

2019 RACE DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

DWAYNE OLSON – HECLA HALF MARATHON



The events in Hecla all started when I went to Hecla to play golf in 2014. After the golf game, I decided to go for a short walk down to the beach. I then decided to walk a little further and ended up lost on the Hecla trail system. After walking 14km lost on the most beautiful groomed trails in Manitoba, I had decided to have an event on the Island.

In 2015 we held the First Hecla Triathlon. The event was a huge success. I was most surprised by the number of people that didn't know about Hecla and were surprised we had something like it in Manitoba. There were many others that knew of Hecla, but hadn't been there for 20 years and wondered why they hadn't.

Shortly after the Triathlon, I was out running with a friend that had recently completed the Boston Marathon. She talked about her experience there and how it was so well supported by the community, especially the hotel where she was staying. That's when I realized the impact a hotel and overall hospitality had on a running event.

Somewhat serendipitously, the then Food & Beverage Manager of the Lakeview Hecla Resort mentioned how nice it would be to have a running event in Hecla. We started the first Hecla Half Marathon as a way to fill some rooms on a slow weekend. The event was not supposed to conflict with the Resort's main business of Weddings. It was also an opportunity to let the Chef do whatever he wanted.

Today, the Hecla Half Marathon is Hecla's largest event. The Resort now reserves that weekend for the running event. The Hecla Half Marathon is also the main fund raising component for Riverton Minor Hockey.