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US Teams Victorious at Fourth Annual NACAC Mountain Running Championships

Canmore, Canada --- The Canadian Trail and Mountain Running Association (CTMRA) in association with the Canmore Challenge Trail hosted the fourth North American Central American Caribbean (NACAC) Mountain



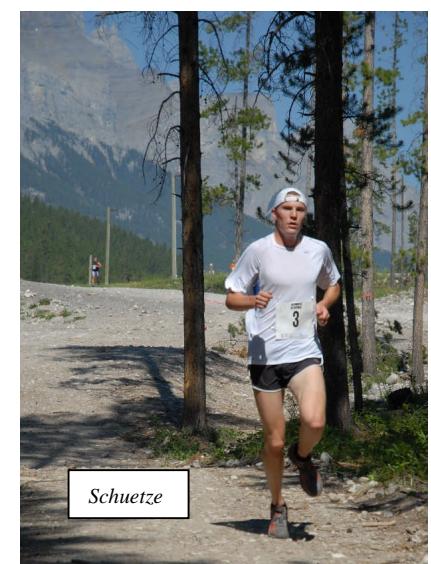
Running Championship in Canmore, Alberta, on Saturday, July 28, 2007. Teams from the United States, Canada, and Mexico competed over the 12 kilometer route with the U.S. teams winning the championships in both the male and female divisions.

Newcomer to the sport, Nick Schuetze, 25, Portland, OR, running in his first trail race, won the event today along with \$400 for first place. Schuetze posted a 49:09 on the course followed by fellow Americans Eric Blake, 27, New Britain, CT, in second for the NACAC

Championships in 50:10, and James Nielsen, 27, Palo Alto, CA, in third with a time of 50:59. The combined score of six bettered second place team Canada West whose score was 21, followed by Canada East with 25, and Mexico with 26.

“I thought the course was awesome,” said Schuetze. “I liked the downhill. It was difficult for most people and I’m not afraid of it. That’s where I made up most of my time. I got in the lead after the first long downhill section and was in the lead for most of the race. I didn’t want to waste my energy on the ups, I knew I’d get anyone that passed me on the downhills.”

Blake related his experience in the race, “Overall I was happy with it. I was hoping for a top three finish, but I was happy with my place (Blake finished fourth overall in the race which included non NACAC competitors as well). This was



my first race since my marathon in June (Grandma’s). The course was more of a “trail” race than a “mountain” race. The uphills were not as steep as other mountain races that I have done. I like uphills – those are my strength. The course didn’t suit me in that way. The course had lots of transitions – tight turns, rolling terrain, lots of pace changing, and some narrow downhill trails which made it challenging. I caught a lot of people on the uphills, but lost time on the downhills. This was my first race where we actually went downhill first and I’m used to uphill starts so I may not have started out fast enough in as good a position. I got up to fourth place and stayed there. I gained a little bit, but not enough to make the top three.”



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comfort zone the whole way."

Lundy will represent the U.S. again in Switzerland on September 15 at the World Mountain Running Trophy. Lundy made her third Teva U.S. Mountain Running Team last month by winning the USA 10km Trail Championships at Steamboat Springs, CO. She is a member of last year's gold-medal winning squad.

Nielsen commented, "It was a fun course and definitely a learning experience. It's a fun sport and I'm looking forward to my next mountain race."

For the women, Christine Lundy, 36, Sausalito, CA, led team USA to their gold-medal podium spot and pocketed the \$400 prize for her first-place finish. Lundy, just back from the Pan American Games where she finished seventh in the marathon, managed to run a great race in spite of a nasty head cold she got on the plane ride back from Brazil.

Following her 57:28 finish time, Lundy said, "It was a nice course. There was definitely a lot of room if you wanted to pass and you could see where everyone else was. We all started out conservatively. It wasn't as steep as most mountain races, up or down. However, the downhills were a bit tricky with the rocks and exposed tree roots. I ran in my



pay too much attention to the views during the race. The fans and volunteers were great all along the course."

Finishing in second for Team USA was Lisa Goldsmith, 42, Nederland, CO, who posted a 57:51 finish time, second place overall for the women, and earned the \$200 prize. Goldsmith was also a member of last year's gold-medal winning squad at the World Mountain Running Trophy.

Rounding out Team USA's seven point victory was Brandy Erholtz, 29, Bailey, CO, who finished in fourth with a time of 59:12.

"I really liked the course," said Goldsmith. "It was very interesting. I liked that it had lots of ups and downs – not just one up and then down. There were lots of turns and it was great to go through the start/finish area four times."

This was Erholtz's third trail race, "The course was very scenic, even though you couldn't



Canada West finished in silver medal position with a score of 14 points. Canada East had one competitor drop out of the race and therefore didn't finish a full team.

Adrian Lambert and Katrina Driver took home the Jim Clampett Awards for top Canadian mountain runners. Lambert was third overall behind Schuetze and Ivan Babikov (a Russian not-yet-turned Canadian citizen), while Driver was third behind Lundy and Goldsmith.



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The race site was the Canmore Nordic Center, venue for the 1988 Winter Olympic cross country ski and biathlon events, which recently completed a \$16 million dollar renovation. The elevation at the Center is 1425 meters.

The course was a 12 kilometer route starting at the Nordic Centre with a short 750 meter “parade loop” and then two 5.5 kilometer loops. The route descended to the Bow River, climbed back up to the top of the Nordic Centre Trails, and looped back down to the start/finish area. The course had an elevation gain of about 450 meters. The terrain was 90% on hard-packed terrain including open ski trails and single track – essentially a hard/fast running surface for the majority of the course. The downhills were the same hard packed surfaces, with the exception of one softer (loamy soil) single track/twisty turn section.

The U.S. hosted the NACAC event in 2004 and 2005 and Mexico hosted in 2006. Team USA won the first two years, but didn't compete in 2006. During the weekend in Canmore, there was a meeting of representatives from Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. to discuss future plans for the NACAC competition with the selection of an event site for 2008 an integral part of those plans.

For more information and complete results of the Canmore Challenge 12km and Canmore Canter 6km event visit: www.mountainrunning.ca

Team scores were:

Men:

USA 6 (1-2-3)
Canada West 21 (4-5-12)
Canada East 25 (6-8-11)
Mexico 26 (7-9-10)



Women:

USA 7 (1-2-4)
Canada West 16 (3-6-7)



For additional information on the USA Mountain Running Program visit www.usatf.org and www.trailrunner.com.

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