

# The Muddy Buzzard

Musings of the Trials of Miles in Big Sky Country  
The Wulfman Gets Wet!!!!, Saturday, June 22, 2013

Missoula's Jimmy Grant shown cresting the Divide, on his way to his second consecutive victory in Wulfman's CDT-14K. Grant, who finished in 56:47, had the forest to his self. His 2:27 margin of victory plus the starting stagger put him 3:27 clear of the next finisher.



Olivia Wood, a recent graduate of Anaconda High School first raced here when she was 14 years old, and she has run again every year since. Her experience on the course doubtlessly played a role in her 6-second margin of victory in the women's overall. Wood, who finished today in 1:08:34, plans to matriculate at Carroll College next fall, where she will compete in cross country and track.



Nicole Hunt (43) of Deer Lodge holds the existing women's course record at 1:04:10 from 2009, but today she aggravated an existing calf injury during the downhill section of the course and then gimped to the finish in 1:08:40 - still the fifth fastest women's time ever. The *World Masters Association* age grading factors converted her time to 1:04:48, which broke Debbie Magilke's 2011 A-G record by 1:15.



Bozeman's Anne Trygstad (69) also broke Magilke's record with her adjusted time of 65:42.

Butte's Jeff Braun (49, and shown trailing) made up the 10-second starting stagger on Dillon's Mike Telling (44) by the time the two reached the course's high point. Then they both ran with abandon and recklessness on the downhill, as proven by the fact that they each suffered a separate traumatic crash during the descent. They both also got up and finished with style, Telling with ground-in dirt on his front and left sides, and Braun with lacerations from his left cheek all the way down his side. Telling eventually pulled away from Braun, but not by enough to overcome Braun's 5-year advantage in age grading. Braun's victorious A-G time of 54:54 was well under the \$75 premium time bonus standard of 56:00ag.



The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Wulfman's CDT-14K Trail Race is in the books; and, once again Butte's Piss & Moan Runners put on an exceptional event. This year saw the 3<sup>rd</sup> running of the northbound direction between Pipestone and Homestake Passes. With the combination of altitude, hills and semi-technical terrain, the course is no cake-walk; but, course records and personal observation would suggest that it's still a bit faster than the southbound direction. And, in the 2011 northbound edition of this course, ideal weather conditions saw some screaming fast times.

But, Mother Nature decided to play a little trick on the field this year. Conditions at the start seemed good - cool (around 6° C) and dry with a very mild breeze. But, about 10 to 15 minutes into the race and the first drops began to fall. By 20 minutes it was full-out miserable. The course wound up into the clouds and then the skies dropped a consistent mixture of rain, grapple and sleet. The rain didn't relent; and, in the end, it was reminiscent of the crazy wetness at the 2009 edition. The course got a bit sloppy, the wetness lent a chill to the air, and the race times slowed accordingly.

However, being a single track trail all the way - the race start has to be adjusted to accommodate the 240-person field. Based on predicted times and consideration by the race director (Ray Hunt), the runners are seeded to go out on the course in 10-second intervals. With the faster runner's going out first, this allows all of the runner's great access to the trail with very little needs for passing or other potential conflicts.

On the men's side, Jimmy Grant of Missoula (as defending champion) was first out of the gate and it was pretty much game over within the first 3 to 4 kilometers. After hitting the uphill switchbacks after 3K, Jimmy reported that the course behind him seemed clear and he was truly in a time trial situation. He seemed to be on 4:00 per kilometer pace through about 6K; but, reported that he was a bit sluggish during the wet middle section. He got back on track over the last 4K; but, by then the hope of the magic sub-56:00 was gone. In the end, he had to settle for a win over 2 minutes+ with a time of 56:47 - which is still the #4 time for the S-N course.

With wins already this year in the 11-Miles to Paradise and the Pengelly Double Dip, Jimmy showed that he's got trail skills to match his road chops. He reports that he's been spending quite a bit of trail training time with the Missoula ultra-trail group of Mike Wolfe, Mike Foote, Chris Kollar and Jason Schlarb - and, it's really improved his off-road abilities. His big goal for the year - the Bridger Ridge Run. With the way that he's been performing this year, it will be very exciting to see how he does on one of Montana's most challenging and historic trail races.

Having run every edition of this race, Butte native Josh Panasuk has some unmatched knowledge of the trail. And, having now moved on to college at MSU-Billings, he's also gained some newfound running skills and strength. He put all of this skill, endurance and knowledge to use today as he pulled off 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall - for his first podium and sub-1 hour finish (59:14). The next position went to someone else with some good history at this race - Dillon's Mike Telling. Heading the over-40 crew and almost all the rest of the field, Mike had a great race with his 60:56.

A surprise, late entrant (taking advantage of a Thursday night cancellation), Casey Jermyn showed that he can still motor along. An alum of Montana State University and a Big Sky Conference champion in track and cross-country - Casey secured the 4<sup>th</sup> spot with his 1:01:57. Ever so close behind Casey was another over-40 athlete - Jeff Braun of Butte. Doing his best to stay in contact with Mike Telling, Jeff got pulled along to a solid 1:01:58 to round out the overall top 5.

The women's race saw some excitement and some drama. Defending champion and course record holder Nicole Hunt was the first woman to hit the trail. And, early on she looked like she was ready to hit it as hard as ever. But, unbeknownst to most everyone else, Nicole has a nagging calf injury that had recently caused her to take 2-weeks off from running. At about 15:00 into the run, she could feel it tightening; and, by mid-race she knew it was serious. But, she gutted it out and hoped that her time at the finish was enough to hold on for the win.

Recent Anaconda High School graduate Olivia Wood started exactly 3:00 behind Nicole - so, she had no idea of Nicole's struggles with the calf. Now, Olivia has run this event every year save the inaugural edition. So, she's no stranger as to what the course is going to throw at her. Pushing through the rain, she showed that she's ready to take on the collegiate level as she enters Carroll College this fall as part of the Fighting Saints XC and Track teams. She also showed why she was an All-State track and XC runner for the Copperheads; because, in the end, her elapsed time was 6 seconds faster than Nicole - 68:34 to 68:40. And, that gave the win to Olivia.

3<sup>rd</sup> place went to former MSU-Billings standout Lisa Minnehan at 73:09. And, the top 5 was rounded out by Bailey Roberts of Bozeman in 73:25 and Livingston's Becky Stieb Speidel in 74:04.

The over-40 categories were focused this year on the age-graded competition; and, solid competition it was. For the women, Nicole took the Master's overall and Age-Graded titles. At 43, her 68:40 gun time converted to 64:48, a new northbound A-G record. The A-G course record cash bonus plus the sub-65:00 A-G premium time bonus totaled \$150 in victory payments for Hunt. Taking 2<sup>nd</sup> in the A-G results was 69-year old Anne Trygstad of Bozeman. Finishing in 98:25 (for 17<sup>th</sup> women's master), her A-G conversion brought her down to 65:42 - a fantastic effort. The rest of the top 5 A-G went to Lori Buratto of Spokane (42) with an A-G time of 71:08; Dillon's Betty Iverson (55) in 73:15; and, Kelli Sullivan of Butte (55) in 74:46.

For the men - Jeff Braun and Mike Telling swapped their positions from the overall and the men's master race. With his 61:58 gun time, Braun at 49 saw an A-G conversion all the way down to 54:54. That missed Scott Creel's mind-boggling 2011 record of 51:23; but, was till quick enough to score a \$75 premium bonus. Meanwhile, Telling's (44) 60:56 converted to 56:12. Suddenly, Jeff is thinking that those extra 5-years of chronological age ain't all bad ☺ The rest of the A-G top 5 went to: Kyle Klickir of Phillipsburg (56) in 57:27; Three Fork's Kirk Keller (54) in 58:13; and, Ray Hunt of Deer Lodge (47) in 58:25. In all, there were 7 men who had age-graded times of under 1:00 - a shining example of the strength of the master's runners at this event.

The wet weather and chilly weather tried to put a damper on the event; but, the runner's would have none of that. Eating some great, healthy food at the post-race spread (hosted by the spectacular Homestake Lodge) and enjoying some fine beverages courtesy of Quarry Brewing, the runners had a great celebration of the summer solstice. With great organization, a great trail, fantastic awards and a top-notch post race picnic - it's no wonder that this is becoming a "must do" event on the Montana racing circuit. And, no wonder that the event's 240 slots were filled by mid-February this year!!!! And, in spite of the weather conditions - the race had an all time record number of finishers with 223 - WOOP, WOOP!!

As I've said before, John "The Wulfman" Wulf would have been pleased to see all his people having such a great time out along the backbone of the continent.

See you on the roads, tracks and trails

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