***Mountain*** *marathon will* ***test runners Saturday***

By LylUl Arave

Deseret News sports writer

FRUIT HEIGHTS - The most abominable sin that
runners can commit in a race is to walk. Walking in a race
means feeling guilty and falling behind the rest of the

field. "

Sueh behavior is usually Interpeted to mean that a
runner is either out of shape, lacking in proper willpower
or is just plain quitting. And "quit" is the dirtiest
four-letter word in sports.

Now to all trained and serious runners, it might be
slightly permissible to walk a little in a 26-mile marathon,
but in races of 10 miles and less? No way!

. However, the seventh annual Bair-Gutsman MOlJIltain
Marathon Races are scheduled for 7:30 a.m. Saturday
starting at the Rock Loft and no runner can possibly
complete without walking considerably.

The reason runners must walk part of these races is
because of their bizarre steepness. Both races climb 960
vertical feet per mile for the first five miles and rank as
the steepest footraces in America. Even the famed Pikes
Peak Marathon in Colorado is not nearly as steep.

The Bair-Gutsman races are Utah's oldest and most
prestigious mountain footraces. There are two races, a
If}..miler which originated in 1974· and a 30.3 miler which

was first run in 1978.

Both Gutsman races are the creations of Kaysville's
J an Cheney. Each race starts ~ at the same time and
follows the same route for the first 10 miles, but the 30.3

miler continues to Bountiful. *I*

The races begin at 4,700 feet' above sea level and
follow a paved road for one-half mile up to the mouth of
Bair Canyon. The course then follows a narrow and
sometimes obliterated trail up the canyon.

Surprisingly, the trail up Bair Canyon passes through
a multitude of different types of terrain and flora ranging
from sagebrush, swamps, ferns, rocks, grass and a small
stream to timber.

At times the trail divides or fades and only a quick
discerning or lucky decision prevents a runner from
getting lost for several minutes or having to run a longer
distance.

Many runners are forced to start walking in the
Gutsman after only one mile, but eventually the steepness
takes its toll on all competitors. The trail becomes so steep
sometimes that a runner can actually save energy and
travel faster walking than running.

A few runners use ski poles to aid in propelling their
body up the mountain, while most use their arms to pump
their knees up and down.

The final 1,000 yard!! up the canyon transverses what
is known as "Death Row," an aerobic torture test that
borders on being straight up. Here a slow walk is the
fastest pace possible .

At the top of Death Row, the trail connects onto a dirt
road that travels south and passes just 50 feet below and
behind the twin radar towers on Francis Peak at an
elevation of 9,450 feet.

Runners are treated to spectacular bird's-eye views
near Francis Peak of most of Davis and Morgan counties
and the Great Salt Lake.

The dirt road travels five miles and 2,200 feet down to
the top of Farmington Canyon where the lO-mile race

 finishes. . .

Finishers of the lO-mile race are treated to a hearty
breakfast at a nearby campground, while 30.3 mile racers
continue four miles and 1,792 vertical feet up to Bountiful
Peak (elevation 9,230 feet).

The longer Gutsman race finishes with 15 more miles
along Skyline dirt road and ends after a downhill drop of
3 970 feet in front of the HB" on the mou,ntain in northern .

Bountiful. .

Total altitude climb in the lO-mile race is 4,800 feet,
while it is 6,592 in the longer race. The lO-mile Gutsman course record is one hour, 37

minutes and 22 seconds held by Colorado's Rick Trujillo in
1976. His ascent time up the Bair Canyon stretch of 1: 06.15
is also the fastest ever. Trujillo is currently the Pikes
Peak Marathon record-holder also.

There are no recorded times for the longer Gutsman
race since Cheney feels it is the distance of such .longer
races that is the key element, not the speed' or time.
However, no one has come close to finishing the 30.3 mile
race in less than 4.5 hours.'

As if Cheney's two Gutsman races weren't cha.I-·
lenging and long enough, he now has tentative plans for an
even longer and tougher mountain event.

He plans to stage "The Flight of the Eagle Event" in '
September of this year. It will be a fun-run - not a race-
from Weber Canyon up along the Skyline of the
mountains, past Francis. Peak and will follow the
remainder of the regular 30.3 mile Gutsman race down

into Bountiful. .

Best estimates are that this route would be 40 to 45
miles long. Sections of the route would not even include
any improvised trail or road,

Prospective entrants of the Gutsman can register for
either Gutsman race at6:30 a.m. Saturday at a cost of$10.
A T-shirt picture and the breakfast are included in the
entry fee.' More than 100 runners are expected to enter this
year's 100mile race.