like a sleeping beauty in mid-afternoon.

Recuperation takes place in rooms which are very plain but well air conditioned. Tonight everyone will be in bed early so as to be in good shape tomorrow.

All reports of the 11. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 12. Stage****Ash Fork to Williams** / 30.06.2011

48.8 km / 806.6 km complete

30.3 mi / 501.2 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		5:05:52
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		5:49:37
3.	13	Serge Girard		5:49:37

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		89:13:58
2.	17	Anneke Kuiper		99:21:05
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		100:48:01

[Show completed list](#)**June 30****A day on the road**

This is our life on the road: The runners are on the road every day, all day and today the team is too, in anticipation of a tough day for everyone tomorrow.

Without doubt, this is the stage that has given me the most trouble and I won't be able to breathe easily until everyone has arrived in Flagstaff tomorrow evening. We don't all have the same concerns and while all my energy focuses on D13, the runners are enjoying a beautiful stage.

They will be delighted by this short stage, most of which will take place on a lovely trail among the pines.

At an altitude between 1800 and 2100 meters, it's cool and the warmest it has been is about 25°C (76°F) and with a strong wind.

Please note that 15 runners started this morning: Gérard wasn't there because he continues to treat his right

Please note that 13 runners started this morning, Gerard wasn't there because he continues to treat his right foot before starting the race again tomorrow. At the start, Bando made everyone laugh by lying on the ground and saying his is the « Playmate ».

He had a good stage; the pain is subsiding Today's color = orange, half of the runners were wearing an orange t-shirt. No change in the general ranking, a few runners finished hand in hand like James and Orru, Patrick and Serge. Rainer and June left early, heading for the Grand Canyon and I'm sure you will see marvelous photos on his website.

A few Japanese also went to have a look at the famous fault. We had a visit from Clotilde, who will write an article for the magazine « Courir au Féminin » even if we have only one female competitor, the magazine is interested in all the runners. Another beautiful stage. We are spending the night in Williams, a city on Route 66 that attracts a lot of tourists.

We are at the door of the Grand Canyon.

In winter, Williams is one of Arizona's well known ski resorts.

All reports of the 12. Stage

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LM to 13. Stage

Williams to Flagstaff / 01.07.2011

65.1 km / 871.7 km complete

40.5 mi / 541.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:54:24
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:24:12
3.	13	Serge Girard		8:24:12

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		96:08:22
2.	17	Anneke Kuiper		107:56:29
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		109:12:13

[Show completed list](#)

July 1st

Hard but so beautiful

7°C this morning at the start and the runners are eager to be on the road to get warm.

This morning there are 16 runners at the start, something we have not had since day 2.

Even if we know that 6 runners are not in the general ranking, it's consoling to have everyone together. There is no room for boredom on the stage between Williams and Flagstaff.

The route alternates between asphalt and trail.

There is a small mountain trail and a good track to enter Flagstaff, 42 km of almost flat road, then some hills and trees.

There is a smile on every face at the finish and shoes and socks all need to be washed.

Everyone is pleased with this stage, which caused me such concern yesterday. The organizing team: Anne, René, David and Bertrand are working like Trojans and the runners' satisfaction this evening is everyone's reward.

Tomorrow's stage will be longer and more boring and luckily some down hills are in store for the runners. After walking 11 km at the Grand Canyon yesterday, Rainer is in fine form.

He is 1H30 ahead of Patrick, who is second.

I asked him if not having a real opponent on his heels didn't take away some of his motivation.

His response was no, on the contrary he can take his time, which in fact he does to by icecream on the road and he takes hundreds of photos.

Rainer loves it and then he tells me that it's good that everyone goes at his own pace and that everyone runs "his/her" own race.

Serge is afraid of injury and doesn't push on the accelerator, for he knows that there is still a long way to go, that extreme heat will return and that sometimes the route will be monotonous.

There are so many reasons for everyone who wishes to see New York to be careful.

Mr. Koshita gives us the same impression, he goes at his own pace, slowly but surely and he is enjoying himself.

Generally speaking, all the runners are rather regular, except Orru and Bando, who sometimes surprise us in one way or the other by their burst of speed or slowness during a stage. Yesterday Markus started running again and seemed to enjoy being on the road.

Today Gérard, who started the stage, is suffering because the trail is uneven and it hurts his right foot. Tomorrow Jenni and Anneka will run alone because their support crew is leaving.

We will miss Dieneke and Theo, whose presence in our small group did not go unnoticed.

They are incredibly kind and caring. This afternoon it was hot in Flagstaff where the highest point is at an altitude of 2300 meters and the lowest point 2000 meters.

Route 66 runs through and is now an enormous boulevard, near where we will sleep this evening. There will be no daily log for a while because we are entering a No man's land.

All reports of the 13. Stage

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LM to 14. Stage

Flagstaff to Birdspring / 02.07.2011

85.4 km / 957.1 km complete

53.1 mi / 594.7 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:55:04
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:03:45
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:06:27

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		105:03:26
2.	17	Anneke Kuiper		119:14:35
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		119:15:58

Show completed list

July 2nd

Welcome to Navajo Nation

Yesterday morning in Williams, the temperature was 7°C (45°F), this morning it's warmer but the air is chilly and the runners leave a bit too quickly, probably to clock as many miles as possible in the early hours, especially since the temperature at mid-afternoon is 40°C (104°F) .

Alexandro drank less this morning and pays the price in the afternoon with stomach problems and cramps..... Dieneke and Theo say goodbye at the start.

Today they leave Jenni and Anneke to continue on their own.

You can see them in the photo taken at the start, kind and smiling and encouraging everyone.

We will all miss them and wish them a safe return and a good vacation. So at the start the pace is fast.

Rainer and Markus talk together for about 9 km and during that time Bando is in the lead.

This evening he is happy to tell me that he was first at the start of the stage... Bando is impulsive and I hope that this impulsiveness will enable him to be in good condition to see New York.

Italo Orru is also impulsive and today he is one of the lead trio.

Italo is one of the runners who eat the least during the race.

He seems to have amazing resistance! Otherwise, the runners are true to form, with the exception of Alexandro's mild problem. Philippe finishes some ten minutes before the time limit and Gérard is champing at the bit to run but the uneven trail hurt his foot yesterday.

It's a day off for him and Mr. Tanaka, who had stomach problems yesterday. In a few dozen kilometers you leave the green mountains covered in pines to enter the Navajo Nation: rocky, sandy, arid earth, which extends as far as the eye can see. The Navajo Nation territory is immense; it is mostly in Arizona and New Mexico, with a bit in Utah and Colorado.

The open spaces are vast, with a few houses which form a community and are located near the Chapter House.

In the Navajo Nation, a chapter House is an administrative and communal meeting place where council delegates meet but also where festivities take place.

The community of Birdsprings agreed to lend us the Chapter House, which is normally closed on weekends.

We thank them for their welcome and make a donation in exchange for lodging.

27 of us will use this comfortable building, which has the shape of an igloo.

Tomorrow evening we will stay in another Chapter House at Indian Wells Some young people from the community show interest in our group.

They tell us that there is not much going on in the sector, so foreign runners bring a bit of animation to this windswept ocean of earth. This afternoon Anne prepared a meal for our 27 boarders in the Chapter House.

I am always afraid there will not be enough to eat and not being used to cooking for so many, we made too much pasta. Bertrand and René took care of the runners on the road, especially Jenni, Anneke, Italo and James, who are the 4 runners without support crew.

They are fed every 1 hour, which is not always easy at the end of the race due to the distance between runners.

But mission accomplished without problem for our two crew members.

David is in charge of logistics: showers, drinks, and treasury.

As you can see, multi-tasking is necessary if we want our caravan to move forward every day.

Everyone arrived safely and this evening we will put our watches ahead one hour.

It's our first change of time zone.

All reports of the 14. Stage

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LM to 15. Stage

Birdspring to Indian Wells / 03.07.2011

65.8 km / 1022.9 km complete

40.9 mi / 635.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:58:54
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:01:20
3.	13	Serge Girard		8:18:56

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		112:02:20
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		127:17:18
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		128:50:42

[Show completed list](#)

July 3rd

1000 Km

Time flies and the days link together at a feverish pace.

Until now, the diversity of scenery and the characteristics of each stage prevented monotony.

The runners were often alone for a great part of their stage.

Some face this solitude with delight, some with a certain pleasure and others just put up with it. The finish line is a real pleasure, a relief, a short term goal.

Faces light up with relief and happiness to have finished.

Joy and so many positive feelings wipe away all the physical and mental pain.

The countryside we cross is splendid and the runners are amazed. The immensity of the landscape makes us realize how small we are.

Rock formations spring from the ground to finish in a point or with a flat top, just like in the Westens. Today the police take an interest in us because the officers fear the runners may cause accidents.

Drivers are not used to seeing pedestrians on the road and narrow shoulders, which will disappear tomorrow.

The officer asks me to tell the runners to be careful and not listen to music on the road, to stop and step aside if necessary due to a speeding car, a police vehicle or an emergency... In the end, they did not prohibit running on the road but if we cause trouble I think there will be an immediate penalty.

All's well that ends well. Insha'Allah! I am trying to make things easier by finding a trail which will let the runners relax but this trail will not be suitable for our vehicles unless it is dry and tonight it is raining.

It's strange how sometimes events are with us and other times against us and seem to complicate the situation.

It is part of the adventure and this is a localized rain storm. But the most important event is the clocking of 1000 km, at km 42, next to the police station in Dilkon, for the 8 runners who are still in the ranking, as well as Peter and Anneka, who are in their own category.

In order not to lose time, everyone strikes a quick pose for the photographer.

Mid-afternoon the heat is back: 40°C (104°F).

Mr. Koshita is suffering from the heat, which prevents him from fully enjoying the scenery. This evening it's camping again at the Chapter House at Indian Wells and livelier than at Birdspring! The runners, as well as the support crews, can take a shower.

Anne prepared dinner again and we reduced the quantities. Lights out at 8:00 pm because we have to be in fine form tomorrow and "maximum vigilance" will be required.

All reports of the 15. Stage

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LM to 16. Stage**Indian Wells to Kinlichee** / 04.07.2011

77.2 km / 1100.1 km complete

48 mi / 683.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:17:12
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:25:30
3.	08	Italo Orru		9:25:30

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		120:19:32
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		136:42:48
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		139:39:23

[Show completed list](#)**July 4th****Independence Day**

This morning I have trouble opening my eyes; a lot of pressure is being applied concerning security, so everything will go without a hitch.

All of the runners know they will be running on portions of road where there is no shoulder and where drivers are not used to seeing pedestrians and cyclists. The night in the Chapter House at Indian Wells was not necessarily good for everyone: the heat, snoring, coughing, the discomfort of sleeping on thin mattresses on the floor, lack of privacy... In short, it was not conducive to recuperation; but it meant we were all together, which forges ties.

And change does us all good.

Every day is different for the runners and the organizers. To ease the tension caused by the necessity of vigilance, the route was changed and there is a 17 km trail which runs through a beautiful canyon.

The strata of stone change color as the day passes and the scenery is magnificent.

The Navajo Indians we see on this long weekend are beginning to know us and wave to the runners and the support crews.

In many of the small, modest homes we pass there is a round construction on the property.

It is a traditional Hogan and I leave it to you to search the Internet to find the definition of a Hogan.

The last 10 km are torture because the runners have to step aside as each car comes toward them, since the cars that hurtle along the road can't swerve to avoid them without risking an accident with an on-coming vehicle.

Rainer tells me that on the Trans-Europe race in Italy the roads were worse and Mr. Koshita tells me that in Japan they are used to this kind of road. We can never be completely satisfied, especially when our desire is to give the runners an itinerary that is almost perfect!!!

I know that there will always be some portion of the road that will be less pleasant or safe, unless we chose to cross the country on trails, which by the way, an American group is organizing for next year. Rene celebrated his 63rd birthday today.

This morning at the meeting we had a gift for him; unfortunately, we missed getting his photo with the runners.

We will have another opportunity.

Another beautiful day.

Italo is in the lead trio of the stage.

He appears to be tireless and in spite of his fatigue still seems to find a reserve of strength. Mr. Bando is in trouble, Philippe seems to have found a cruising speed, even if he was out of steam this morning.

Mr. Koshita is suffering from the heat.

It's humid and stormy and there are a few showers but they are not refreshing and the runners enjoy the few drops of rain a black cloud drops on them, but the sun is never hidden for long. Yesterday evening we were near Window Rock, the Navajo Nation Capital, but that's for tomorrow.

All reports of the 16. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 17. Stage****Kinlichee to Gas Station on Rd 491** / 05.07.2011

71.7 km / 1171.8 km complete

44.6 mi / 728.1 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:39:11
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:30:58
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:41:30

Show completed list

1.	06	Rainer Koch		127:58:43
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		145:13:46
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		149:45:38

Show completed list

July 5th

Bye Bye Arizona

Yata Hée: Hello in Navajo There is a 30 minute delay at the start today on this terrible Route 264, which goes from Ganado to Window rock: 20 km of dangerous road without a shoulder... I think more than a few are cursing me.

Everyone starts with a fluorescent vest... then, finally, there is a big, wide 4-lane highway which gives the runners relief for the last 50 kilometers. At km 35 some are happy to stop at MacDonald's as we cross the town of Window Rock.

I'm thinking specifically of James, who wolfs down a big hamburger as he runs.

How does he do it? There is only one change of direction, at km 62, before the finish line on the parking lot of Twin Lakes Chapter House.

Our truck and our tent intrigue people, who come to see what's going on.

We are across from a Senior House, where people over 60 can have a meal and get together I suppose.

Peter and René are invited to have lunch there and if it interests them they will be welcomed.

The Navajos seem to have a real sense of hospitality.

Kim his services as a masseur for the runners and asks questions about these strange athletes. A site foreman offers us yellow, fluorescent vests; size XL which is too small for him but too big for our runners, which is too bad.

It's the thought that counts. The population is very welcoming, friendly and extremely kind.

New Mexico offers more wild, desolate country.

Tomorrow the program will include no shade, no trees, no comfort, nothing but a long asphalt ribbon and vastness.

All reports of the 17. Stage

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LM to 18. Stage

Gas Station on Rd 491 to Crownpoint / 06.07.2011
 66.4 km / 1238.2 km complete
 41.3 mi / 769.4 mi complete
 8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:54:49
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:28:25
3.	08	Italo Orru		7:28:25

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		134:53:32
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		152:42:11
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		159:24:15

Show completed list

July 7th

Only 1 turn

It's cool this morning and our fireflies string out on the road, one behind the other following the pack, except for Peter and Rainer, who are well ahead from the start! The sun comes up on a new day which will not be complicated.

There will be only one change of direction at the 3rd kilometer! Then comes the long ribbon of asphalt studded with little men who are lost in the immensity of the desert.

Serge is among the last to leave every day; a true diesel engine because he advances steadily along the line of runners and exchanges a few words with each person he passes.

Mr.

Koshita is fast today and says he is hurrying so that he won't have to suffer too long in the heat.

By doing so, he moves into 7th place in the general ranking, ahead of Bando.

Bando stops in front of the finish line in imitation of Michael Jackson.

We can't remain indifferent to Bando; he makes us laugh and sometimes is painful to see with his suffering and the unpredictable way he manages each stage.

Italo and Patrick finish the stage together once again, 9 km per hour, which is fast for a stage that is hilly even if it is not extremely hot.

But there are still 52 days to go, so the most important thing is to feel good and both men are in fine shape... It's important not to think of ranking at this 18th stage, it's a little early to think about being 2nd or 3rd on the podium.

Alexandro gets better and better; his body is limber and at ease and he doesn't seem to make as much effort as he did earlier on.

It's a pleasure to see and his thoughts are surely in Italy, with his wife, his 18 month old daughter, Sofia, and the baby that is due to arrive at the end of August, like Dad in New York. Rainer is having trouble with the skin on his face.

"Normally, I don't use sun block and for once when I do it's worse than ever".

But it doesn't seem to bother him; he's always full of energy, lively and available. Peter wanted to do the stage in less than 6 hours; he is within his time in spite of a watch that seems to have died on the road.

This morning before the start he called his wife.

He is always happy to have news of his chief sponsor, whom, as he likes to say, is his wife who permitted and accepted this long absence so that Peter could take part in the dream to cross the USA.

At the age of 68, what could be more beautiful than to make dreams come true, and still to have dreams! Gérard is back and we hope that it will be a new start.

His blisters seem to be just a memory. Jenni's feet hurt.

She has more blisters than she can count with the 10 fingers of her two hands.

Anneke, at her side, is her main supporter.

Go, Jenni.

I know that she has a very strong personality and she won't give up now. Markus seems to have found his cruising speed, is all smiles and it is easy to see that he is enjoying himself. Mr. Tanaka has highs and lows, with recurring stomach problems these last few days. Mr. Isshihara forges ahead willy-nilly, a slight wave of the hand but never much conversation.

He is very reserved and there is the language barrier.

The whole team admires him because at the age of 66 he is one hell of an athlete. The Japanese support crew is wonderful, everything is always OK I have extra words to write about our James, who treats you daily to his comments on his Blog... but this evening after a tiring day, the time has come to eat some rice, to drink some water and go to sleep without using the computer. Between bouts of vomiting and diarrhea, James rests for 30 minutes, then starts and suffers in silence.

Anne walks with him for more than 15 kilometers; the team hovers over him because James must not give in and tomorrow he has to be within the time limit and have some energy.

Perhaps he has to take a good look at his eating and drinking habits because from the beginning we have been surprised to see him eating candy and hamburgers and drinking only Gatorade and "Monster"... Even if we know that Rainer drank almost 10 liters of Coke and ate stuffed green olives and now eats black ones... it's true that eating habits are very personal.

This is not a marathon where you have a special diet for a short time.

Here you have to eat with appetite and absorb a minimum of calories. For example, Peter and Rainer take the time to eat two real meals after the race and they eat well with June, who is watching over them! See you tomorrow on the roads of Pueblo Pintado... Consult your maps because this is an out-of-the-way place.

All reports of the 18. Stage

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LM to 19. Stage

Crownpoint to Pueblo Pintado / 07.07.2011

64.4 km / 1302.6 km complete

40 mi / 809.4 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:30:14
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:34:54
3.	08	Italo Orru		7:41:55

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		141:23:46
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		160:17:05
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		168:14:05

Show completed list

July 7th

same scenario

We rose early this morning to get to the starting point, 57 miles (92 km) from our motel.

Nobody likes to spend time on the road and due to everyone's fatigue, we need to optimize our time more than ever. This stage is shorter than the average daily mileage; it comes before a long stage where the runners will have to leave at 5:00 am, 30 minutes earlier than usual. James is better and, for a convalescent, makes a rather fast start.

Is this reasonable? Jenni has to find some bigger shoes because hers hurt her feet.

René lends her his Mizuno trail shoes, size 41, which seem to fit.

We need to find a place to buy new shoes and it isn't easy in this no-man's-land, which is as beautiful as it is barren. It's hard to believe that we are in the USA where we haven't a cell phone network for our US or French phones!!! There is only one change of direction and we had no particular problems.

Tonight we are staying in our last Chapter House.

Here we have to talk a lot because we are observed and looked at with a certain amount of circumspection.

You have to explain and gain people's confidence because our caravan draws attention.

Frankie Lopez, the vice president of the Chapter House is happy to welcome us and shows us the Council and the different Navajo departments.

His wife shows us the president of the Navajo Nation.

Tomorrow we will leave this territory, which has impressed us.

Even if we have not been able to get to know people well, they have been kind, curious and very welcoming.

There seems to be a lot of idleness among the young people. The general ranking remains the same, even if Italo is creeping up on Serge and will surely take his 3rd place before long.

But Serge is not at all interested in the ranking, he knows that there is still a long way to go and anything can happen.

His pace is good for him and it will give him his spot in the final ranking. Otherwise, the day's scenario is about the same.

There are runners who progress at the same speed from start to finish, whereas others start fast, then reduce speed in the second part: make time while it is cool, then put up with the heat. Even if it is not as hot as in California, the humidity is hard to take. This evening we are happy to have a roof over our heads, for all of a sudden wind, rain and lightening are upon us.

For the past few days clouds have appeared around noon and the weather becomes stormy.

But that doesn't keep anyone from sleeping soundly.

We are so tired.

All reports of the 19. Stage

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LM to 20. Stage

Pueblo Pintado to Cuba / 08.07.2011

87.2 km / 1389.8 km complete

54.2 mi / 863.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:52:12
2.	08	Italo Orru		9:50:01
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:01:15

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		150:15:58
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		170:18:20
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		179:46:15

[Show completed list](#)

July 8th

Radio Lany

This evening at the finish I'm surprised to see runners who know all about this race, even though the only contact our runners have is with the support crews.

In this barren place, with only a filling station at km 42, it's funny to see how fast news travels.

In this barren place, with only a timing station at Km 42, it's funny to see how fast news travels.

Rainer will be first on this stage and is sure to wear the yellow jersey.

Everything is going well and over the past few days his average speed has increased, even though he continues to take his time!

There are a few drops of rain from a thunder shower as he crosses the finish line.

Peter is already there, even though he started 30 minutes later.

He continues to be fast, a real shooting star and we are astonished by his speed.

Italo and Patrick stick to a speed of 9 km per hour and everyone hopes they won't wear themselves out.

Alexandro left slowly, even cautiously and James is still very tired and continues to be plagued by diarrhea and vomiting.

Mr. Koshita arrived with his camera in hand and smiling but he didn't stay at the finish line for long.

Bando was last of the 8 runners still in the ranking.

Concerning the other runners, Gerard is OK but his feet are still bothering him and he will not start tomorrow.

Jenni arrives all smiles "I'm so happy because was afraid of this stage".

It seems that it was a good stage for her and for Anneke.

Markus was concentrating on his race and surely has good thoughts because his wife, Brandi, arrives today.

Lastly, Philippe and Mr. Ishihara finish hand-in-hand less than 30 minutes from the cut-off; they are beaming.

All of these runners had problems at a certain point but everything seems to be in order now.

Anecdotes: Rainer saw several sofas at the roadside but didn't stop for a nap.

Philippe, who slept in the car last night, somehow ran down the battery.

So, at a moment's notice the team had to arrange to feed Gérard and Philippe.

It was additional work for the organizers, especially for Bertrand and David, who provide food for Philippe every hour and ten minutes, that is about every 4 miles.

The boys make note of everything they eat and drink and it is worth noting that Philippe never finished his water ration at each stop.

So we are not surprised to read on Gérard's Blog that Philippe is suffering from dehydration, he who on D2 was abandoned by the crew who took care of him and Gérard, and because of it had to call the fire department, due to a real dehydration.

The organizing team feeds 4 other people who are not fortunate to have a crew and everything is going perfectly well.

We are taking good care of James, who has not recovered completely and the time we spend with him is enormous.

I hope that he will be able to get back on track and stay in the race.

A dog ran 30 km with some of the runners before collapsing; it was then fed by Bertrand and David.

One lone dog was herding its sheep without a shepherd, to Rainer's astonishment and later in another spot to Serge's.

Everyone observes what is going on around them, even if the hours don't pass as quickly as the minutes and sometimes solitude weighs.

All reports of the 20. Stage

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LM to 21. Stage

Cuba to Abiquiu Lake / 09.07.2011

82.8 km / 1472.6 km complete

51.4 mi / 915 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		9:06:59
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:26:05
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:48:34

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		159:22:57
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		180:44:25
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		190:56:41

[Show completed list](#)[Show completed list](#)

July 9th

Simply Beautiful

This is one of the most beautiful stages of the circuit.

Canyons, rocks sculpted by the wind with strata of varied hues: reds, greens, ochre.

There are pines, gentle and steep inclines, bends to the right and to the left.

The road sweeps and turns as it likes, in an ocean of green.

It is a magnificent stage, so beautiful and so difficult.

This morning the meeting takes place in complete silence.

Eyes are downcast and seem to be as closed as everyone's ears.

Fatigue shows and there is limited time for communication, and it is not necessarily of good quality, but we have to live with it.

Like many of the runners, I manage to find a reason for managing one stage after another.

We live in the present, only the present.

The second point that does not help communications is the lack of networks in all the places we have just come through.

Being cut off from the world is not the problem but not being able to communicate between the organization's different vehicles is not making our days easy, especially since James's diarrhea has forced him to stop 15 times a day and he has vomited twice a day for the past 4 days.

Such diarrhea causes severe dehydration and I think it is time to find out if such a severe case is caused by bacteria or not.

If it is, then it needs to be treated with antibiotics because his strength is decreasing by the day.

But for the moment, James is on the road; Anne and René are with him and for the last two hours in the day Bertrand and David will take over.

To take his mind off the situation they haven't found better than to teach him the refrain of a French song: "82 km on foot is wearing, it's wearing; 82 km is wearing out shoes....." which we all sing at the finish line.

If the body is suffering the spirit is too and I know that he misses his girlfriend.

I asked if she will be on the race and the plan is that she comes for the last week.

He seems to like the idea that she may come earlier and even very soon.

Let's hope it will be possible.

Everyone arrived within the time limit at Lake Abiquiu, not far from the Abiquiu Dam.

This small body of water appeals to people with small boats but also to the runners who enjoy the scenery, that is, most of them.

Rainer made a banana milkshake for James and everyone asks after him.

There is mutual respect for effort and I can understand that only the runners can understand because they are living the race in the same manner and facing the same difficulties.

All reports of the 21. Stage

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LM to 22. Stage

Abiquiu Lake to Velarde / 10.07.2011

62 km / 1534.6 km complete

38.5 mi / 953.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:11:18
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:39:12
3.	13	Serge Girard		7:50:01

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		165:34:15
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		188:23:37
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		199:18:28

[Show completed list](#)

July 10th

Happy Birthday Markus

The eagerly awaited storms did not come to trouble the sky over the LANY footrace and I hope that it will continue this way, especially because tomorrow we will still be on mountain roads with a finish at the culminating point of the race.

New Mexico is a vast state, the 4th largest in area of the USA (bigger than Italy for example).

The population density is low, with between 6 and 10 inhabitants per square kilometer (depending on the source).

The national average is 33 inhabitants per square kilometer.

The Spanish colonized this region and bloody battles took place between the conquistadors and the native Indians, notably Apaches and Hopis.

The Mexicans ceded territory, of which New Mexico was a part, in the mid 19th century.

New Mexico was granted statehood in 1912.

The primary resources are mining and cattle.

We see that it is impossible to grow anything on this arid and mountainous land.

New Mexico is the state with the 4th highest altitude, after Colorado, Wyoming and Utah.

The capital, Santa Fe, is at an altitude of 2100 meters and is not the largest city in the state, which is Albuquerque.

I was wrong in thinking Albuquerque was the capital.

This evening we are north of Santa Fe and just east of where violent forest fires are raging over thousands of acres.

Yesterday the mountains were covered in a thick fog and the smell of burning reached us.

But this morning, not far from the lake, there was a gathering of fireflies at 5:15 am, to start the new day.

Today is Markus's birthday so we sang Happy Birthday.

His wife, Brandi, came to join him for a few days and because of it Markus is a happy man, tired but happy.

Brandi helped us to find lodging for several stages.

Many thanks for her help.

This was a relatively short stage, with 5 changes in direction, something we have not seen for a long time; and it was all downhill, much to Peter's joy.

Rainer is always in good form, still followed by Patrick, who is also in good form.

Behind them comes Italo, tired and with painful tendons in both legs.

Serge, his usual self, starts almost last and advances along the race.

Alexandro goes slowly but surely; his calves were tight yesterday and he knows that tomorrow will be difficult.

Alexandro is the quiet strength; you see him smiling while calmly and coolly analyzing things.

It's quite clear that all the participants have very different personalities and that's what gives richness to this adventure

After having a few tests at the hospital, « our » James is much better.

Today the organizing team has taken over his fueling and won't let him manage his food or drink.

James has put himself in their hands, even if he only half likes drinking liquids slowly and which are not cold; yogurt mixed with crushed banana, protein milk and energy bars.

It will be a change from candy and hamburgers but James is serious and the most important thing for him: reach New York in the best shape.

He says that Bertrand and David are like mothers to him.

I have to say that the team has a great deal of experience with Serge and they know what it is to follow, to fuel and to watch over a runner.

So they are taking care of Orru, Jenni and Anneka, as well as James, who has required a lot of care over the past days.

But we are well rewarded because his form is coming back and it was worth investing as much as possible to help him through this bad patch.

So James is reassured and near Espanola the telephone worked and he could call his girlfriend.

His morale has improved and physically he is better.

We are all relieved.

Mr. Koshita and Mr. Bando, still 7th and 8th in the general ranking, are fine.

Mr. Bando is resigned to going slowly from the start and no longer takes off like a rocket, only to suffer for the rest of the day from terrible pains.

Managing one's body is a very important part of these long-distance races.

You get to know yourself and sometimes you have bad experiences.

In the group, several people know themselves well: Rainer, Patrick, Serge and Mr. Koshita.

For the others it's a first and each person manages in his/her own way: rigorously or impulsively!

The group of « stage runners » no longer in the general ranking is fine.

Jenni has new shoes, brought by Brandi because hers were a bit small for her feet.

René lent her his for a few days but she already had blisters on all her toes and more.

All the runners are wearing running shoes 2 sizes bigger than normal.

Gérard stopped again 2 days ago because the blister on the sole of his foot is not healing well.

He should be able to start again.

I hope he will be able to settle into the race once again because I can imagine that his motivation is wearing thin, especially for a "challenger" like him who loves competition.

Mr. Ishihara, who for almost a week has started wearing running shorts again so his calves are bare, is fine.

He regularly alternates running and walking.

Mr. Tanaka had difficulty with the heat and again today in spite of an altitude of 1700 meters the temperature reached 95°F (35°C).

Markus enjoyed the scenery today; it was a nice birthday present!

All reports of the 22. Stage

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LM to 23. Stage

Velarde to Palo Flechado Pass / 11.07.2011

75.5 km / 1610.1 km complete

46.9 mi / 1000.5 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:43:05
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:47:35
3.	08	Italo Orru		9:47:35

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		174:17:20
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		198:11:12
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		210:32:28

[Show completed list](#)

July 11st

1600 miles and 2783 m elevation

The stages pass and each one is different: a long, beautiful climb with an occasional bit of relief.

We are following the Rio Grande, a small stream that runs into deep gorges.

For two days we have been following this water, which gives us the urge to go swimming or rafting.

It's unbelievable how much we are beginning to miss water and greenery.

This is a beautiful stage and everyone arrives at his/her normal spot, or almost. 1000 miles – So great! Arrival at the highest elevation of the race : Palo Flechado Pass. Fatigue is making itself felt and the amount of work piles up, so management on a case-by-case basis is sometimes difficult to handle.

This evening there isn't the normal warm atmosphere in the team, but that's life.

We depend on our vehicles and the time that passes and all this plays a part; so it only takes losing sight of the overall picture, or of the group, or if we lose something, to lengthen our day unnecessarily.

overall picture, or of the group, or if we lose something, to lengthen our day unnecessarily.

Having to pick up a direction sign 25 km from the finish line or dig a box out of a carton that is buried at the back of the truck becomes a chore, which then adds length to a day of about 18 hours, non-stop. But everyone is suffering from the gangrene of fatigue and we aren't finished yet.

Now everyone is asleep in the Community Center of Angel Fire.

Tomorrow there will be a short stage and another day.

The adventure continues for everyone.

All reports of the 23. Stage

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LM to 24. Stage

Palo Flechado Pass to Cimarron / 12.07.2011

59.9 km / 1670 km complete

37.2 mi / 1037.7 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		5:51:29
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		6:51:17
3.	08	Italo Orru		6:57:32

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		180:08:49
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		205:02:29
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		218:13:40

[Show completed list](#)

July 12th

Short and quiet

Cool, very cool; fleece vests were out at the starting line.

Everybody enjoys this invigorating coolness and I think that the runners are going to miss it very soon because extreme heat is announced.

With giant strides we are approaching Oklahoma and today is our last day in the mountains.

There was a lot to talk about at our meeting this morning:

The organization of the 4 next stages: I have decided to level off the mileage to avoid stages of more than 90 km, even if the total distance run remains the same.

Psychologically, it seems preferable to have more even mileage.

So, from 79km on D25 the stage will be 86.3 km and from 95.5 km on D26 the mileage will be 88.2 km.

For the slower runners an hour less over a day's race is significant.

And we have to organize our sleeping accommodation from D29 to D33.

There will be lots of camping.

We will specify distribution points for drinks, food supplies and breakfasts, which the organizers supply to the runners every 5 days.

We have been able to handle lots of case-by-case situations, which are rather complicated to manage; we just have to accept it!

Concerning today's itinerary, it is an easy one, with no crossroads.

I pass on messages from Russel Secker (Finisher of the Trans Europe 2009) and Olivier Forti (Finisher of the Trans Am 2002)

Then it's high time to leave for a short stage with a downhill profile, which everyone will enjoy.

Here are some details concerning the refueling for those runners taken care of by the organizers:

Italo :

59': He doesn't want anything

1:52 = 1 apple sauce and Gatorade

2:32 = 1 energy gel and Gatorade

3:11 = 1 vanilla desert and Gatorade

4:20 = 1 energy gel and Gatorade

5:11 = 1 chocolate desert + 1 protein milk + Gatorade

6:07 = doesn't want to eat anything, just Gatorade

Didn't ask for water for his pouch

Italo talked about the race and joked with Bertrand

Jenni et Anneke

Anneke drinks mostly Coke, today 6 to 7 cans + potato chips

Jenni :

58' = Super protein milk (350 Kcal)

1:57 = bread and Jenni removes her boosters

2:54 = 1 fruit desert, puts on her cap and tells us her hair is too long

3:56 = Fills her pouch with 1 liter of water, takes a strawberry desert, gives us two empty wrappers from a fruit bar and a cereal bar

4:48 = 1 liquid yogurt + potato chips, talks about the magnificent, many colored birds and the gigantic butterflies that have followed her

5:37 = Fills her pouch with 1 liter of water and talks to us about her camel bag, which doesn't chafe or cause burns and is the simplest and cheapest.

6:39 = 1 fruit desert

A 7h41, Jenni and Anneke cross the finish line

We know that Jenni had big problems with her diet the first week and now she eats regularly, even if it is in the form of snacks.

Anneke carries things in her bike bags which she gives to Jenni between refueling.

James: Is tackling his eating habits

58' = 1 liter of water in his pouch

1:58' = 1 energy gel +

3:00 = ½ Sprite and ½ bottle of water + 1 liquid yogurt

4:04 = ½ Sprite and ½ bottle of water + cashew nuts + 750 ml of water in his pouch.

He sits down to drink his water and asks for toilet paper.

4:56 = ½ Sprite and ½ bottle of water + 1 pack of skittles.

He sits down and asks about the hotel, then he talks about Bertrand's departure and the arrival of his girlfriend.

He washes his hands with antiseptic.

5:51 = ½ Sprite and ½ bottle of water + 2 small pieces of chicken

6:44 = 1 Sprite

7:22 = ½ Sprite and ½ bottle of water

James carries cereal and other bars in his camel-bag but he doesn't give us the wrappers so we don't know what extra food he is eating.

His speed decreased at the end of the day and he crosses the finish line after 8H21'

So everyone is custom fed about ever hour.

For James, for example, it's about every 8 km.

Sometimes between fuelings we pass them and if they need something they raise their hand.

It's like that every day.

We were supposed to provide basic refuelings for the runners but it has become more than basic.

We should take a photo and show all this in detail.

Then there is the question of individual taste: James and the Japanese like dried meat, Rainer, olives, Jenni shrimp soup, etc., etc.

Nutrition is terribly important; it's the fuel which provides energy and is necessary to get through such a day.

But there is also the comfort aspect and it's important to get pleasure out of eating.

All reports of the 24. Stage

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LM to 25. Stage

Cimarron to Point of Rocks Rest Area / 13.07.2011

86.3 km / 1756.3 km complete

53.6 mi / 1091.3 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		9:01:01
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:29:19
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:29:19

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		189:09:50
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		215:31:48
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		229:23:22

[Show completed list](#)

July 13th

Always in New Mexico

As the days pass there is less and less inclination to hurry to the morning meeting, which starts 5 minutes late today, with everyone asleep on the spot.

Faces are drawn with fatigue.

We are entering the phase of extreme fatigue.

A small smile before the start? "Nada".

The road is going to be long; what are the runners thinking about as they hit the road?

God only knows.

There is contrast on today's route, with a rather pleasant straight line for about 30 km, where we see a few farms and animals.

Then there is a boring frontage road which leads to Springer, a small town with a population of just over 1000.

We wonder what the locals do in their free time because we see very few sports fields in the state of New Mexico.

To go to a movie or a theater must mean 2 hours of highway driving to reach a large city. Once out of the mountains, the land seems to be used for grazing and there is one ranch after another.

Fewer and fewer people own ranches, probably because the younger generations are not interested in living on this arid land. Leaving Springer there is a road which seems to go on forever, with no change of scenery, and which leads the runners to a point 300 meters after the 28 mile sign, which means in the middle of nowhere. The scenario is different for today's finish, except for the leaders: Peter and Rainer, then 1 ½ hours later Patrick and Italo, hand-in-hand.

Then the cards change.

Jenni, even though she is no longer in the race, arrives in 4th position among the runners.

She really liked the scenery at the beginning, and then she suffered from heat exhaustion at km 60 to 65.

She is happy at the end of her day and I feel sorry because Jennie knows that she is no longer in the general ranking.

We talk about it for five minutes and finish with the thought that the most important thing is to be all together to reach New York.

It will be the best gift for her as well as for the organizers, even if she lacks 2 to 300 km.

Anneka reminds us that there is now a real feeling of family. Alexandro who starts last takes 5th place.

He seems tired but always says he's OK.

In spite of that at km 50.7 he curses me for having lengthened the stage.

I tell him that tomorrow he will give me his blessing because the stage will be 7 km shorter than planned... He smiles but only slightly, his eyes are full of fatigue. Serge follows and with a sad face today because he has intestinal problems.

Then comes James, who has put on a beautiful T-shirt and who is also wearing his normal Hollywood movie star smile, even if he looks tired. Lastly, at the tail of the pack, Philippe, Bando, Mr. Koshita and Mr. Ishihara play at

overtaking, again and again.

I suppose the idea is not to cross the finish line last so they push in order not to be overtaken or to catch up with the person ahead...

All that adds a bit of spice to the stage, which is rather monotonous.

In the end, the last competitor crosses the finish line 1H30 ahead of the cut off time.

I wonder if that is reasonable and tomorrow will tell us because there will be more than 88 km to cover.

Afraid of the storms that are announced, we decide not to camp, which means driving 30 minutes to reach a small motel in Springer, which is close to a Mexican restaurant.

A bit of comfort won't hurt at this stage of the game.

All reports of the 25. Stage

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LM to 26. Stage

Point of Rocks Rest Area to Clayton / 14.07.2011

88.2 km / 1844.5 km complete

54.8 mi / 1146.1 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		9:18:31
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:53:01
3.	08	Italo Orru		11:13:46

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		198:28:21
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		226:24:49
3.	17	Anneke Kuiper		241:31:52

Show completed list

July 14th

Last day in New Mexico

Another start with eyes full of fatigue and dust.

Such repetition becomes boring.

So let's talk about Gladstone: it's the only sign of life on this long stage.

At km 12, like an oasis, this shop that sells antiques as well as food, candy, drinks and bags of ice is a curiosity that all the teams will stop to see.

The décor is old and all the rooms are worth a visit, even the toilets.

Shelly opened specially for us at 6:00 am and the team was able to have breakfast there and buy souvenirs.

Most of the runners stopped just to have a quick look or to buy an ice cream, like Rainer and Mr. Koshita, who at 6:20 am left with theirs.

It's like school recreation, and everyone is now wide awake and ready to start on the long, deserted route to Clayton, 75 km from here.

As the days go by I realize that 16 people on the road, 16 people with whom to communicate, without counting the support crews, as well as a team to manage, is enough to make me happy.

It enables us to feel close to everyone.

There are a total of 35 people in our caravan of 12 vehicles, 1 small truck for supplies and 1 mobile home, because Alexandro sleeps in an RV, as they are called here.

As you can imagine, people are packed in and the cars are overloaded.

We know that the heat will soon to be upon us; we are losing altitude every day and tomorrow we will be at 1500 meters.

At Clayton it poured rain.

They have not had a drop of rain here for 9 months and there has not been such a drought in 100 years.

We saw a sign that said « Pray for Rain ».

There is more time spent on the road today.

Rainer is just the same, like Patrick.

As for the others, speed decreases, except for Mr. Koshita who tells me it isn't a "Good Day, it's the "Best Day" of the race.

Jenni ate a lot in small quantities but she perspires heavily and is losing a lot of salt.

We are going to have to find a way to increase the sodium in her diet.

Alexandro is bored on the road; it's like at sea where there isn't much to look at.

Some think there is always something to look at; others suffer from the monotony and boredom of the past two days so one has to find a way to get one's mind off the race and think of something else.

And it's not finished because tomorrow, aside from a few ranches and cows, it's a real no-man's-land between Clayton and Boise City.

All reports of the 26. Stage

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LM to 27. Stage

Clayton to Boise City / 15.07.2011

78.9 km / 1923.4 km complete

49 mi / 1195.1 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:18:05
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:53:41
3.	08	Italo Orru		9:53:41

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		206:46:26
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		236:18:30
3.	08	Italo Orru		251:52:43

[Show completed list](#)

July 15th

Oklahoma

We are entering a state which I particularly dread.

Lately Oklahoma has experienced very high temperatures for the season and even if we knew it would be hot, I think that reality will exceed our imagination.

Oklahoma, and especially Red Carpet Country, a narrow band of land between Kansas and Texas and as flat as it is windswept and it is extremely monotonous.

Some of the runners are having problems getting their mind off the race.

The teams have nothing to distract them from the race either because they will see no service stations or stores, nothing but plains, a few ranches and herds of cattle.

It will be like that for the 90 km that lie between Boise City and Gaymon: nothing except one turn at km 4 and another at km 87..... As you have already understood, an important part of the success of this crossing is the runners' morale and I hope with all my heart that everyone will hold the course.

A flat country, heat and no contacts are elements that can make progression mentally and emotionally difficult. This morning there are a few changes in the general ranking.

Italo has taken 3rd place in the general ranking and Serge has moved to 4th place.

Italo has resources that Serge seems to have lost these past days, even if he has no real physical problems. Otherwise, everyone is OK, with ups and downs during a day, moments when they don't think they will ever see the finish line but when they have crossed it, hope returns and there is every reason to be at the next day's morning meeting. This evening we are putting our clocks ahead one hour and we lose another hour of sleep.

Now we are in the Central Time Zone.

All reports of the 27. Stage

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LM to 28. Stage

Boise City to Guymon / 16.07.2011

89.8 km / 2013.2 km complete

55.8 mi / 1250.9 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		9:39:05
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:48:09
3.	08	Italo Orru		11:04:21

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		216:25:31
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		247:06:39
3.	08	Italo Orru		262:57:04

[Show completed list](#)[Show completed list](#)

July 16th

Departures, Visitors and 2000 km

Yesterday, Russel Secker and his wife came to see us.

They live in Tulsa and came to welcome their runner friends who arrived in Oklahoma.

Russel took part in the last Trans-Europe race in 2009, and he ran with Rainer, Peter, Jenni and Anneke.

They are delighted to come run a few kilometers with Jenni and James.

They brought their smiles and their kindness, as well as lots of gadgets for the runners because, as you know, we are crossing a no-man's -land where one sees an occasional, desolate, small village.

It is impossible to find a pair of running shoes or a GPS, especially if you need a particular model.

So Russel is like Santa Claus.

This evening he had beer from Texas in the trunk of his car!!!

It is better than Christmas day for James because Gemma, his companion, has arrived.

She organized her trip in less than a week.

She will stay a good week with James to assist him and give him a boost to take him to New York.

He is again wearing his permanent smile, just like the first days of the race.

There is a big change in the organizing team due to the departure of Anne, Bertrand and David.

It was a very moving moment because they have become very close to all the runners, watching over them as if they were their own children.

They leave with heavy hearts but with their heads full of unforgettable moments.

They have turned their group over to Bérengère and Emily, who are taking over from them after a tiring 2-day trip and arrival in a heat wave which is difficult to put up with when you come from Normandy and the Cher region.

But the day went well; René and I are used to things and Emy and Béren will just have to adapt to the unbroken rhythm and get to know the runners.

The most difficult part will be to follow in the footsteps of David and Bertrand, who were able to make the group laugh.

We will miss them.

Mr. Tanaka even kissed Anne goodbye!

Once doesn't make it a habit because in Japan you bid farewell and that's all.

After 2 months spent in Japan in 2007 I never saw a Japanese kiss someone goodbye.

If we took pictures at the first 1000 km and the first 1000 miles, 2000 km went unnoticed.

Nobody had the energy to do more than look at their feed.

Patrick thought he was running on a treadmill; his horizon was 1 meter in front of his feet.

Even Bando, who vomited today, didn't have the will power to sing or dance this evening.

Jenni and Philippe abandoned the race at km 51 and km 30, respectively.

Mr. Ishihara and Mr. Tanaka did not start today.

The temperature was 106°F (41°C) all afternoon and the wind was not hot, it was boiling.

Even if we say that the first two weeks are the most exhausting, because the body has to get used to making such an effort, I know that crossing this state will be very tough on the runners' bodies and spirits and I am watching everyone closely.

Eyes are sunk in their sockets, weight loss begins to be apparent, most of the runners have stomach problems and boredom takes hold on a straight road that resembles a sandy sea and which makes you feel you weigh a great deal.

James says this evening, "I could see Rainer finish" then bursts out laughing.

No doubt it was possible but with binoculars.

Keep faith and a strong morale!

In any event, every kilometer adds to the kitty and it is one more step toward New York.

All reports of the 28. Stage

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LM to 29. Stage

Guymon to Balko School / 17.07.2011

73 km / 2086.2 km complete

45.4 mi / 1296.3 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:04:14
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:13:12
3.	08	Italo Orru		9:22:28

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		224:29:45
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		256:19:51
3.	08	Italo Orru		272:19:32

[Show completed list](#)

July 17th

Welcome to Balko School

Since we changed time zone, departure takes place at night when it is relatively cool.

We start the stage by crossing Guymon, population 10,000 and completely asleep at such an early hour.

It has been a week ago that since we last crossed a town of this size: Espanola in New Mexico, where we found a huge shopping center.

We will have to wait another 5 days before we will find the comfort of a big city. Poca City has a population of 25,000.

The runners are surprised by the extent of the territories, and the unchanging scenery.

They have been used to more variety.

The new organization team is getting organized.

René is teaching the girls how the refuelling of the runners takes place and I teach the rest.

Yesterday was shopping day at the super market, then the preparation of the food for the runners, and the breakfasts for everyone.

This morning we picked up a palette of drinks for distribution this evening.

In 3 days, the runners have doubled the quantity of liquids they are drinking and we are back to 10 to 15 liters per day, like it was at the beginning of the race.

This evening we distributed 48 liters of water to each participant.

This evening we arrived at "Balko School," which is surrounded by fields.

This school dates back to the 60's and there are small houses around it where the staff lives during the school year.

Larry Mills, the director, threw open the doors to us and with the help of the "Crossroads Bible Fellowship" church, of which he is a member, prepared a buffet supper for us all.

5 families came to bring the meal, and with them was the pastor, James Epp.

They were all extremely kind and the runners talked with our charming hosts.

We were supposed to sleep in the gymnasium, which has a superb wood floor but Larry suggested we use the library, which is air conditioned, to the delight of the runners.

Showers were taken in the shower rooms of the gym.

Lights out at 8 :00 pm because we need to recuperate the one hour of sleep we lost due to the time change if we are going to be ready for a new day.

All reports of the 29. Stage

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LM to 30. Stage

Balko School to Hwy Crossing 412/283 / 18.07.2011

83.5 km / 2169.7 km complete

51.9 mi / 1348.2 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		9:00:55
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:05:46
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:05:46

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		233:30:40
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		266:25:37
3.	08	Italo Orru		282:25:18

[Show completed list](#)**July 30****Welcome to Laverne**

Thanks go to Emy for taking over the job of making our videos, even if it will not be every day.

We will put them on the website regularly.

Of course, we want to thank David, who did such a great job the first four weeks of the race.

I know you have all enjoyed these views of the race. This was another long stage where we were surrounded by fields which were yellow and dry.

Rounding a one kilometer curve in the road we see some cattle who gather in the shade of the only tree on this immense piece of land.

The road has rolling ups and downs, like a wave that rolls on to infinity.

For some it was another interminable day. The wind comes up around 11:00 am.

It's a headwind, the temperature is 106°F (41°C), the humidity only 40%, and yet we still feel damp stickiness which clings to us.

It's hot, very hot, hotter and hotter. We are beginning to think of 1928; even the season was not the same.

The 199 runners didn't have air conditioning, or suitable shoes and surely not popper food.

But they must have seen the same scenery we do.

Unfortunately, there is no survivor of the Bunion Derby of 1928 and I envy the people who could speak to those tough pioneers.

Yesterday Rainer told the journalist that if Andy Payne and the others had not made this crossing we would surely not be here.... No doubt he is right. Andy Payne, a guy from Oklahoma who never became a national hero and about whom we will soon speak. But for the moment, we continue to meet very friendly people: Lynda and Dan Crocker, the owners of the Country Inn Motel, welcomed us this evening in their clean and comfortable 10 rooms.

We managed to squeeze 31 people in.

After she logged onto our site, Lynda contacted the TV station and then she offered us dinner.

This evening we feasted on chicken, fresh pasta salad, yams and potatoes, fresh fruit, yogurts and hazelnuts.

It was all so good and everyone is grateful to our hosts, who were at the finish line to welcome each runner.

They are incredible, simply incredible!

The runners, even though they were exhausted, love this little corner of Oklahoma, which by the way, is where Miss America 1967 was born!

Everyone who started this morning arrived at the finish, with the exception of Mr. Ishihara, who is having trouble with a cramp in his calf.

Mr. Tanaka did not start because the intense heat upsets his stomach. In spite of his smile at every finish, Markus is having a tough time and had cramps at the finish.

Philippe was rather exhausted at the finish but so happy to run and finish the stages. Everyone is determined present; everyone has a good reason for being here, even if I sometimes ask myself where they manage to find the motivation.

It's deep within each runner of course but it is so easy to give in and say "stop a minute".... Come what may, everyone knows the disappointment would be too great; you must never give in and most of all you have to wait for good feelings to return when you are going through bad times.

Patience in all its glory and the joy of attaining your goal, without giving in to the easy way, is what drives our runners, who now all have gaunt and tired faces.

Even Peter in no exception to the rule because every day he goes at top speed!

All reports of the 30. Stage

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LM to 31. Stage

Hwy Crossing 412/283 to Crossing Hwy 64/N1980 / 19.07.2011

51.6 km / 2221.3 km complete

32.1 mi / 1380.3 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		5:35:00
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		6:17:56
3.	08	Italo Orru		6:17:56

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		239:05:40
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		272:43:33
3.	08	Italo Orru		288:43:14

[Show completed list](#)**July 19th****Buffalo and more**

81°F at 5H38 am, i.e.

27°C Many of the runners asked me if there would be as many trucks today as yesterday, because highway 412 between Guymon and Woodward has heavy truck traffic.

Even if the shoulders are relatively wide, the danger of the magnet affect, as well as the deafening noise made by these huge vehicles is extremely tiring.

There are lots of exceptional load convoys transporting wind turbine component parts and they are all in a hurry because these over-sized trucks are all going well over 100 kph (62 mph).

But today as soon as we are out of Laverne, the runners take a small, quiet road that leads them to another even quieter road.

More than anything, it's very pretty with red soil and jagged rocks, which can't really be called canyons.

In any case the scenery has changed and all the runners agree it's super! But the really super thing is that the stage is only 52 km long and at the finish line the runners take time to talk and kid around so it's like vacation time.

The atmosphere is good and I am surprised that in spite of the heat, the fatigue and the days that pass, bad humor and weariness have not set in.

It is what I fear most at this mid-point of the race. Our caravan does not go unnoticed and if yesterday News Channel 4 was at the finish line for the first runners, today it's the newspaper « The Happer County Journal » that carries an article with photos.

As James says "we are Famous!" and yes, our heroes of the road draw attention.

Tonight we are sleeping at a school and we had a visit from Girl Scout Troop 741 from Buffalo, just to say Welcome and bring us lots of good things to eat. In these places where we are given lodging and sometimes a meal, the whole group makes a donation.

In the USA donations are not unusual and they make lots of things possible.

For example, large companies give important sums of money to universities because the government does not completely finance secondary education.

Larry, the director of the school of Balko, told me that they will use our donation to buy computer equipment for the students. If we had to drive miles and miles and then pay for hotel rooms the cost would be greater for all of us.

By making a donation we are giving something in exchange and we are also able to meet people.

We are not here just to receive and take advantage.

We are sharing with the people in this state, who are particularly welcoming, generous and curious about these runners who are passing through their neighborhood. Just a word about the problems the Japanese support team that has had with their vehicle over the past 15 days: D15: Dead battery D21: Flat tire D29: Keys locked inside D31: Flat tire It shows the complications that the teams can suffer.

Luckily for them, they have 3 vehicles for 4 runners so there is always a vehicle available to take care of the runners' refueling. At 8:00 pm everybody is in bed, ready to sleep in a room of the gym, which is in the shape of an igloo and is air conditioned.

Many thanks to Martin Adams, the director of Buffalo High School, who let us sleep here because the basket ball court, with a beautiful wood floor, was like an oven. Some of the support crews went for a swim in the public swimming pool behind the school; only one runner went for a dip, Patrick.

Most of the others are afraid of infecting their wounds: (blisters and various spots that have been chafed, especially by the straps of the Camel Bag).

All reports of the 31. Stage[Top of page](#)

LM to 31. Stage

Hwy Crossing 412/283 to Crossing Hwy 64/N1980 / 19.07.2011

51.6 km / 2221.3 km complete

32.1 mi / 1380.3 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		5:35:00
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		6:17:56
3.	08	Italo Orru		6:17:56

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		239:05:40
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		272:43:33
3.	08	Italo Orru		288:43:14

[Show completed list](#)**July 29th****Coming Soon**

Coming Soon

All reports of the 31. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 32. Stage**

Crossing Hwy 64/N1980 to Alva / 20.07.2011

76.4 km / 2297.7 km complete

47.5 mi / 1427.7 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:57:21
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:16:07
3.	08	Italo Orru		9:16:07

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		247:03:01
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		281:59:40
3.	08	Italo Orru		297:59:21

[Show completed list](#)**July 20th****why?**

There are no more questions to be asked.

We can't hope for better because this morning at 5:30 the temperature is almost 30°C (86°F).

The runners have agreed that tomorrow's start will be at 5:00 am. There is only one road on today's menu, Route 64 East and it is not just a straight line, there is the ever present head wind, which is crippling and exhausting.

It ventilates but for sure does not refresh. The humidity is rather low for the region but for us it is better to have dry heat than damp; it's easier to put up with. The shoulders are narrow and vehicles drive very, very fast.

There is an accident when a car grazes Mr. Koshita's shoulder.

The driver wasn't able to stop and didn't know what to do when she had a truck coming toward her on one side and Markus and M. Koshita on her side.

She was going much faster than the speed limit and lost control of her car.

The Sheriff came and made a report.

At the finish Mr. Koshita is very tired, his shoulder hurts but he seems to suffer more from fright than pain and he refuses to see a doctor or have an x-ray made.

He applies ice to relieve the pain.

This accident wakes the fears I had at the beginning and which I pushed aside.

An accident can happen so quickly and the runners are so tired that their attention and vigilance is lowered as the days pass, or even as the hours pass during a day.

They are tired and the slower runners who spend a great deal of time on the road are less and less alert as the time passes.

When you think that the last runner takes twice as much time as Rainer to cover the same distance you can understand the situation. As you have noticed, I try to give news of all the runners and to separate the runners in the official ranking from those who are outside the official ranking.

This point was raised yesterday at our meeting because the distinction was made when the runners had to make a decision about the race.

Who has a say in the matter, who can vote on a decision to be made, the runners in the official ranking or all the runners?

It is a question which raises other issues and stirs up thoughts.

After a rather long meeting on the subject I had to take a stand and try to explain.

By accepting to allow the runners to remain in the race but outside the ranking, it was obvious that problems might arise.

It's a choice I made. I thought mostly about giving a second chance to start again with renewed strength.

For example, it was the case for Markus, who stopped 3 days to get back in shape after D8, but who has run and finished all the stages since then.

Some runners are doing the race "à la carte," which is something I had not considered at the beginning.

For example, I run 1 day, I stop 2 days, I run 2 days, I stop 3 or I start and then stop because I don't feel well.

Among the 6 "stage runners" outside the ranking, there are different ways of managing this.

However, one thing they don't have, or they have less of than the 8 runners in the official ranking, is pressure.

If their body weakens what is the use of pushing.

If they aren't OK they stop and start again the next day.

That is not the case with our 8 runners in the ranking, who have everything to lose if they are not within the time limit because of a physical problem... We also have Peter and Anneke who are outside the ranking but who appear on the list but with the note n.a. So we have 3 distinct groups and 16 individuals with different personalities and who, in spite of probably different reasons, are all here to live a great adventure.

Because our group is small, everyone is thinking about everyone else, rather like a large family.

The atmosphere is good and nobody wants to cause tension or be a spoilsport.

Rainer has an important role in this group as the representative of the runners.

This role suits him perfectly because he is close to everyone and is interested in all the runners.

It's true, that he doesn't see anyone leading the race and that he wants to have regular news of all the runners behind him.

Each day after the finish he gets the news of the day.

As everyone knows that in the small world of ultra runners, Rainer is a phenomenon; at the end of a day no fatigue shows and he has legs which let him jump into the truck and go downstairs 4 at a time.

Once the finish line is crossed "Ultrakoch is Ultraendurant" and his human touch doesn't need advertising. After 1 month of race, Rainer is running away with the general ranking: almost 35 hours ahead of number 2 and 136 hours ahead of Bando. Bando who understood that he had to go slowly if he didn't want to drag injuries all the way to New York. Everyone has suffered from this horrible heat, most of all Jenni, who still is unable to manage being overated, which forces her to walk.

Since walking is painful for her it's very, very tough.

She started relatively fast and after 10H30 of race she has to force herself to walk.

She is wobbling on her legs and wants to stop the stage at 50 km so René, then Bérengère take turns walking with her to the finish line.

Her body and mind are exhausted so she goes to rest.

Anneke watches over her.

Tonight we are sleeping at the Northwestern Oklahoma State University at Alva.

It is a small university whose red brick buildings cover a block.

Another new place, a new place to discover, each day somewhere else...

All reports of the 32. Stage

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LM to 33. Stage

Alva to Medford / 21.07.2011

84.2 km / 2381.9 km complete

52.3 mi / 1480 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		9:12:20
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:52:23
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:52:23

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		256:15:21
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		292:52:03
3.	08	Italo Orru		308:51:44

Show completed list

July 21

Trucker s So Crazy Medford So Friendly

These truck drivers are crazy.

They race along on a road without shoulders.

The day started with recommendations: "The Oak and the Reed" there is no use fighting.

The important thing is to stay alive and if something abnormal happens in front of or next to you on the road you just have to jump or dive into the ditch.

But everything goes well and everyone moves over and some even stop.

The magnet effect, a speeding vehicle or two or three!

The traffic is sheer hell!

There are lots of cattle carriers – it must be the season.

Things are a bit more relaxed when we are in Alfalfa Country, where there are wide shoulders.

There is a salt lake nearby and thanks to the humidity the vegetation is rather lush.

The leaders of the race stop to admire a colony of turtles. Then there is the long asphalt ribbon sandwiched between prairies which are all yellow, no they are toasted.

In Medford Dea Kretchmar, Manager, City Clerk and his team are waiting for us.

The chamber of commerce prepared a buffet dinner for the runners, and once again we are treated like kings.

So many foreigners at one time in this small town of 1000 make for entertainment.

There are lots of questions which Rainer and Peter are happy to answer.

But once again it was a rough and long day.

Patrick and Italo thought it was more difficult today; reactions are relative and often connected to extreme fatigue.

For example, this morning Patrick wasn't awake.

He was looking everywhere for his cardio belt and he wasn't enthusiastic about the stage.

Such feelings at the start mean that you can have an average or even a bad day.

The one common dominator of these successive days is the happiness that can be seen on faces when the finish line is crossed.

There is no change in the ranking.

There were only 4 "stage runners" who started and 2 that finished: Markus and Mr. Ishihara.

Jenni still can't stand the heat and her lower right leg is swollen.

She can't walk in a straight line because of the heat and decides to stop just after 21 km.

According to Mr. Nami, a member of the Japanese support crew, Mr. Tanaka doesn't eat anything and only drinks water and he stops at km 40.

Alexandro seems tired.

Serge, who is always doing calculations in his head, figures he has lost 30% of his speed.

And the well-being he usually feels after 2 to 3 weeks of a race has not appeared.

He has intestinal problems and there is a sub-cutaneous bruise on the bottom of his foot.

In short, his morale is low. After two weeks of race he told me he thought he had not fully recuperated from his year-long race and he repeated it yesterday.

He is finally becoming realistic.

Even if they body is full of reserve energy, stretched too far it can rebel.

James is still all smiles.

Gemma runs with him for a few kilometers in the morning and they are enjoying their last days together.

Mr. Koshita is better, his shoulder moves in all directions and he demonstrates with wide movements.

What elief!

Bando, like Usain Bolt has his distinctive way of marking the finish of each stage: a big circle with his arms and hands raised toward the sun.

When Bando takes off his glasses he looks like a miner and we can't help smiling at his youthful demeanor, even though he is 43.

Bando beams and Bando makes us smile.

I have more and more respect for all these runners who don't stop running and I have the impression that at the end of each day they have successfully met a new challenge.

When everyone has crossed the finish line I can breathe easily again and free my mind of all these runners, who have become our runners.

Bertrand talked about "his Girls" when he spoke of Jenni and Anneke and of my "colt".

The big LANYFOOTRACE family progresses, like it or not, and always in 106°F (41°C) heat.

All reports of the 33. Stage

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LM to 34. Stage

Medford to Ponca City / 22.07.2011

67.6 km / 2449.5 km complete

42 mi / 1522 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:08:25
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:38:47
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:14:15

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		263:23:46
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		300:30:50
3.	08	Italo Orru		317:05:59

[Show completed list](#)

July 22nd

16 starters and 16 finishers

We are still in Oklahoma and it is in this state that we will be in the longest and where the runners will cover the most miles.

We arrived the morning of July 15 and we will leave during the day on July 26.

The temperature peaked today at 109°F (43°C) and the runners are having great difficulty getting used to such heat.

Ice is an important element in our day.

All the super markets, filling stations and grocery stores sell bags of ice cubes and we buy between 8 and 10 packs per day for our 6 ice chests.

If we wanted to have ice all day long we would have to double the quantity.

Some have been able to keep milk from one day to the next but they have to watch the cold chain.

Markus told me that at home he drinks almost no milk but that he has been drinking a lot lately.

Food is something very personal and there are no rules: everyone must eat with pleasure and all day long, which is exhausting.

It's hard on the taste buds, it's hard on the stomach and it can be hard on the morale.

Food should be varied so that eating will be a comfort, not drudgery.

But some runners eat very little during race time.

Rainer and Italo are examples of this.

Russel Secker is back; we are near his home town of Tulsa.

Ponca City is a mid-sized city of 25,000 inhabitants, which would be a huge city for us.

The halfway point of the number of days in the race is tomorrow.

the half way point or in the number of days in the race is tomorrow.

It's a figure which gives us the impression that we are progressing.

The days pass at incredible speed and another food and water distribution day is here.

Once again a forklift puts a palette with almost 1000 liters of water in our truck.

We are getting used to this because Bertrand, David and René did the work by hand.

This is a rather tedious day for the organizers but it highlights the race every 5 days, which come round very quickly.

If unpacking, repackaging, arranging and stowing make us irritable then we can take out our bad mood on the truck.

There were 16 starters this morning and most important 16 finishers!

We have not seen that since D26, eight days ago.

Hats off! On this race I no longer count by date or day but by stage number. The days that speed by have become Numbers.

All reports of the 34. Stage

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LM to 35. Stage

Ponca City to Pawhuska / 23.07.2011

72.7 km / 2522.2 km complete

45.2 mi / 1567.2 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:43:05
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:26:47
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:26:47

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		271:06:51
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		308:57:37
3.	08	Italo Orru		325:32:46

Show completed list

July 23rd

Halfway

At halfway (not exactly halfway in miles but almost) I would like to thank Lee Hecht, who has been translating my daily log from French into English for the website.

I have too little time and my English is too basic for me to write it directly in English.

This stage has been a bit greener but also more oppressive because of the high level of humidity in the air and the almost complete absence of wind in the afternoon.

We all feel sticky.

One positive point is that the runners for once are at ease on the road, thanks to good wide shoulders.

They don't have to move over every time a vehicle passes.

A bit of a break does everyone a lot of good.

It's the season for transfers in the football world, before the championships.

On the LANY FOOTRACE there are also some changes in the support crews.

This morning Géraldine and Véronique, Gérard's daughter and wife will leave the race after a 2-week stay.

Bernard will be Gérard's crew and he will no longer crew for Philippe.

The Japanese crew has accepted to crew for Philippe as long as he keeps to their rhythm.

If he does they have no problem.

With their 3 vehicles, the Japanese are organized in the following way: car A, B, C work in rotation; when A has finished it then falls back to follow C and so on.

I think the distance between each car is 2 miles.

Sylvano, the driver of the big camper is leaving tomorrow and the Jeep will have a trailer.

With 3 people and all the material they have, I wish them luck in making this mini-move; I say 3 people because Simone, the trainer and Mauro the photographer welcomed Lucas 3 days ago.

Lucas is concentrating on dietetics and mental preparation or management because we have passed the preparation stage.

If I have understood correctly, Alexandro uses several food supplements from different countries: UK, France, Italy, and USA, all of which are natural, without irradiation or chemical treatment.

The aim is to show that by using natural products it will be possible to reach New York without excessive weight loss or decrease in muscle mass and without vitamin or trace element deficiencies.

Alexandro is the only participant to have a major sponsor and a professional team with him; nevertheless, he is a runner like the others and is managing his race carefully and putting his whole heart into this adventure.

Alexandro started training for this race in November because he is not a regular runner.

Previously, he has only trained to participate in the Marathon des Sables a few years ago and it is his only other footrace experience.

Today there were two early finishes among the stage runners: Jenni and Tanaka.

Among the runners still in the race, Serge is having a big problem with a hematoma that prevents him from putting the ball of his foot on the ground.

He is trying to run twisted and it's painful to see.

He has had this problem once before.

Will he have the patience to continue this way for a few more days in the hope that the hematoma will be absorbed, since it is too deep to remove the liquid that is causing the pain?

With his morale at half mast it's not certain.

He finished last on this stage.

For the 7 other runners, everything is OK with no pains to report except fatigue and irritated skin on the back because of the heat and the camel bag for Patrick.

Italo's morale is low because he learned of his mother's death two days ago.

He has decided to stay in the race because it is something he has dreamed of for a long time and for which he has made many sacrifices, as have others here.

For each runner life goes on, to the rhythm of the miles and the minutes that tick off and to their heartbeat near the GPS watch.

There is one goal: New York.

The second half has begun for the next 35 days: D36 to D70.

All reports of the 35. Stage

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LM to 36. Stage

Pawhuska to Oolagah / 24.07.2011

80.1 km / 2602.3 km complete

49.8 mi / 1617 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:46:35
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:57:33
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:20:17

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		279:53:26
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		318:55:10
3.	08	Italo Orru		335:53:03

[Show completed list](#)

July 24th

A second part begins

Last night Pawhuska City was like a Western film, with lots of cowboys and cowgirls in jeans with fancy belts, hats and boots.

There was a rodeo a few miles away at 7:00 pm but that was when the runners were just crossing the finish line so there wasn't time to join the festivities. Today's route will please the runners, who want a change.

The vast prairies which have been toasted by the sun are becoming very boring. Oil pumps are everywhere, even

The vast plains which have been toasted by the sun are becoming very boring. Oil pumps are everywhere, even at the roadside.

Oklahoma is the 5th oil producing state, is in 3rd place for gas production and supplies 10% of the country's natural gas needs.

So there is nothing but huge expanses and cows but the subsoil is rich in energy resources.

To the north of Tulsa we finally see some green, with trees, rivers which have not run dry, turtles, snakes, beautiful homes and imposing ranches.

The sky clouds over and there is a brief rain storm which cools the atmosphere for about ten minutes.

Only a few of our runners got caught in it and they loved it. We have reached the halfway point, even though I must be careful because in my calculation of the total distance there is only a 5 km difference from the calculation I made during the first 5 days of the race.

One never knows what surprises the road, the weather, etc., etc., may hold for us.

So we are at the halfway point, Inch'allah!

Rainer, who had a few problems at the beginning: intestinal problems and heat exhaustion on D5 in the middle of the Mojave Desert, which put him in 4th place.

Since then he has been managing the heat well by using ice.

He is more and more at ease as the miles go by, in spite of the heat.

His pace is smooth and fast and his average speed has increased, even if it remains slightly under 10 KPH for the day.

He makes frequent and rather long stops so he is really running between 11 and 12 KPH!

With the exception of D5 he has won every stage.

Today to fight the intense heat, he bought himself an ice cream, which he was obliged to gulp down, rather than lick because in 110°F (44°C) heat it melted faster than he could eat it. It's worth mentioning that for once there is no wind and there are many changes of direction.

Maximum vigilance is necessary so an intersection won't be missed.... The road goes on.

All reports of the 36. Stage

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LM to 37. Stage

Oolagah to Vinita / 25.07.2011

61.1 km / 2663.4 km complete

38 mi / 1655 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:42:35
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:39:52
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:28:17

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		286:36:01
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		326:35:02
3.	08	Italo Orru		344:21:20

[Show completed list](#)

July 25th

Once upon a time

As in a dream, we wake up to rain, the rain we have been longing for.

The roads are wet, the air is full of humidity but it's 79°F (26°C) and we feel almost cool.

Day breaks with a cloud-filled sky, which pleases everyone, and the temperature is bearable for 5 hours.

A good fairy granted our wishes.

You who are suffering from the cold in Europe must be saying "what are they complaining about?" It's too bad we can't help balance the situation. As in a dream, our steps lead us to Foyil, and we have to make a small loop to see the Andy Payne statue.

A native of Foyil, he ran and won the first Trans America in 1928.

Andy Payne Boulevard is a small street parallel to the wide and heavily traveled Hwy 66, which crosses Foyil, where there is a service station.

Peter wanted to find a postcard but we are going to have to make them ourselves.

Here, Andy Payne is ancient history that doesn't really interest people.

On the other hand, Will Rogers is a celebrity in this region.

Born in Oologah, our starting point this morning, he was famous in the 20's and 30's in Hollywood as an actor and comedian.

Claremore, south of Foyil, is a city in his image; Will is everywhere.

And we are in the middle of nowhere because I'm not sure that Foyil appears on every map.

However, we are standing in front of an idol that demands respect: Andy Payne.

For more information, don't hesitate to go to the web and listen to the itv of Markus on the video. As in a dream, Gemma departed this morning, leaving James on his own again and in the hands of the organizers.

It is very difficult for James to live without crew and being separated from his sweetheart is especially hard because she was his ray of sunshine for 9 days.

Come back soon, Gemma because James is not following your advice on food!!! As in a dream, Peter met a turtle on the road and wanted to save it from certain death if it continued on its way across.

He hurried to pick it up but the turtle did not want to be held and bit peter's hand.

Luckily June was close by to bandage the wound, which was bleeding profusely.

Now Peter is no longer interested in playing lifeguard to turtles. Once upon a time a Japanese runner, Mr. Koshita, saw things nobody else saw.

He showed me a picture of a magnificent, old iron bridge lost in the trees.

The reason nobody else saw this bridge was that it wasn't on our route.

When Mr. Koshita plays tourist with his video or photo camera he follows signs that indicate points of historical interest.

He takes time to live....It's very nice and I rather envy him. Once upon a time there was a hematoma that was reabsorbed so now Serge can run almost normally.

It was time because attrition was getting to him. All goes well in the best of worlds, even if the planet continues to turn and the world to move, we are in our bubble with one goal: New York.

All reports of the 37. Stage

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LM to 38. Stage

Vinita to Miami / 26.07.2011

65.9 km / 2729,3 km complete

40.9 mi / 1695.9 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:05:42
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:11:52
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:33:29

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		293:41:43
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		334:46:54
3.	08	Italo Orru		352:54:49

[Show completed list](#)

July 26th

The last day in Oklahoma.

Today we welcome 2 new members in the organizing team: Karinne and Serge, from Betton, near Rennes.

They have come to reinforce our small team for 3 weeks, the length of their vacation.

Yesterday we found Route 66 again and followed it for a good part of the day.

We were even on some of the original sections.

The itinerary had frequent changes of direction and top vigilance was required, even though I reminded everyone at our morning meeting.

Serge ran past the 2nd intersection of the day.

It's the kind of mistake that always puts you in a bad mood.

On one hand the extra kilometers you run don't count and on the other the time lost is not deducted and counts in the total time of the race.

So you risk not making the cut-off time

so you risk not making the cut on time.

But Serge has found his normal pace and arrives within the time limit.

End of story; I hope it will serve as a lesson.

The race rules state that the runners must carry with them: a turn-sheet, a supply of water, money and their bib.

Sometimes one of these items is forgotten and even if they are not essential, I have to ensure that the rules are followed because apparently it is the job of the Race Director.

So I am not always easy to deal with, even though I realize I have to be flexible.

One point on which I am inflexible and uncompromising is security, especially because we are entering Missouri and the roads in this state have no shoulders.

The day was hot and humid, just like yesterday and no doubt like tomorrow!

A SPECIAL THANKS FOR LAUREL RICHARDS KANE OF AFTON STATION FOR THE AID STATION PREPARED – LOT OF RUNNERS STOPPED TO HAVE A LOOK TO THE VERY BEAUTIFUL OLD CARS COLLECTION.

All reports of the 38. Stage

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LM to 39. Stage

Miami to Carthage / 27.07.2011

78.5 km / 2807.8 km complete

48.8 mi / 1744.7 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:40:51
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:33:57
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:47:07

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		302:22:34
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		344:20:51
3.	08	Italo Orru		363:41:56

Show completed list

July 27th

3 states

This day is unique because we have been in 3 states: we left Oklahoma where we covered 885 km (550 miles), Kansas for 14 km (8.5 miles) and now we are in Missouri, where it will probably be as hot as Oklahoma and surely more humid.

This afternoon it's difficult to stand the heat and we don't need to read temperature signs which say 108°F (42.2°C)

The day started with a joyous event: Patrick celebrated his 51st birthday.

Gifts, and of course Happy Birthday sung by all and then a new day starts but not until there is a reminder of the security rules, especially since the roads seldom have shoulders in Missouri.

All the runners decided that the race will start at 5:00 am while we are in Missouri.

This is a special day because we cross the city of Joplin, population 45,000.

The year tornados tore through much of the center of the United States.

On Sunday, May 22, the day of the high school graduation, a devastating tornado whipped through, killing 159 people and causing untold damage. Three schools were destroyed.

Ruined homes were cleared by bulldozer, digging through the debris has finished and rebuilding has been announced.

Mobile home villages have been set up for the homeless.

Following Peter and Rainer's request, I found an association to whom a donation could be made for the children.

The schools of the region have a program called "Bright Futures" and tomorrow a representative will come at 4:45 pm to talk to us about the program.

Then at the finish Peter will present the donation we collected today, after a Peter's suggestion.

The TV station joined us just before Joplin.

Italo was interviewed and the cameraman ran a bit behind Jenni.

The runners continue to find lots of treasure along the road: a Sheriff's star, a little plastic frog, pennies, a plastic box, pearl necklaces...

This stage is difficult as much due to changes of direction as to the discomfort of the race caused by the heat.

Some of the runners are not very attentive and two receive penalties:

Mr. Tanaka in a moment of insanity found himself in the middle of the road on a portion of the itinerary which I had stressed was particularly dangerous in this morning's meeting (special mention!)

And our unhappy James, who is finding it difficult to be without crew and who in a blind curve (just before km 70) was in the middle of the left side of the road and seemed to be concentrating on his road sheet and didn't hear our car coming and we were both surprised to find ourselves nose to nose. I have to say that it was the only time in the day where the 2 refuelings were 1H10 apart.

For example, after a stop at McDonald's, he doesn't eat anything at the refueling 3H10 later and after 7H40 of the race.

And he didn't eat anything at the last refueling, 2 miles from the finish because he had a smoothie at the last McDonald, 1 mile from the finish.

It's very difficult to regulate things and his refueling sheet is a mess.

I know that my team has problems managing the situation with James, who is in a bad mood today.

In short, James is tired but everyone is fatigued, even the organizers.

We are at the stage when everyone has to make an effort.

Gemma left instructions, some of which are feasible and other not, such as going to Subway to buy him sandwiches or milk shakes at McDonalds.

It's difficult for James to manage things himself, which is something we noticed on the first part of the race; however, with fatigue and Gemma's departure, it is even more true.

We have trouble suggesting he eat healthy food, which Gemma could do without problem and he finds comfort in hamburgers, pizzas and smoothies.

There were 3 McDonalds along our route today and he stopped at all 3.

This allows me to mention again that it is difficult to undertake such a race without assistance.

It requires a capacity for autonomy and the 4 participants who joined this way did so with full knowledge of the facts because the rules of the race stipulate that under no circumstances will the organizers replace a support crew

Alexandro had a difficult day.

I saw Simone walking a lot with him.

According to Lucas this evening, Simone walked or ran 11 km with his runner.

At the rear of the race, Mr. Koshita is 9 miles (14.5 km) from the finish and very close to the cutoff time.

I was afraid but phew, he must have put his camera away and pressed on the accelerator.

Bando lost 8 minutes for an identify check by the police, who it seems were being zealous.

We are very pleased to have Karinne and Serge with us and today thanks to their presence it was possible for us to make very clear marks on the road with flour, a long and boring job, which kept the runners from getting lost.

And they also helped us distribute liquid and solid food, which is just as boring as preparing it every 5 days.

At this stage of the race, fatigue carries weight and patience is wearing thin.....

All reports of the 39. Stage

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LM to 40. Stage

Carthage to Springfield / 28.07.2011

84.5 km / 2892.3 km complete

52.5 mi / 1797.2 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		9:13:42
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:13:54
3.	08	Italo Orru		11:01:54

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		311:36:16
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		354:34:45
3.	08	Italo Orru		374:43:50

[Show completed list](#)

July 28th

Everything is relative

Hot, not so hot Tough, not so tough Heavy traffic, light traffic Easy terrain, not so easy terrain It would be a good idea to classify the stages: 1 foot = easy, 2 feet = difficult, 3 feet = very difficult.

Really, difficulty is relative and it depends on the moment and the way each individual feels.

A good day, a good state of mind, less or no pain; everything is so much easier.

A bad day, a nagging pain, a worry and everything becomes more difficult.

Rainer is the only one for whom regularity seems to have a meaning.

All the others manage as follows: they like it, they don't like it, they are in pain, they are not in good form, they have bad feelings, the route is unpleasant, the road slants, everything is OK, the wind in the right direction, it was easier today, the scenery was monotonous... In short, so many elements that mean each runner lives his race within himself and everything is relative.

Rainer continues to be impressive and he takes the road as it comes: desert or city, nothing bothers him. Patrick hangs in and seems determined to stay in 2nd place till the end.

The days are more or less long and more or less difficult, depending on his level of fatigue and the pain signals he gets from his body. Italo is having a problem with a pain at the arch of his foot and he is tired.

He thought this was a difficult stage. Serge, after 3 bad days, is better but he had diarrhea today and his face did not look untroubled.

Like Italo, he says today was particularly difficult. Alexandro had a very bad day but when he is on the road it is difficult to tell because his body and face are always the same I think. He is patient and must wait for better days, hopefully tomorrow James seems better today than he was yesterday, or at least he is in a better mood.

He walks the up hills and runs down.

Today it's "false flat," with lots of ups and downs.

Mr. Koshita has a particularly difficult day, especially after an inconsiderate motorist throws a half empty bottle out of his car and it hits his ankle. He is angry and in pain or perhaps it's the other way around.

Since yesterday, he knows that he will just make the time limit; he is even a bit late if he hopes to arrive before the 15 hours allowed for today's stage.

He is going to have to use his "turbo" and spend his last hour running, accompanied by Philippe.

They arrive happy as kings and their effort is rewarded because they are 12 minutes before the cut-off time.

It was a real Damocles sword hanging over Mr. Koshita's head. Bando, always the same, has found some energy.

He is singing and dancing again and full of humor at the finish line.

This evening he tells us that he looks like a panda with the white mark from his glasses and suntan all around.

For the rest of the troops, Peter is fine and spares no effort.

However, he is always tired at the finish and needs 10 minutes of calm before he has anything to drink or can start talking... Anneka is on the road and always in a good mood.

Jenni decides to start this morning and runs 62 km, and then Anneka reaches the finish line.

On the road she finds lots of treasures and today she came back with a toy hedgehog, yesterday a frog.

Sometimes she gives us these treasures, like Italo.

It would have been interesting to make a treasure box with all the things that everybody finds on the road.

Among the stage runners, 3 finish: (Mr. Tanaka will not start for 7 days following the penalty, Mr. Ishihara is recovering from an edema on his ankle and Jenni didn't finish the stage) Gérard is finally back in the race since D34.

He runs consecutive stages and at last seems to be at ease. Markus, in spite of the heat, has found his rhythm and is as airy as usual.

He and Alex, they are the two tallest runners.

They run with very straight backs and swing their arms when they walk, which gives them a lively pace. Philippe

stayed near Mr. Koshita after his mishap and was able to follow Mr. Koshita who speeded up his pace out of spite.

They are the only two not to stop at the old Sinclair service station of Halltown.

Jeannette, the owner of this museum, offered water and a refreshing scarf to the runners, without it having been organized beforehand.

Mr. Koshita tells me that he didn't have time and I know he is right.

This time the race takes precedence over discovery and a photo. They finished hand in hand and so happy.

He didn't think he would cross the finish line before the 15 hours were up and while they were toasting their exhausting day some runners were already asleep....Even the time for rest is relative!

All reports of the 40. Stage

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LM to 41. Stage

Springfield to Philipsburg / 29.07.2011

71.6 km / 2963.9 km complete

44.5 mi / 1841.7 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:45:17
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:26:30
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:52:57

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		319:21:33
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		363:01:15
3.	08	Italo Orru		383:36:47

[Show completed list](#)

July 29th

Sprinfield Missouri

coming soonWe are at the outskirts of Springfield, the largest city we have crossed since we left Los Angeles, population 150,000 and the 3rd largest city in Missouri, after Saint Louis ad Kansas City.

Those two cities are located on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

The race started at the now usual hour of 5:00 am

The 16 km across the city are difficult; at daybreak it is humid and the heat rises from the ground to make the atmosphere stifling.

Missouri is a lush green and very damp state in the center of the USA.

Originally inhabited by Indians, it was explored by the French and attached to Louisiana before it was sold to the United States in 1803.

The sky remains milky white for a good part of the day, before clouding over and two runners are delighted to be caught in a lovely rain storm: Alexandro and James. Markus, just shortly behind James only got a few drops.

We are running along the Interstate highway I-44 and will sleep near Conway.

Everyone arrives safely.

Rainer seems to be suffering but says that no, everything is OK.

Jenni had a good race, after being somewhat winded.

The humidity and occasionally the total absence of wind gives the impression that you can't breathe.

No doubt about it, this race is difficult, very difficult but Missouri is so pretty.

All reports of the 41. Stage

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LM to 42. Stage

Philipsburg to St Robert / 30.07.2011

83.1 km / 3047 km complete

51.6 mi / 1893.3 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:44:50
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Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		328:06:23
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2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:56:16
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:44:48

[Show completed list](#)

2.	05	Patrick Malandain		372:57:31
3.	08	Italo Orru		394:21:35

[Show completed list](#)**July 30th****3000 KM**

At the start the weather is cool, and then the humidity wraps itself around us from head to toe.

The sky darkens and there is the rumbling of a storm.

Buckets of water fall on the heads of most of the runners.

Only Peter, Rainer and Patrick, who arrive before the 10 hours of the race, miss the deluge.

Lightning splits the sky in two, and strikes close to the middle of the race.

Jenni and Anneke take refuge in the car of the girls who are crew, while Alex, James and the Japanese continue to walk in the rain in spite of the fact that they can see almost nothing.

But they are happy, even if rain means chaffing and can causes problems for the feet. The primary benefit is that the temperature falls to below 80°F and does not rise before the end of the stage and the day.

Hurrah!

Some of the runners feel the storm's affect on their speed but Alex and James are both particularly slow.

James doesn't talk about his start and stops at almost every service station along the road.

For a week now we are in a more urban environment. The trees and the forests, the ascents and descents, the streams, the animals, the houses and the barns make a rural atmosphere not very far from the Interstate highway I-44, where we celebrate the clocking of 3000 km. This won't impress our Anglo-Saxon friends but for the Europeans and the Japanese it represents a good part of the road.

It's a nice round figure that has a good sound.

8 runners, plus Anneke and Peter stop at the sign, whereas some go right past.

I have difficulty accepting the fact that there are two races in the race but I guess that's a fact, even if it doesn't make me happy.

Mr. Koshita runs a good stage, like Rainer, who bought two new pairs of shoes.

Jenni had her hair cut by June and ran a good stage: Could there be cause and effect?

The arch of Italo's foot seems to be better.

Patrick is more alone than before but he isn't bored; he likes solitude.

Solitude is also the daily diet of June and Fabienne, who never see anyone during the race. Each is alone in her vehicle.

June crews for Peter and Rainer and Fabienne for Patrick.

These women never complain and they move right along.

This evening Berengère and Emy are frozen because they also got caught in the storm.

Even a hot shower doesn't warm them up.

René broke out in a cold sweat when he couldn't see Italo for refueling.

He drove miles and miles thinking he had taken a wrong turn but no, Italo had just found shelter and was waiting for the storm to pass.

Phew!

The race continues...

All reports of the 42. Stage**Top of page****LM to 43. Stage**

St Robert to St James / 31.07.2011

66.5 km / 3113.5 km complete

41.3 mi / 1934.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

[Daily stage results](#)[Total race results](#)

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:37:54
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:50:02
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:27:28

Show completed list

1.	06	Rainer Koch		334:44:17
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		380:47:33
3.	08	Italo Orru		402:49:03

Show completed list

July 31th

Souvenir

I let a day go by and must admit that I no longer know the date.

Each stage is so full that it cancels the preceding one.

Luckily, I have the photos to remind me of D43,

which begins badly because the « Race Director » (that's me) is particularly annoying first thing in the morning.

I insist that everyone wears a yellow vest with reflective stripes.

The roads in Missouri are far too dangerous to leave pedestrians wandering around without reflective gear, even if there is little traffic.

All it takes is one car.

So I am fuming and my irritation is passed on to the runners....

So the fireflies take off for a new day.

Everyone loves the itinerary, which is in a sea of green.

Mist and sunshine herald the day and it is absolutely magnificent, especially because there is little traffic.

The situation deteriorates as we leave Rolla.

The road is a roller coaster with no visibility and curves that are uncomfortable and a "pain in the feet".

Alexandro and James are dragging and very tired.

They plod on, like it or not, and they don't complain; however, we are watching them and trying to understand and find solutions to help them get back into top form.

Serge is in somewhat the same condition but to a lesser degree.

He lacks all energy, which he thinks is completely abnormal.

Even if the other runners don't talk about it, their faces show it.

This stage seems difficult to a lot of them, even if we no longer use comparatives: more, less, equal.

Every day is a step toward New York, period!

Bando is suffering from an itchy rash on a good part of his body, following yesterday's rain.

That plus the sun, the heat and perspiration has set his body on fire from his knees to his chest.

Other runners also suffer from being overheated and from chafing.

Mr. Koshita seems to be making out all right and maintains a good pace.

Among the stage runners, Markus is in top form; his wife Brandi is a native of Missouri and he is happy to cross the state, which he likes a lot.

The humidity (70% today) with a temperature of 35°C (96°F) doesn't appear to affect him.

His crew, Klaus, who has been with him for a few weeks, is always smiling and even tempered, which is very nice.

Jenni has perked up and her morale is improving day by day.

Jenni's physical sensations and morale affect the way she functions so her head and body need to be in harmony for her to advance.

She is running stage after stage and it's a pleasure to see.

Gérard took a day off because of the problem he has with the sole of his foot.

Mr. Ishihara had a good stage.

Philippe is hanging in and since the Japanese crew has taken him under its wing his morale is good and he has been able to run more stages.

He seems to be enjoying each day, even if they are sometimes difficult.

In the end. there is always a lot to sav.....

All reports of the 43. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 44. Stage****St James to Owensville** / 01.08.2011

46.8 km / 3160.3 km complete

29.1 mi / 1963.7 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		4:20:53
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		5:22:45
3.	08	Italo Orru		5:30:30

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		339:05:10
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		386:10:18
3.	08	Italo Orru		408:19:33

[Show completed list](#)**August 1st****New Month**

Yesterday, our arrival in Saint James pleased James because the hotel is next to a McDonald's.

James crossed the finish line, ran around the fly and then raced to McDo, without coming to see us.

We joke that we plan to make a McDo truck to follow James all day long and serve him Wild Berry Smoothies, which are his favorites.

Yesterday Ludovic arrived.

He will join William to crew for Serge.

Ludo is a physiotherapist and he will give Serge some much-needed massage until the end of the race.

Ludo has crewed for Serge since 1999, on previous long races.

He knows Serge well, and fits in with the team right away.

Today the atmosphere at the start is sinister; the word may be a bit strong but the ambience is not good.

Everyone is sitting down, even though the meeting only lasts 2 ½ minutes.

It's difficult to get up when it's time to start and faces are more and more closed, almost austere.

Serge said to me "Laure, you will see, after 1 month everyone will be tired and that is when it will be difficult for everyone: runners, crews and organizers".

After 6 weeks, running on American roads it is beginning to wear on all of us.

You want everything to go without a hitch but impatience and a bad mood give an overly sensitive tone to the most insignificant events.

It's no longer possible to stand back for the long view; everything happens quickly and at the least annoyance things take a negative turn too quickly.

I expected to see some pleasure reflected in faces this morning, or at least less tension at the start of this short stage (47 km = 29 miles) but no, it's the same closed faces and haggard eyes.

And yet, many runners were waiting for these two days to sleep and recuperate a bit.

Let's hope that our best runners will sleep all afternoon, like sleeping beauty, even if their prince and princess don't come to wake them, the fairy tale will continue...

All reports of the 44. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 45. Stage****Owensville to Hermann** / 02.08.2011

48.1 km / 3208.4 km complete

29.9 mi / 1993.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		4:14:00
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		5:18:20
3.	08	Italo Orru		5:28:30

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		343:19:10
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		391:28:38
3.	08	Italo Orru		413:48:03

[Show completed list](#)**August 2nd****Hermann**

Hermann was originally a Germany colony of grape growers.

During prohibition, the city was one of the biggest wine producers in the country and it was controlled by the government.

It's a short stage which has a holiday atmosphere. We would gladly take a few days of vacation and rest in this small city on the banks of the Missouri River but that's just a dream because tomorrow our route continues with a long stage.

The runners are at least lucky not to spend their afternoon on the road because the temperature is still over 100°F (38°C), with humidity at 70%.

It's always more difficult to put up with humid heat, like damp cold. I don't look forward to the next two weeks, which will be difficult for two reasons: Extreme fatigue and decreased alertness.

This condition applies to everyone: runners, support crews and the organizers. The heat, which sticks to our skin during this year's unusually torrid summer in the USA.

We will enter the Eastern part of the United States once we cross the Mississippi River, two days from now.

It will no doubt be more monotonous, the bigger cities will surely be more difficult on the morale and the road book will be harder to follow. The finish is still far away even if this evening we are drawing closer to the 2000 mile mark, just the other side of the Missouri River. I think that when we get through the next 15 days, the finish will seem close and we will see the end of the tunnel.

Let's hang in there.....

All reports of the 45. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 46. Stage**

Hermann to Bowling Green / 03.08.2011

88.4 km / 3296.8 km complete

54.9 mi / 2048.5 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:57:51
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:23:48
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:39:53

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		352:17:01
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		401:52:26
3.	08	Italo Orru		424:27:56

[Show completed list](#)**August 3rd****Missouri 2000**

Username: Missouri

Password : 2000 miles

Welcome to the wonderful world of the Los Angeles-New York Footrace

Open the door of your air conditioned room; take a deep breath of hot humid air

Run 10 km and pass the 2000-mile mark

Continue straight on - turn right, then left on a beautiful shadeless track

It's 11:00 am, a breeze comes up and a north wind cools the air, smile, you're being filmed!!!

Your legs hurt but it is stronger than anything, stronger than you; New York pulls you like a magnet

The wonderful world of the LANY Footrace is within striding distance

The alarm goes off, it's time to get up and start a new day.

All reports of the 46. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 47. Stage****Bowling Green to Hannibal** / 04.08.2011

72.4 km / 3369.2 km complete

45 mi / 2093.5 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:49:35
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:21:35
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:59:41

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		359:06:36
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		410:14:01
3.	08	Italo Orru		433:27:37

[Show completed list](#)**August 4th****Coming Soon**

Coming Soon

All reports of the 47. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 48. Stage****Hannibal to Pittsfield** / 05.08.2011

76 km / 3445.2 km complete

47.2 mi / 2140.7 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:58:24
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:58:03
3.	08	Italo Orru		9:31:37

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		366:05:00
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		419:12:04
3.	08	Italo Orru		442:59:14

[Show completed list](#)**August 5th****Rainy Illinois**

We turned a page this morning when we passed the Mississippi River, the geographic boundary between the Western and Eastern United States.

The runners can't see much from the brand new bridge, which is semi highway because it is night.

They run against the traffic so they can't even see the sign which says we are entering Illinois.

The only luck they have is to get wet because as soon as we enter this 6th state, there is a cloud burst as heavy as both Alexandro's and James's beards put together.

With the exception of Italo, who takes out his rain cape, the others run in T-shirts or jackets.

Our runners are happy to have the rain but it must not last too long.

Luckily, at the beginning of the afternoon it stopped, which allowed heat to rise from the asphalt.

This stage ends on the banks of the Illinois River.

In two days we have crossed legendary rivers of phenomenal length because the Mississippi and the Missouri Rivers together total more than 6,800 km. The Missouri flows into the Mississippi north of Saint Louis, and from there it flows all the way to New Orleans.

In 1993 both rivers were in flood and Jesse and Mickaël, who organized the race that year, had to stop it before Hannibal and make a long detour by car before it could resume.

This time there is no problem because of the heat wave.

This summer is relatively dry.

It is obvious very early on that the terrain will be relatively flat and we will have a daily diet of corn fields.

Peter is happy to have the flatness and even a nice downhill at the end of the stage.

Rainer speeds up his pace and finishes 2 hours ahead of Patrick, who is astonished by such a time difference.

Both Bando and James are plagued by pains and injuries; they both seem to suffer from inflammation on the right side.

James takes consolation in finding at least one McDonalds on the road every day.

Serge has found his normal form and a somewhat faster pace, like Alexandro, who in spite of everything starts every day walking slowly for the first miles.

Storms are forecast for tomorrow but that's another day.

All reports of the 48. Stage

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LM to 49. Stage

Pittsfield to New Berlin / 06.08.2011

68.3 km / 3513.5 km complete

42.4 mi / 2183.2 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:14:30
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:40:20
3.	13	Serge Girard		7:47:45

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		372:19:30
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		426:52:24
3.	08	Italo Orru		451:22:19

[Show completed list](#)

August 6th

Storm

The day began with a beautiful spectacle: for almost two hours distant lightening split the sky and there was an impressive storm which we were happy to watch from a distance.

At the meeting this morning, Serge again brought up the problem of the camel bag, saying that he did not see any reason for carrying, it since he has not carried any water in it for two weeks.

He sees no need for it now that the weather is not so hot and we are in a more urban environment.

I know that there are two other runners who don't carry any water but as I have explained many times, this item of the race rules is beyond the control of the organizers, since a runner can say that he has just finished drinking and he has to wait to see his crew to fill up the bag.

So we are operating on the basis of trust.

So Serge openly admits he is breaking the rules and for two runners, who don't appear to have anything to feel guilty about, this is unacceptable.

The 30 minute penalty isn't enough for them and this evening they ask Rainer to disqualify him.

It seems to be a settling of scores, but it is up to the runners in the official race to vote whether to disqualify the runner, since it is a request by 2 people.

The vote will take place tomorrow morning.

Another vote will take place this evening to know whether the runners are in agreement to ease the camel bag rules, so that wearing it is left to the discretion of each runner.

A vote will also be taken concerning the morning start time.

Rainer and I are losing a lot of time to settle this matter and it is costing Rainer time he needs to rest and me energy I cannot devote to the logistics and the preparation of the route, the stages and communicating with my team and with the runners.

I don't thank Serge for playing rebel (he doesn't realize the consequences of this), nor Markus and Alexandro, who are far from being able to say that they are completely commendable as far as holding to the rules is concerned.

However, I see that my flexibility on the first part of the race has done me a bad turn and I almost regret having been so relaxed.

But things will be better tomorrow.

The most important thing and the essence of the race are « to enjoy it ».

We must not regret being together on the road with a unique goal: "all together in New York".

So the route continues.

All reports of the 49. Stage

[Top of page](#)

LM to 50. Stage

New Berlin to Decatur / 07.08.2011

87.4 km / 3600.9 km complete

54.3 mi / 2237.5 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:44:24
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:02:20
3.	08	Italo Orru		10:02:20

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		381:03:54
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		436:54:44
3.	08	Italo Orru		461:24:39

[Show completed list](#)

87.4

In the country of cowboys and Indians

A full meeting at 4:45 AM and after a quick coffee; it's time to tackle serious matters. The most important: as usual, two or three details about today's itinerary.

Then Rainer takes over to give the result of the votes: 1) as to whether wearing the camel bag should be left up to the individual runners, 6 people are for, and 4 are against.

Phew, it's not a tie so the organizers don't have to settle the matter.

2) 8 participants wish to keep the start time at 5:00 am until August 26, so there will be not be changes which could keep us from knowing where we are.

Then Rainer announces the request that Serge be disqualified.

He voices his opinion that yes, serge did break the rules but at least he was honest enough to admit it. The disqualification request, which to me is serious, was announced to Serge 20 minutes before the meeting.

It came as a surprise to quite a few of the runners and crew.

Alexandro took the floor to explain the reason for the request: Serge admits to not carrying a reserve of water in his camel bag, so he is a liar and a cheat.

Markus does not speak because he is no longer part of the official race. Serge steps out of the room and we take a vote, which is not secret.

9 of the ten voters want Serge to remain in the race.

I close the meeting by saying that one can only be disappointed that such a thing has happened.

We are in a bad cowboys and Indians film, where the 3 actors concerned are the bad guys.

Even if it's not possible for everyone to live in harmony and agree all the time, it's still sad to reach such a level of dissension in a group of 30 people.

So the abscess has been broken and gangrene will not set in. Time is short and we must move on to our reason for being here; a day of footrace and sharing in our respective roles: runners, crews and organizers, in order to live the fabulous adventure of running across the United States.

It's a very long day, which ends at 14H50, even later for Bando, who finished before the cut off.

He is battling with a serious inflammation which does not let up.

Patrick and Italo are together for the first time in two weeks and finish hand in hand.

It had been too long since that had happened and they are delighted to run the second part of the race together.

It's heartwarming to see. We finally ended the evening at 10:00 pm, looking for Mr. Ishihara, who disappeared after the finish.

Perhaps he went to the wrong room; however, it seems strange that he would not show up before now.

Perhaps he had a heart attack.

Papa takes a flash light and looks all over for him.

Then all of a sudden he appears, fresh as a daisy.

He did indeed get into the wrong room and had a good nap.

We all breathe more easily and head for bed.

There has been enough emotion for one day.

All reports of the 50. Stage

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LM to 51. Stage

Decatur to Tuscola / 08.08.2011

67.3 km / 3668.2 km complete

41.8 mi / 2279.3 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:22:13
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:13:37
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:13:37

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		387:26:07
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		445:08:21
3.	08	Italo Orru		469:38:16

Show completed list

August 8th

Calm returns to the LA-NY Footrace

This stage is relatively short, compared to what is waiting for the runners in the next few days. This morning we are joined by Tony Turner who was contacted by Brandi.

He is a member of the Decatur Running Club, which has about 80 members.

Every year he organizes a 15 km race around the lake.

Several of the members came to start the day with our runners.

They will also set up a feeding station in Hammond, at approximately km 40.

They will have a long wait because Rainer left very fast and at mid race there are 7 miles between him, Patrick and Italo.

But for the moment, the start is at the entrance to Decatur, and the runners will cross the center of the city, which is fast asleep at this early hour.

I try as much as possible to have the stages finish at the entrance to a city so that the start the next morning will take place while the city sleeps.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible. As we leave Decatur, a 57 km straight line is waiting for the runners: Highway 36 East.

The only scenery amounts to fields of corn and soy beans on the left, on the right, behind us and in front of us.

The one positive point is that the terrain is flat.

The 28°C temperature is hard to take because the humidity continues to be high. Sarah, who has joined Rainer and Peter, lends a hand to June for refueling and to guide them.

Peter is often fast, head down in his handle bars and I fear he will get lost.

Patrick and Italo are twin brothers.

Italo finds lot of treasure on the road and gives gifts to the girls in the different groups.

He finds a half dollar, which I had never seen before.

It will surely be a good luck charm.

Serge has got his speed back but the humidity bothers him.

Alexandro tells Bérengère that he is going to have to change legs in New York.

James's pains migrate, sometimes behind the thigh or in front on the tibia, or in the groin, left or right.

This morning he was limping but this evening his pace is more balanced. Mr. Koshita was the only one to see black horse-drawn Amish carriage and it made his day.

Finally Bando crosses the finished line.

Bérengère went to be with him for the last few hundred meters.

We tend to worry about Bando, our red lantern, who advances with resignation.

Courage, courage.... Peter arrives exhausted and unhappy to see that his time is posted 2 minutes later than what his watch shows.

We check with Rainer, who arrives just afterward, as well as with the other organizers' watches.

Peter must have a problem with his watch because in the end the time given by the organizers is correct.

It is worth mentioning that all watches are started on the word "Go" and we have a total of 6 stop watches among the organizers.

I wear two, one on each wrist, plus my GPS watch when I go on reconnaissance for the next day.

We are well armed but when an error is noticed it's always good to verify everything.

After all, this is a race and time is of the utmost importance. Anneke is tired but always very pleasant.

She takes care of Jenni and expends a great deal of energy trying to find a solution to every problem.

They are "our girls" and we take good care of them because Bertrand (part of the organizing team the first month of the race) is monitoring the situation from France (smile). Things don't change for the stage runners.

Markus seems to be in good form, Jenni, who is having problems with blisters on her feet, threw in the sponge on yesterday's stage after 50 km.

Today she finishes the stage.

Mr. Tanaka stops a lot at the beginning of the stage because he has tendon problems.

Gérard doesn't start because he has pain at the back of his left thigh.

Mr. Ishihara continues to run good stages and today Philippe takes 40 winks in the shade of a tree but manages to finish within the cut-off

All reports of the 51. Stage

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LM to 52. Stage

Tuscola to Rockville / 09.08.2011

91.4 km / 3759.6 km complete

56.8 mi / 2336.1 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:20:55
2.	08	Italo Orru		9:37:39
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:35:40

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		395:47:02
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		455:44:01
3.	08	Italo Orru		479:15:55

[Show completed list](#)

August 8th

Long Day

My stomach is in knots when I see all the small fireflies of the LANY Footrace set out for a very long day.

91.4 km, it is the longest distance that has been run since the start.

The cut-off time will be 16 hours, which is at 9:00 pm.

It's twice as long as a normal work day in France, which gives you an idea of the kind of day that will lead us into Indiana, the 7th state crossed and the 8th if you count the 14 km we ran in Kansas, between Oklahoma and Missouri. This long day will allow me to update the website, which has been somewhat neglected for the past days, due to lack of time, and to work on the stage finishes and lodging, which surprisingly are not easy to reserve in the Eastern part of the USA, even though school holidays will soon be over. And during this time, the runners follow their itinerary, which has no change direction. It's a straight line with fields on both sides and then the entrance to Indiana is marked by a series of curves, the presence of trees and forest before we enter Rockville, a small town that charms everyone because it is so picturesque.

Because the motels are not big enough, the group stays in two different places: a charming small motel which looks more like a B&B with the finish line in the owner's garden.

It's almost like being at home.

The second group is lodged across from the Court House in what used to be the prison.

It's a surprising place and doesn't leave anyone indifferent.

But to get back to the race, for the leaders, it was very, very fast.

Peter, in top form, arrives at the finish line a few minutes after the organizers.

Phew, we got there just in time! Rainer, like a canon ball, shoots to the finish line in record time: 8H20'.

Faster and faster, Rainer has found his normal rhythm of the Trans Europe and the Transe Gaule: with an average almost 11 kph. If you deduct stops the real speed of his race is exceeds this average, which gives you something to think about.

In spite of everything, he won't be able to finish the race with an average speed of 10 kph, because to do that he would have to run the 18 remaining stages at an average of more than 11.5 kph. Italo takes 2nd place, with an average of 9.5 kph.

His speed continued to increase during the entire stage.

Italo's best performance is 11H30 for 100 km and today he surpassed that time.

51 days of training pays off!

It gives a wonderful boost and he is beaming when he arrives. Patrick sees his son at the roadside.

He came from France with friends and will follow the race at a distance to the finish.

Patrick is happy and had a big smile, even if he is a bit disappointed to take only 3rd place on this stage. Serge advances at a good, regular pace, like a metronome, and shows neither pleasure nor disappointment at the finish; it's just a one more day of the program.

But he does want to know the length of tomorrow's stage! Mr. Koshita always seems to be in fine form when he can run a long stage.

He always leaves faster in such a case and forgets about tourism and concentrates on the race.

He finishes slightly before the cut-off time.

Bravo! Alexandro stops several times in the shade with his crew.

He leaves for Indianapolis and I don't see him at the finish line.

But this morning he tells me that he's feeling OK. James walks to the finish line, carrying a bag from Burger King which he bought at the entrance to the town.

He takes off his camel bag with a grunt of satisfaction before eating his Whopper and writing to Gemma in London.

As is his habit, he tells me that everything is OK; even though we both know it is not the case.

I jokingly tell him and he replies that it's a kind of an auto persuasion to say everything is better every day. Finally, Bando arrives after dark, exhausted.

He finishes the stage with Philippe and our two courageous runners fall into each other's arms at the finish line.

It's a moving moment for the whole organizing team to welcome them after almost 15H46' spent on the road.

It's 9:46 pm because we have set our watches ahead one hour since we entered this new state.

Luckily, we will remain in this time zone until we reach New York.

After such a day, to lose 1 hour of sleep weights heavily in the balance but this morning Alexandro's suggestion to wait until tomorrow to move the clocks forward in order not to lose an hour of sleep, is voted down 6 to 3, with one abstention.

Too bad: I think it was a good idea. Among the stage runners, Gérard does not start.

Mr. Tanaka stops en route.

Markus and Mr. Ishihara each have a good race.

Jenni hangs in, even though she is suffering a great deal, and crosses the finish line with great emotion, falling into the arms of Bérengère's, who accompanied her on the last 16 kilometers.

Anneke, who is constantly watching over her, also has a very tough day but does not forget to offer her crew and James a divine apple crumble which she purchased in Dana.

For Philippe, it's an incredible day: taking care of Bando and motivating the two of them make it one of his longest days.

All reports of the 52. Stage

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LM to 53. Stage

Rockville to Indianapolis / 10.08.2011

83.7 km / 3843.3 km complete
 52 mi / 2388.1 mi complete
 8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|---|---------|
| 1. | 06 | Rainer Koch |  | 7:35:52 |
| 2. | 08 | Italo Orru |  | 9:14:50 |
| 3. | 05 | Patrick Malandain |  | 9:19:10 |

Show completed list

Total race results

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| 1. | 06 | Rainer Koch |  | 403:22:54 |
| 2. | 05 | Patrick Malandain |  | 465:03:11 |
| 3. | 08 | Italo Orru |  | 488:30:45 |

Show completed list

August 10th

Another Day

With one hour less sleep, it is very difficult to get up.

The sliver of moon in the immensity of the sky gives no light and we are off on another long stage, which will take us to the outskirts of Indianapolis, the capital of Indiana, which is known for its automobile race circuit.

The first kilometers are relatively dangerous and I ask everyone to wear their head lamps because with the change of time there will be 2 hours of darkness.

The temperature is mild, 64°F; sweaters are brought out and we are all near freezing.

For the runners this temperature is ideal, especially because there is less humidity.

Each runner holds his place for the entire stage.

James, who is always in pain but whose morale is good, has at least decided to be patient.

Alexandro walks the first 5/6 kilometers, as usual. Bando trots along, eyes glued to the asphalt.

It looks as if his legs hurt less but for him, as for the others, the daily challenge is to finish within the time limit.

This evening he finishes 10 minutes before the famous cut-off time.

It's tough after 4 hours of sleep but every day New York gets closer and we remind him of this fact.

Mr. Koshita starts fast this morning; the night spent in prison was not beneficial and he finishes his breakfast at the starting line.

As usual, Serge doesn't show any particular emotion, neither more nor less, too much or not enough; he makes no comment and his crew tells me he is not talkative.

Italo seems to be boosted by an invisible force and arrived in second place on yesterday's stage.

Today's miraculous catch produces 2 license plates for Italo.

Rainer, in spite of a good race, has a rather sad face today.

Peter's morale is low at the finish ; his left knee hurts and Sarah, who came for a few days, is going home to Iowa and leaves June to carry the torch on her own as their crew.

Rainer does some sightseeing, whereas Peter has his normal good nap.

Patrick tries to catch up with Italo but in vain.

He and Fabienne are happy to have their youngest son, Mathurin, with them and it puts some spirit into the task.

In spite of his fatigue, Patrick is always pleasant and smiling, with one goal in mind, which he has had since the 2nd day: take 2nd place in the general ranking on August 27.

We wish him that happiness, especially because it will be difficult, if not impossible, for Italo to catch up with him at 17 days from the finish.

Anneke came back sooner than planned because Jenni stopped today, emotionally exhausted and in pain.

She came back for much needed rest.

Mr. Tanaka and Philippe don't finish the stage.

Gérard starts and finishes the stage in reasonable time; he has understood that he must not start too fast or he risks having problems with his feet and tendon.

Mr. Ishihari, looking down from his 66 years, is always impressive and finishes this new stage in good shape.

If the countdown has not yet started for me and my team, we are beginning to hear «and the last day » in conversations.

New York, the ultimate goal of our undertaking, is so near and yet so far.

To hold the course, maintain discipline and manage a group of 35 people on a daily basis is beginning to weigh on me.

Even if I knew it, I now understand better why there are so few candidates to organize this type of event.

The last edition of the trans-USA Footrace took place in 2004!

All reports of the 53. Stage

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LM to 54. Stage

Indianapolis to Dunreith / 11.08.2011

73.5 km / 3916.8 km complete

45.7 mi / 2433.8 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|---|---------|
| 1. | 06 | Rainer Koch |  | 7:00:21 |
| 2. | 05 | Patrick Malandain |  | 7:55:10 |
| 3. | 08 | Italo Orru |  | 7:55:10 |

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| 1. | 06 | Rainer Koch |  | 410:23:15 |
| 2. | 05 | Patrick Malandain |  | 472:58:21 |
| 3. | 08 | Italo Orru |  | 496:25:55 |

[Show completed list](#)

August 11th

Coming Soon

Coming Soon

All reports of the 54. Stage

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LM to 55. Stage

Dunreith to Crossing US40/Arlington R / 12.08.2011

86.6 km / 4003.4 km complete

53.8 mi / 2487.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|---|---------|
| 1. | 06 | Rainer Koch |  | 7:37:47 |
| 2. | 05 | Patrick Malandain |  | 9:56:24 |
| 3. | 08 | Italo Orru |  | 9:56:24 |

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

- | | | | | |
|----|----|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| 1. | 06 | Rainer Koch |  | 418:01:02 |
| 2. | 05 | Patrick Malandain |  | 482:54:45 |
| 3. | 08 | Italo Orru |  | 506:22:19 |

[Show completed list](#)

August 12th

4000 KM

This morning at 4:45, it's bitter cold, to the point that fleece, not sweaters, are brought out.

It has taken us 3 days to cross Indiana and we are now entering Ohio.

The homes are luxurious, the towns and cities cleaner, life is buzzing and traffic is heavier.

The East is obviously richer and more heavily populated.

One city follows another and shopping centers stretch out for miles. 4000 Km are clocked 3.4 km from the finish and are marked on the road with flour.

The photo is taken at the finish line.

Each runner takes the sign and does what he/she wishes with it.

I like James's and Bando's creativity (see the photos) Yesterday, Bando wanted to stop, he couldn't take it anymore.

But today with one step more toward New York you have to hang in.

It's not at 4000 km that you can throw in the sponge.

Peter has a very bad day, between losing 20 minutes in the streets of Richmond after missing a change of direction, he gets a flat rear tire, which we don't notice until he is at the finish line; it was a terrible day.

Luckily, Bepó was a first class amateur bicycle racer and can repair a flat in record time. The runners seem

Luckily, Rene was a first class amateur bicycle racer and can repair a flat in record time. The runners seem sleepier and sleepier; the move ahead like automats and for some it's with resignation.

I'm not sure that all of them are taking advantage of their surroundings.

You start your watch, then move into action, stop your watch and pause to eat and sleep, then start again. Rainer finishes before Peter for the first time.

He tells us that he wasn't faster but that he made fewer stops....Rainer is incredible and it's obvious that he was born to run! Patrick and Italo clock the 4000 km together and cross the finish line like airplanes, which is normal because we are alongside a landing strip.

Serge arrives with his habitual stride, the same posture and a low morale, even if he smiles for the 4000 km photo.

He seems empty, devoid of motivation or pleasure and it's terrible to see.

Alexandro arrives as usual and his feelings don't show on his face.

He is tired and tends to be on automatic pilot in the morning.

He walks a lot the first part of the day.

Mr. Koshita, who knows the itinerary, doesn't seem to be bored; he is surprising and adapts the effort he expends and his speed to each stage. The Japanese crew often analyzes the stages with great care the evening before.

James has a visitor: someone he knows in Columbus whom he met on Badwater last year.

They have kept in touch via FaceBook.

Lucas accompanies him for a good half of the route and James is pampered and it means he can talk a bit and pass the time.

At the finish he collapsed on the grass, it feels so good!

And our "Bando International" who once again is the tail light, waves his 4000 km sign toward the sky, toward the East, toward New York, with one goal in mind....good night.

All reports of the 55. Stage

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LM to 56. Stage

Crossing US40/Arlington R to South Vienna / 13.08.2011

78 km / 4081.4 km complete

48.5 mi / 2536.1 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:38:25
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:31:02
3.	08	Italo Orru		9:29:20

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		425:39:27
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		491:25:47
3.	08	Italo Orru		515:51:39

[Show completed list](#)

August 13th

Exhaustion

The end of this stage is distinctive because cities are separated by truly beautiful scenery and there are some runners who are still clear-headed enough to appreciate what they see at each bend in the road and at every change of direction.

I take particular care in preparing the turn-sheet, i.e. the daily road sheet which is handed to the runners in the evening or the morning.

The end of the route has given me particular trouble for several reasons: I made only one reconnaissance in November 2010 and it seems that I neglected this part of the race in order to concentrate on the first part, where I knew the distances, the route and the places we would stop to sleep.

For the last 15 days I planned the finishes of several stages at small motels which prefer to have travelers on a weekly basis, rather than book a room for only one night and not have it available for a long-stay customer.

This means having to sleep elsewhere and/or change the finish line, which is the case for D59 and D60.

To change one day means 2 days are involved.

Today the start and the finish were changed by 600 meters on both days.

So, tomorrow the day will be shorter; however, after making the daily reconnaissance for tomorrow's itinerary, I see there is a difference of 2.8 km and that's not normal.

I'm not worrying because this difference is reduced for the runners and it is surely good news for them to know

they have 2.8 km less to get to the hotel tomorrow evening.

But it does bother me because I like precision and I feel it is essential to give reliable information.

So I go over it again between 8:15 am and 10:15 pm in order to understand the situation.

It is one of the many things that make up my job...

Today was a good one for some and a bad one for others.

When I pass Alex at mile 9, after 3 hours and 35 minutes of race, he has a problem.

When he leaves the toilet at a service station, for no good reason he takes the wrong road.

All he had to do was go straight on and follow Highway 40.

No doubt lack of clear headedness adds to his discomfort, because since yesterday morning his levator muscles are inflamed and very painful.

It is strange to have such a problem at this stage of the race because this usually happens at the beginning before the tendons get used to the heavy demands placed on them.

In another style and without wanting to mention clear headedness, attentiveness and concentration can be affected.

Both Patrick and Italo fall but luckily suffer only a few scratches, which cause more fright than pain.

Today the two friends are not running together so we can't say they were goofing off.

After being alerted by Rainer that there is a crossing which is not marked, I decide to repeat something we have already done and I verify the distance with the GPS watch and see that today a few hundred meters are missing.

I curse myself because this turn-sheet is important for the runners who are navigating alone, which is Rainer's case.

He turns a corner before the one indicated on the turn-sheet, because his GPS tells him to so.

Even if there was no flour on the street, he takes it and naturally finds himself on the correct street because in this country the streets are laid out perfectly straight and are divided into blocks.

In the USA you don't say turn after 3 streets you say turn after 3 blocks.

So there was no serious problem but it's a rather uncomfortable situation.

It was an eventful stage which caused some excitement but everyone arrived at the finish line in good shape and within the cut-off time.

All reports of the 56. Stage

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LM to 57. Stage

South Vienna to Reynoldsville / 14.08.2011

68.6 km / 4150 km complete

42.6 mi / 2578.7 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:30:53
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		7:35:38
3.	08	Italo Orru		8:04:31

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		432:10:20
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		499:01:25
3.	08	Italo Orru		523:56:10

[Show completed list](#)

August 14th

Coming Soon

Coming Soon

All reports of the 57. Stage

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LM to 58. Stage

Reynoldsville to Zanesville / 15.08.2011

83.3 km / 4233.3 km complete

51.8 mi / 2630.5 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:36:23
2.	08	Italo Orru		8:27:30
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:57:21

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		439:46:43
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		507:58:46
3.	08	Italo Orru		532:23:40

[Show completed list](#)**August 15th****100 marathons**

Rainy Ohio

It is very gray and there has been torrential rain.

In a few words, it is this kind of day...

Peter: Good day, he finishes with a smile, he had a good night.

Rainer: Good form – he ran the last 14 kilometers in 1H13'.

Today I learned that for one year Rainer was a member of the German 100 km team and that his best time for that distance was less than 7H10'.

Italo: is astonishing with his average of 10 KPH.

His speed increases as time goes by, although it's true that from the start of this race he has never been regular; but now it's phenomenal.

Could it be that Italo is a phenomenon?

In any case, it will be almost impossible for him to glean the 2nd place, unless Patrick gives up or walks every day to the finish.

Patrick: hangs on to the hope that he will lose less time to Italo.

He does not feel safe and has trouble letting up and taking care of himself.

He pushed himself today and finished exhausted.

Serge: is better, he is doing calculations in his head, which he enjoys.

All day long he and Gérard pass each other, one behind then one in front depending on refuelings.

They cross the finish line together.

Anneke: is always jovial and pleasant.

She and Jenni are the daily duo we prefer.

Anneke always has lots of questions and she is observant.

The cold and bad weather are tough on her because she is stationary on her bike.

She always wears extra layers of clothing.

James: has perked up.

His friend, Lucas, is staying with him a good part of the day.

Mr. Koshita: really liked the 18km bike path leading to the entrance of Zanesville.

He is always even tempered and pleasant and he had a very good race.

Mr.

Bando: is better and it shows

Alexandro: is struggling and it shows.

He finishes tail light in 13H12' but he knows how to wait for the pain to subside and we hope that it will do so quickly so that he can have good feelings again.

Among the stage runners: Philippe and Mr. Tanaka don't finish the day.

As for Jenni, she is incredible these days and seems to enjoy herself in spite of her blisters.

All reports of the 58. Stage

[All reports of the 59. Stage](#)[Top of page](#)**LM to 59. Stage****Zanesville to Morristown** / 16.08.2011

88.6 km / 4321.9 km complete

55.1 mi / 2685.5 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:06:28
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:47:51
3.	08	Italo Orru		9:47:51

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		447:53:11
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		517:46:37
3.	08	Italo Orru		542:11:31

[Show completed list](#)**August 16th****Another long stage**

This is a long stage with 15 changes of direction.

As we exit Indianapolis, we leave Highway 40 East for the first time to take the old road that gets lost in winding tracks.

The surroundings are wilder and quiet and there is no need to watch out for cars or traffic in general.

There is no waiting for a green light in order to cross, no uncomfortable slope to the road and no need to step onto the shoulder when a truck comes toward you.

It's a restful change, even if Jenni falls on the asphalt 2 km from the finish.

She has some good scrapes on her left elbow, a pain in the shoulder and sore knees; but Jenni's morale remains good and she has a good stage.

The temperature does not go above 86°F, even in full sunshine.

The scenery is green and rolling, it's long and it's difficult but the runners are unanimous: it's a beautiful stage. Like all the previous Trans-America races, LANY Footrace has many long stages at the end, with an average of 80.8 km for the last 10 days.

Intensity, length, extreme fatigue and a desire to finish seem to overwhelm everyone.

The crews that are here from the beginning are exhausted and weary.

There are now daily naps in the vehicles.

The runners take one day after the next without asking questions and there is only one thought in mind at the end of each stage: still another day to go.

For many there seems to be no time to enjoy things, it is only a question of starting and finishing before going to bed and then beginning again; somewhat like robots.

It is not the case for everyone but for the majority it is. It is the end of another beautiful day.

Karinne and Serge are leaving this evening, after spending 3 weeks with us.

We thank them for giving us a hand.

Have a safe journey home.

For the rest of us the road goes on.

All reports of the 59. Stage[Top of page](#)**LM to 60. Stage****Morristown to Washington** / 17.08.2011

81 km / 4402.9 km complete

50.3 mi / 2735.8 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:31:55
2.	08	Italo Orru		9:24:00
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:45:51

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		455:25:06
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		527:32:28
3.	08	Italo Orru		551:35:31

[Show completed list](#)[Show completed list](#)

August 17th

10 days to go

We will soon start the countdown because the last week approaches bringing: freedom, emptiness and a strange feeling I don't dare think about right now.

We are waiting for an atypical start, with one runner missing, Alexandro.

While the runners wait patiently we learn that he will be 30 minutes late.

It's time so the start takes place without him.

He arrives 30 minutes late but it takes him 17 minutes to get ready.

These times will be counted in his official time for the stage and Alexandro leaves 47 minutes late.

Furious, he takes off, anger makes him advance but watch out, he too falls at the end of the stage!!! These repetitive falls worry me.

It is true that going up and down sidewalks is tiring but a bad fall can be the end the race.

There is thick fog this morning but it vanishes over Wheeling.

This first part of the race worries me because we still have one hour of darkness in the morning and it is dangerous.

Even if I don't feel like bringing up the matter of start time, which the runners have already decided many time, this evening I decide to bring it up at tomorrow's meeting.

If we push the start ahead it will be lighter and less dangerous.

Security is always the most important point for me but I no longer have the strength to fight against people who don't cross in the pedestrian cross walks, who don't wait for a green light and who don't run on the sidewalk, etc., etc.

If I were to hand out penalties on this subject few would remain in the race and it would be an unhappy gathering in New York.

And I won't mention those who don't take advantage of secluded spots of greenery or service stations to urinate and who don't hesitate to urinate against a wall or a post in the city.

In short, the rules are there and concerning Alexandro, he normally should receive a penalty for being late but I feel that his lateness is punishment enough.

We will have to take a vote on it tomorrow.

I feel weary, very weary.

Sometimes you have to hide behind humor and take distance, especially at this stage of the race.

There is no change as far as the ranking is concerned, even if James and Alex can still « fight », like Bando and Koshita.

Barring catastrophe, the chips are down for the first 4 runners.

It is always rather strange to see Italo and Patrick who keep passing each other as if a duel were being fought.

With 24 hours ahead of Italo, 10 days from the finish, Patrick is comfortably in 2nd place but he can't help it, he runs after Italo, who has been in fantastic shape lately.

Their names are not yet among the great long distance runners but they have run a good race from the height of their 51 years for Patrick and 48 for Italo.

Peter finishes happy as can be and Rainer, true to form, takes the time shoot lots of photos and regrets that we don't cross the old "S" or crooked bridges.

James is impatiently waiting for Gemma to return and this morning forgets his laptop.

The return trip to get is a 2-hour drive for Emy, who goes in spite of her great fatigue.

It has to be said that these last 10 days have been exhausting for the runners but for the crews and the organizers as well.

See you tomorrow.

All reports of the 60. Stage

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LM to 61. Stage

Washington to Uniontown / 18.08.2011

78.8 km / 4481.7 km complete

49 mi / 2784.8 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:19:38
2.	08	Italo Orru		8:58:35
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:41:32

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		462:44:44
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		537:14:00
3.	08	Italo Orru		560:34:06

[Show completed list](#)**August 18th****In Pennsylvania**

Today we have an early rising and start without fog but the temperature is only 57°F.

Our fireflies run through the streets of Washington, Pennsylvania.

After 6km we turn right onto Highway 19 South, a small country road which is pleasant and quiet and which runs along the I-79.

A second change of direction to take Route 221 and merge into Highway 118, which leads to Jefferson, where we go over a small hill before taking Highway 21 East for 30 exhausting, crowded and noisy kilometers.

At the finish the runners are very tired due to the deafening noise from the incessant truck traffic, but they did appreciate the first part of the stage, until km 48, even though it was particularly hilly. At Uniontown City it wasn't easy to find a spot for the finish line because even the smallest square footage is privately owned.

Even if the gardens don't have fences and gates, the feeling of ownership is strong.

But people are friendly and welcoming and Pamela allows us to set up in front of her hairdressing salon, which enables René and me to have our hair cut. For security reasons, I ask the runners again if they prefer to start later. It's a tie, 5 for, 5 against so the organizers vote: the start will be at 5:30 from now on, so the time we spend on the road in the dark will be shortened.

And I stressed the necessity to be careful on the road because yesterday there was another fall; this time Alexandro got scraped.

All reports of the 61. Stage**Top of page****LM to 62. Stage****Uniontown to Frostburg / 19.08.2011**

82.2 km / 4563.9 km complete

51.1 mi / 2835.9 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:16:29
2.	08	Italo Orru		9:20:20
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		10:48:47

[Show completed list](#)**Total race results**

1.	06	Rainer Koch		471:01:13
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		548:02:47
3.	08	Italo Orru		569:54:26

[Show completed list](#)**August 19th****Monstrous**

It's an ultra-long stage and ultra-bumpy, with lots of valleys and climbs to an altitude of between 900 and 990 meters to go over passes.

There is a positive ascent of almost 1800 meters.

Oh là là, Peters has been stressed out for the past two days just thinking about this stage and this morning he takes the floor at the end of our meeting to voice his concern.

In spite of everything, it is an excellent stage for him, certainly difficult but the scenery is magnificent in the Laurel Highlands. He even meets a couple of Germans who knew his childhood neighbourhood in Berlin and even knew his family.

The world is so small.

It's a delighted Peter who crosses the finish line. Pour Rainer, une belle journée aussi. Il se contente de ce qui vient, qu'il pleuve, qu'il vente, qu'il fasse chaud, qu'il y est des bosses, que ce soit long ou court, il est heureux de courir. Rien ne le dérange sur sa route, il prend les choses comme elles viennent et comme elles se

présentent. « Just have fun » Italo, in superb form, finishes 1H30 before Patrick, who has back pain and is very tired.

He can't keep up with Italo's rhythm and invisible wings.

Italo is happy.

He and Rainer continue to pick up stuff along the road: stuffed toys, cents and licence plates.

They are the two runners who collect the most and who take dozens of photos along the road.

Rainer found 3 cell phones these past days.

The miraculous catch continues for Italo, who is filling the truck and his suitcase with useless paraphernalia.

Anneke, who accompanies Jenni takes the time to stop, to observe and contemplate and she too picks up a lot of stuff. The scenery is grandiose and the runners can enjoy it thanks to very wide shoulders which make for a more comfortable situation than at the end of yesterday's stage. There are rain storms over Frostburg all during the afternoon but miraculously they are local and almost everyone is spared, except at the very end of the stage.

Mr. Koshita, Mr. Ishihara, Bando, Philippe and James get drenched.

The rain is thick as a rope, with a diameter the size of a ping pong ball.

It's rain like you see in the Fred Astair film Singing in the Rain and it's not fun. I don't think Bando or James feel like tap dancing this evening.

It will be a good shower and then to bed! The states are going by at high speed.

Since we left Ohio two days ago we have touched West Virginia, Pennsylvania and now Maryland.

We are heading for New York and the dream is becoming reality!

All reports of the 62. Stage

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LM to 63. Stage

Frostburg to Hancock / 20.08.2011

81.6 km / 4645.5 km complete

50.7 mi / 2886.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		8:11:25
2.	08	Italo Orru		8:48:48
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:48:34

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		479:12:38
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		557:51:21
3.	08	Italo Orru		578:43:14

[Show completed list](#)

August 20th

Beautiful and difficult

A good question this morning before the start: will this stage be as difficult as yesterday?

Well, no, you can't say it will be easy, with 81.6 km and as many ups and downs, even if there is less positive ascent than yesterday.

It is hot this afternoon and some runners arrive covered in salt.

It is the case for Jenni, Serge and Mr. Koshita.

Rainer takes a wrong turn and covers 6 km extra, so Italo finds himself in first place for a few kilometers, before Rainer passes him and puts on the Turbo.

Rainer finishes 40 minutes ahead of Italo, even though he passed him at about km 40, which makes 1 minute per kilometer faster than Italo on the 2nd part of the race.

Italo didn't even try to follow our maillot jaune! Waste of time.

Patrick decides not to run after Italo and runs his race trying to lose as little ground as possible.

He has to take care of himself because it reminds me of the Trans-Australia of 2001 when the second place gave up a few days from the finish.

You have to hang in and even if there is only one week left you must never swear to anything because anything can happen!

Serge is always impressive on hills, which he climbs at his usual pace, a trot?

He is a metronome and his pace never varies going up or going down.

he is a metronome and his pace never varies going up or going down.

Bando takes 5th place and as far as I can remember it is the first time.

That devil, Banko stretches his arm toward the east, toward New York all day long.

Alexandro is fine, his morale is good and his wife still has not given birth.

Mr. Koshita never seems to be exhausted.

At the age of 60 he controls the situation and adapts his pace.

It's impressive!

Finally, James is happy.

Gemma is back, delayed by traffic leaving New York

That's it for our 8 runners who will see New York in 8 days, after crossing this gigantic country.

The ups and downs are rough on the thighs and Jenni and Géard are sore.

Anneke doesn't seem to be bothered by the terrain and has been as smiling as usual for the past two days.

Markus finds the stage easy or at least the same as yesterdays.

He is the only one because all the others thought it was a difficult stage.

Mr. Ishihara is impressive, having run the last 21 stages in their entirety at the age of 66.

As often happens, Mr. Tanaka does not finish the stage and Philippe arrives tired and weary but happy to have finished the last two stages.

He is particularly appreciative of the Japanese crew, always superbly organized, with 3 people in the mobile crew for 5 runners.

Hats off for the work they do every day!

The support crews are tired and for them it's a challenge to follow the rhythm: June hooks a post and bends the radiator grill of the vehicle, which Rainer and René fix this evening.

Klaus is a shadow of himself; he has lost a lot of weigh and his features are drawn.

Messrs Nami, Iguchi and Papa are extremely tired and sometimes are napping when their runner arrive at the car.

To give themselves some pep they run while they are waiting.

Fabienne is always on the go and takes care of her husband marvellously well.

Patrick is lucky to have his wife with him and so attentive.

It is the best way to keep up the morale. Ludo joined William, who was beginning show signs of fatigue in crewing for Serge.

Everything is fine and boredom did not set in.

Simone and Mauro, who are with Alexandro, are extremely tired, to the point of not hearing the alarm a few days ago.

Lastly, the organizers have 2 vehicles to assist Jenni, Anneke, Italo and James, although James now has his preferred crew this evening: Gemma.

The organizing team is happy to crew for the runners, with whom they have established privileged contact.

The crew and the runner form a veritable team, the goal being to get the runner to New York.

Ever morning they all get up for the same reason .

Hats off to them all.

What a job!

All reports of the 63. Stage

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LM to 64. Stage

Hancock to Waynesboro / 21.08.2011

74.4 km / 4719.9 km complete

46.2 mi / 2932.8 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:45:45
2.	08	Italo Orru		7:56:34
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		8:54:10

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		485:58:23
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		566:45:31
3.	08	Italo Orru		586:39:48

Show completed list

August 21

The last Sunday of the LANY Footrace

Excitement is beginning to increase among the troops and this morning at the meeting our arrival in New York was mentioned.

New York, New York...

On this last Sunday of the LANY Footrace, the weather is sultry and stormy and after a few drops of rain the sun comes out and the air remains humid.

I am so engrossed with préparations for the end of the race that I can't stand back to enjoy today's finish ; my mind is on other things : D65, D68, D69, D70 ; there are so many things to think about and during that time the runners cross the finish line.

Today there are no surprises and the order of arrival is similar to yesterday's.

At the start of the race the first 3 fly off, then Jenni, Markus, Serge and Alexandro are in the middle and lastly our 4 Japanese, with the most French of the Japanese, Philippe

Today we distribute food for the last time.

The truck is almost empty and we will give what remains to the owners of the hôtel, Indians whose name is Patel, like the majority of the Indian hôtel owners in the USA.

The same name comes up every time and it can't be just by chance.

The Internet says « American Indians own 43% of the 47,000 hotels and motels in the country. » but it does not say why perhaps 99% of them are named « Patel ».

But the subject that interests us is this new day of the race and the visit by Joy, who is an organizer of the « Marine Corps Marathon ».

For 36 years this military corps has been organizing a marathon in Washington D.C. which will have 30,000 participants.

Joy made cakes which all the runners enjoyed.

She has been following the race by reading June and Rainer's input on Facebook and is delighted to be at the finish line today to greet the runners.

L'ambiance est détendue, les sourires reviennent sur les visages comme en atteste les photos. Même si la fatigue là, les jours qui passent nous rapproche du dénouement de cette aventure aussi dense qu'éreintante, que fascinante...

The atmosphère is relaxed and smiles are back as you can see from the photos.

Even if there is fatigue, we are approaching the end of this adventure, which is as full and as fascinating as it is exhausting

All reports of the 64. Stage

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LM to 65. Stage

Waynesboro to York / 22.08.2011

78.5 km / 4798.4 km complete

48.8 mi / 2981.6 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:49:10
2.	08	Italo Orru		8:28:55
3.	05	Patrick Malandain		9:11:52

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		492:47:33
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		575:57:23
3.	08	Italo Orru		595:08:43

Show completed list

August 22nd

Like a wave

There is a succession of towns, which are taking on a somewhat European look, with the center of town around a traffic circle, a church and small shops.

Streets are more animated now and people leave their homes and their cars.

It has been this way since we arrived at Columbus and perhaps there is more animation because the temperatures are not so hot and people feel like being outside.

I'm a bit frightened by the days, which fly by at amazing speed.

The past 3 days have been particularly full and leave me little respite.

Luckily tomorrow promises to be a day when we can put the meter back to zero, with a short stage of only 43.3 km.

However, there is also a risk of decompression and becoming slack.

There is no room for growing lax and in spite of extreme fatigue you have to keep your goal in mind and not weaken or let time go by and risk not being able to catch up with it.

But I will push the pause button just for an instant and close my eyes in order to forget the infernal whirlwind that takes my breath away: never to show emotion, to put on armor every morning, to keep a smile on my face even when I don't feel like it and always to be in tip top shape with these slaves of the road, who are accomplishing such feats every day.

Every day I think of the harsh words of Alan Firth (the organizer of the two last editions): "The only thing left is to retain some pleasure to the very end, which will then no doubt be liberation for the runners' bodies and relief for the organizers' minds".

The days which pass are not easy for everyone, in particular for Patrick, who is limping, and Bando who lately has lost his smile.

Jenni and Markus seem to have found a good cruising speed, thanks to the approach of the finish.

Everyone is slowly recovering from the last two stages, which were difficult.

Rainer and Italo appear to be surfing on a wave and nobody seems able to stop them.

All reports of the 65. Stage**Top of page****LM to 66. Stage**

York to Lancaster / 23.08.2011

43.3 km / 4841.7 km complete

26.9 mi / 3008.5 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		3:43:26
2.	08	Italo Orru		5:27:05
3.	16	Alexandro Bellini		5:37:30

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		496:30:59
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		582:24:18
3.	08	Italo Orru		600:35:48

Show completed list

August 23rd**A short day which became a long one for some; and 3,000 miles.**

Everything seemed to be going well in the best of all possible worlds, what with a long awaited short day of 43.3 km, but no, one mile after the start at the darkest night and with heavy traffic even at this early hour, 13 people take the wrong road and run 8 km out and back before they find the right road.

History doesn't say who took all these people in his wake and why it happened.

The only ones to take the correct road are: Peter, Rainer, Jenni, Anneke and Markus.

Alexandro quickly backtracked after reading his turn sheet but the others did not!!!

Even our two stage runners of the day, Bérengère and « la Vache » follow the wrong itinerary and will covers more than 51 km.

If a few smiled, some did not and even accuse an incorrect turn-sheet.

But there always has to be a reason for an error and I think it was due to fatigue and an incorrect reading of the itinerary at night.

Just like Bando who tripped over a piece of iron which we had purposely placed as an obstacle on the road

because he wasn't following the arrows we had marked but was walking on them.

These claims flabbergast us.

Extreme fatigue makes people unfair and I am overtaken by weariness!

In short, this small stage should have been a pleasure but it seems to have become a bad dream.

This afternoon when I returned from my reconnaissance, I was pleased to see that there was a vacation like atmosphere in the LANYFootrace, with a small group of runners and some of the organizing team and crews having a good time in the swimming pool, while others took a nap.

All reports of the 66. Stage

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LM to 67. Stage

Lancaster to Kutztown / 24.08.2011

81.4 km / 4923.1 km complete

50.6 mi / 3059.1 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:27:31
2.	08	Italo Orru		8:45:20
3.	16	Alexandro Bellini		10:45:24

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		503:58:30
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		593:18:20
3.	08	Italo Orru		609:21:08

[Show completed list](#)

August 24th

Today can be summed up in a few sentences:

• Will « Cumbell » who helped Jesse and Mickaël organize the Trans USA race in 1990 is present and speaks to us. • I am in a very bad mood this morning and justifiably fed up, even though it is Bérèngère's birthday. • A new James, who shaved off his beard!!! • Extra long ground marking: we love playing with the flour; it took us 24 kg and 4H15 to mark the itinerary on the road.

Surprise, nobody gets lost!!!! • An extra long reconnaissance, which is normal due to traffic lights and traffic. • The end of the stage was exhausting for the runners due to the noise and density of traffic. • Patrick is not well.

He moves with difficulty and can no longer walk.

His morale is sub-zero and his body won't follow.

It's very tough and everyone is worried and wonders if he will be able to finish his race, even 3 days from the end.

It is not at all certain because he is terribly affected.

Fabienne sheds tears at the finish. • The evening ends happily: Rainer, Peter and June prepared some lovely things for Bérèngère: a cake with candle, a balloon "Hello Kitty" and a DVD.

All reports of the 67. Stage

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LM to 68. Stage

Kutztown to Washington / 25.08.2011

82.2 km / 5005.3 km complete

51.1 mi / 3110.1 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		7:39:53
2.	08	Italo Orru		9:17:26
3.	16	Alexandro Bellini		11:02:23

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		511:38:23
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		609:59:20
3.	08	Italo Orru		618:38:34

[Show completed list](#)

August 25th

5,000 km are clocked and for the first time we see New York on a road sign

The first signs indicating New York appear at Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

Neither the itinerary nor the terrain is easy.

The distance is long.

Even if we are 3 days from the finish it's is a difficult day.

Nobody gets lost but our makings on the road take 6 hours and 27 kg of flour! For Patrick the day is marked with a black stone with a 2H30 stop to go to the hospital. He refuses to have any tests; he only wants to have a pain killer.

He leaves after having a shot of cortisone in the butt.

It is past 10:00 pm when he finishes, with the support of Fabienne, his wife, and Mathurin, his son, and friends from Montivilliers.

Solidarity is strong among the runners and many of them will be near him, notably the 3 other French runners: Gérard, Philippe and Serge. It is worth mentioning that the condition of the roads in the Eastern USA is deplorable, no doubt due to the severe winters.

I don't know what percentage of the state budget the governor of Pennsylvania allocates to the improvement of the roads and highways but there is work to be done.

Even if there have been changes, it is clear that the "pseudo-interstates" come to an end and small roads increase the effect of bottlenecks and danger.

In short, we considered changing this itinerary in November 2010 but the hilly terrain, the absence of shoulders and the density of traffic confirmed that we should keep the itinerary run in 2002 and 2004, even though we occasionally were able to make some modifications. Announcement of the arrival of Hurricane Irene can be seen on the TV, which I don't watch; however, I do take a look at Internet, which is not alarming.

Everyone maintains that New York is getting ready to live a nightmare.

I fall asleep without trouble because it seems to be much ado about nothing.

I have a very low opinion of the media and most particularly of American news, which make a lot of useless noise about nothing. Today there is rain on the menu and the temperature is only 57°F at the start. Another day which brings us closer to New York and the runners are exhausted.

It's time for all this to end.

As worn out as we are, we will finish together.

Today I feel like deserting the race to hide and find myself alone in a lair to sleep, sleep and sleep some more.

I know that there are several runners who have periods of extreme fatigue and even short periods of time when they ask themselves what they are doing here.

We are crazy and all we can do is back one another up just a little while more.

All reports of the 68. Stage

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LM to 69. Stage

Washington to W. Orange / 26.08.2011

77.3 km / 5082.6 km complete

48 mi / 3158.2 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		6:50:09
2.	08	Italo Orru		7:02:30
3.	16	Alexandro Bellini		10:49:00

[Show completed list](#)

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		518:28:32
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		622:22:50
3.	08	Italo Orru		625:41:04

[Show completed list](#)

August 26th

D-1: New York in view

Today it is not the runners that worry us, because the running is downhill between woods, typical small villages and beautiful homes.

It is a more relaxing stage, with fewer kilometers than planned; however, there is an extra kilometer because I forgot to add it and this will give Bando a problem.

He calculates his total cut-off time and naturally when you are cut it short it becomes enormous.

He finishes his stage 3 minutes from the cut-off.

Bravo!

Patrick started this morning and he limps along in pain.

He is accompanied by his numerous supporters, who take turns so he will not be running alone.

I hope only one thing: that he will arrive within the time limit, because he won't be given a second chance.

As everyone knows, on this race, runners who finish late once get a second chance and I'm not sorry about this decision, which was voted by all the runners in the official ranking.

A bit of compassion does no harm and the stakes in this race are not to win millions or even one cent, or to see one's name in the headlines, but just to enjoy, to dream one's life and to help others dream.

That will be the final word at tomorrow's recognition event. Rainer, Italo and Peter have been become arrows which pierce everyone's heart as they speed by.

Peter is in top form and the two runners have strides which are a pleasure to see.

Since yesterday, Rainer does not wish to be assisted by June; it is a long story.

The tie that binds a runner to his crew is something strong and each has had intense personal experiences within the group for the past 70 days, where everything is shared: wakening each morning, meals, life on the road, life after the race. Every minute that passes is shared and the only minute of intimacy and quiet time is when you are in the shower and while you sleep. Philippe flies along his route, arriving with the 3rd fastest time, even if for him time is of little importance.

Just the same, it's a damn good performance and he clocks 4,000 km just before he reaches New York. Today it is hurricane Irene that worries us... This evening there is a special meeting due to the state of Alert declared in New York: evacuation of the population living in low lying areas, closing of all shops, theaters, public places, subways and busses from noon until Monday morning.

In short, it's a catastrophe weekend, which will cause problems for our arrival in New York via the George Washington Bridge. Lots of changes have to be made for the finish and solutions found for the problems which have come up: - The George Washington Bridge, the only pedestrian bridge between New Jersey and the Island of Manhattan may be closed at any minute if the wind increases.

Nobody can say whether the bridge will be closed tomorrow. - Central Park: All its employees are asked to stay at home: no bicycle renters, no vendors and all tourist points will be closed.

Central park will be a ghost park for the entire weekend and a place to be avoided due to the risk of falling trees. This evening we have to find solutions: 1. Leave earlier in order to cross the bridge before noon, not later because at that hour all the public transportation will cease.

To avoid too much difference between the runners in crossing of the bridge at km 43, they are to run in 3 groups at staggered times: 5:00 am / 6:00 am and 7:00 am If some are able to cross the bridge and others not, the race time will be taken for all runners at the entrance to the bridge.

This time will be counted for all in the case where some would be unable to cross the bridge! 2. A meeting place must be found so that all the runners will gather 1 km from the finish and will be able to leave together for the finish line in formation: the stage-runners, then Peter and finally the runners in the official ranking in the reverse order to their position.

Seeing as how rain is forecast and the crews will have left their runners in order to park their vehicles, it appears unlikely they will wish to leave their wet runners waiting with a coffee, even if it is in a dry place.

So it was decided that each runner will finish his race alone and without any staging.

3. The finish line is modified; it's no use finishing in a deserted park where nobody can find shelter at the end.

Another place has to be found and it appears that the easiest for all is at the hotel where we will all stay: The Novotel at Times Square with a finish line at the intersection of Broadway and W 52nd Street. For this last, real stage, I have organized a buffet so that everyone can meet and have a meal together.

It is a very congenial evening and I believe that tomorrow evening we will all be on our own and it seems completely unreal to me.

I find myself alone for the last time, at the keyboard of my computer, with my faithful printer, to finish tomorrow's turn sheet.

It is 1:45 when I collapse into bed, knowing that at 4:00 am the alarm will ring for the last time on the LANYFootrace.

All reports of the 69. Stage

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LM to 70. Stage

W. Orange to New York / 27.08.2011

56.6 km / 5139.2 km complete

35.2 mi / 3193.4 mi complete

8 Participants at the start / 8 Participants at the stage finish

Daily stage results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		4:27:24
2.	08	Italo Orru		4:50:12
3.	13	Serge Girard		6:34:27

Show completed list

Total race results

1.	06	Rainer Koch		522:55:56
2.	05	Patrick Malandain		629:58:22
3.	08	Italo Orru		630:31:16

Show completed list

August 27th

About Ranking

LOS ANGELES – NEW YORK

JUNE 19th – AUGUST 27th

5139,2 KM

70 JOURS

Official Ranking :

Pos	Bib	Name	Nation	Time	Km/H
1	6	Rainer KOCH	Germany	522 : 55 : 56	9,82
2	5	Patrick MALANDAIN	France	629 : 58 : 22	8,15
3	8	Italo ORRU	Italy	630 : 31 : 16	8,15
4	13	Serge GIRARD	France	694 : 12 : 53	7,4
5	16	Alexandro BELLINI	Italy	746 : 28 : 49	6,88
6	1	James ADAMS	Great Britain	781 : 16 : 32	6,57
7	10	Makoto KOSHITA	Japan	830 : 33 : 43	6,18
8	9	Yoshiaki BANDO	Japan	848 : 30 : 27	6,05

Extra Scoring :

Pos	Bib	Name	Nation	Time
1	00	Peter BARTEL	Germany	461:43:06
2	14A	Anneke KUIPER	Netherlands	700:54:48

Stage Runners :

Pos	Bib	Name	Nation	Km
1	7	Markus MUELLER	Germany (USA)	4947,8
2	14	Jenni DE GROOT	Netherlands	4694,8
3	11	Yoshiaki ISHIHARA	Japan	4441,9
4	4	Philippe GRIZARD	France	4010,3
5	3	Gérard BAVATO	France	3166,5
6	12	Yoshimi TANAKA	Netherlands	2762,9

1. Officials Comments about Official Ranking :

2 official finishers : James and Patrick are arrived after the cut off time

D18 for James with 12:16 instead of 11:45

D68 for Patrick with 16:41 instead of 14:30

In my organization with the other officials runners we have decided to give a second chance (I read enough reviews on the cost of these sort of stage races. Everybody knows all the sacrifices you need to do : job, family, money, to participate at these sort of very long and expensive races)

2. Stage Runners

And all the dropped out runners could continue the race with their own possibilities like a stage runners always for the same reasons

No regrets with an arrival in New York with everybody, all together after 70 days share on the road

All reports of the 70. Stage

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LM to 70. Stage

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Show completed list

4:00 am – the alarm goes off

Breakfast is ready and some members of the organizing team and a few of the crews are sitting in front of steaming cups of coffee. For some it must have been a short night. 3 departures after a planned meeting of 20 minutes.

At just after 5:00 am a gathering of Bando, Mr. Koshita, James, Serge, Patrick, Mr. Tanaka, Mr. Ishihari and Philippe.

They start a few minutes late.

It is pitch dark and as in Los Angeles there will be no markings on the ground, except at the entrance and exit to the bridge.

Everyone has to follow the turn sheet and the maps in the big road book which was supplied at the start of the race.

The stress is perceptible in some of the teams.

I give the final instructions, especially concerning the crossing and exit from the George Washington Bridge.

Once on the right track, navigating in New York is easy with its system of numbers and the road grid. The first group takes off in a religious silence and in the dark.

A question remains for Patrick; will he retain the 2nd place.

It is the day when it will be played out because 3H19' separate him from Italo and we know that Italo has known for 3 days that he can aspire to the 2nd step of the podium. Just before 6:00 am the second and smaller group is at the starting blocks: Jenni and Anneke, Markus, Alexandro and Gérard.

Same instructions, same start in a foggy night.

It isn't raining and there is still no wind.

I have just called the security police for the GW Bridge and for the moment it is still open to pedestrians and vehicles.

All is well, they're off

Well before 7:00 am, the 3rd and final group is ready: Peter, who seems to be the main character of a fiction film, which could be entitled « As in a dream, Peter doesn't have his feet on the ground »; Italo, is like a thoroughbred pawing the ground in its paddock, and adrenaline oozes from all his pores; Rainer, who seems to be a lot more effervescent than he wishes to let show.

Rainer has had skin deep emotions for the past few days, which he is unable to hide behind a quiet force and his mind is not serene, even if his body is invincible and strong.

This start is the beginning of the end; waited and hoped for, the day everyone has hung onto when the going was tough.

I would have liked to be in the mind of each runner these past hours, especially going over the bridge that marks the entrance to New York and from where you can see Manhattan.

I receive a phone call from David and Bertrand, who are at the foot of the bridge, and I know at what time each runner enters New York.

I have a sigh of relief when I learn that at noon everyone has gone over the bridge which could have been closed.

The last runners get the first rain at the middle of the bridge and it is raining hard in Manhattan.

The streets were deserted yesterday and still are today.

Broadway is so strange like this.

The only advantage of this cataclysmic situation is that traffic and parking are easy, which simplifies things for the runners and their crews.

There are two banners at the finish line, as usual, which makes this day like any other and which may precede D71, since on this race we don't count in days of the month but in the number of "days".

There is just a flagging tape to indicate that this is the final finish line.

The photos on this rainy day are full of color.

I realize that today could have been like the apocalypse but it is really quite bright.

One by one everyone crosses the finish line and there is a lot of emotion at Times Square, where a few surprised onlookers wonder what is happening.

Bando and Mr. Tanaka are missing; they got lost in Manhattan and don't show up so we begin to worry.

At 3:00 pm everyone is safe at home, as usual and I can relax a bit but I don't have time to breathe easily because the team is getting ready to prepare the award winning ceremony, which will take place at 6:00 pm.

We have less than 3 hours to get ready.

The team is reinforced by Bertrand and Karine (David's wife) who joined the team this morning. Tomorrow we will have the time to take care of the vehicles, to empty and pack up all the stuff we have

accumulated.

At 6:00 pm, we are in a beautiful spot with a view on Times Square and Broadway – I can't get enough of this view.

The terrace on which we were to hand out the awards has been closed but we are in a large room and even though I have a strong voice, it does not carry as much as it should.

Our ceremony takes an hour and a half and each runner is called to receive his/her diploma and trophy.

Some have prepared a few words and others improvise; Bando dissolves in sobs.

Everything is too brief but how can you wrap up 70 days of intense and passionate feelings in 1 hour and 30 minutes.

It's difficult and rather frustrating.

Rainer, the last to receive his recognition for 1st place, and before the photo session on the podium begins, presents me with an engraved plaque which conveys thanks for the organization of this event.

It's incredible and I don't know he did it.

This is my opportunity to express my thanks :

- To a loved one, whom I abandoned for 70 days and even more: Serge.

Without him the organization of this race would not have existed because it was he who desired this race.

I don't know if it was a good or a bad idea because our relationship has been severely tested.

- To my formidable, if not to say fantastic team, because not everyone would be able to put up with someone like me, who is uncompromising, always demanding the best from everyone from morning to night.

All that we can do is never enough compared to what our runners accomplish every day on the road.

We haven't the right to complain or say that we are tired.

There is no place for personal problems or time to think of one's family, unless it takes second place, because we have to devote ourselves 300% to this race.

It's a total investment and for me this has always been the key to a successful result.

Even if perfection does not exist, doing the maximum is the motto.

Thanks go to Anne, Bertrand, David, Bérengère, Emilie, Karinne and Serge, with special Mention for René, who at the age of 63 is in fantastic shape.

He is a rare jewel which I wish to preserve.

René, you are extraordinary!

- To Lee Hecht, who joined us on this last day, after having translated all my texts on a daily basis.

To her I extend my sincere affection.

- To all the participants, who trusted me.

I can imagine some of the comments before the race: "who is that" and a French woman to boot, organizing a race in the USA???

The forums are instructive and devastating and make me smile when in conversation someone mentions them .

Far from being perfect , this race will always be for me a jewel which I won't allow any outsider to soil, without knowing or having experienced and tried to understand the stories of all these runners, their crews and the organizers.

- To all those who organize races, long or short, I wish you all the best.

For me, it's finished.

I turn over this job to someone else, even if one can never say never...

Leaving our microcosm and returning to real life is sometimes painful and I think it is necessary to have a transition or a re-adaptation .

For 3 days now I have awakened with anxiety: quick, my wrist watch, where are they?

Have I missed something?

Calm down, it's time to turn the page and to move on to something else, after a short period of disintoxication , doing nothing!!!!

To dream, only to dream one's life

All reports of the 70. Stage

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