

50 Anniversary

Albert Martens

I have run from 1980 to today – some 41 years. And my odometer sits at 47,050 km. I have been running primarily out of my own initiative, for the purpose of raising funds to help less fortunate people, also to get to know and encourage other runners, plus network with national and international runners, this is now my full time work.

I started running when I moved to Germany, I had done sports in Canada e.g. baseball, but in Germany I needed an outlet for my stressful job.

So I started running, initially in 1979 – first time ever, it was 4 km.

which lead to more serious running in the following year, raising money for the school I worked for.

Most of my motivation for the long ultras was to raise funds to help a charity in some capacity in the many years to come.

My most satisfying achievement was definitely to run and then turn the special long runs into an event, where I invited other runners to come and share my experiences and raising about \$250,000 dollars thus far for primarily 4-5 charities.

The Marathon Des Sables has been the most difficult and most rewarding race event for me.

I have so many good memories of the runs that I have done, it is hard to single out one, but when I crossed the finish line in Morocco in the 2001 Marathon des Sables, this is the one that stands out.

Toughest Ultra Marathon – The Badwater Ultra - Running 135 miles in Death Valley, California in 2004

Coldest Marathon: The Polar Bear Marathon – Churchill November 2013 (Wind Chill – Minus 41)

Most Challenging Ultras: The Marathon Des Sables (4 X) in Morocco 250 km - 7 days in the Sahara Desert.

I have completed: 12 Ultra Marathons - cross Switzerland, Germany, & Paraguay

49 Full marathons - world wide (and many other distance runs)

Plus

6 World Loppet Cross Country ski races in Europe and

I played hockey for 12 years in Germany and Switzerland

One of my favourite races was the Jungfrau Marathon in Interlaken, Switzerland. To run up a beautiful Swiss Alps – over 2000 meters up and then see the landscape of the Swiss scenery is absolutely fantastic. To see the glaciers, the cows with bells and hear the cow bells ring is gorgeous.

My worst experience was to be afraid in the Sahara Desert in a sand storm in 2006 and 2009 when I turned in my number in fear of getting lost in the storm, in 2009 I had to be rescued and was so dehydrated that I received 5 liters of IV and brought back to the main camp for recovery.

My volunteer work is fantastic, I recommend and encourage runners to engage in running extreme – news worthy races for a charity, where other needy people are helped.

Right now I am on “faith “ support as a full time employed volunteer receiving my income to cover my cost of living, so I can be engaged to run and help others as much as possible. I enjoy helping the three first Nation communities and encouraging them to run and terminate substance abuse. I had a film made – Run the North. – a documentary of the Polar Bear Marathon – I showed this to the community of Tadoule Lake, MB. as encouragement
Run the North: <http://www.p2cfilms.com/runthenorth>

Other Fund Raising ultras marathons have been:

- 1) Run for Hope – run from Encarnacion to Asuncion, (Cross Paraguay)
- 2) Run for Missions – Run 330 km from Italy to Germany (Cross Switzerland)
- 3) Run in Tarragona, Spain, and Grand Canary Islands.
- 4) Run 101 – 101 km for my mother.

Books Written:

A Million Steps - 1997
Sand in My Shoes – 2008

