

WHERE THE EARTH MEETS THE SKY

WHAT IS SKYRUNNING?

SKYRUNNING IS MOUNTAIN RUNNING UP TO OR EXCEEDING 2,000 METRES (6,600 FT) WHERE THE INCLINE EXCEEDS 30% AND THE CLIMBING DIFFICULTY DOES NOT EXCEED 11° GRADE. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? HILLS, MOUNTAINS, AND LOTS OF ELEVATION. WITH MOST TRAIL RACES FOCUSING ON DISTANCE, SKYRUNS PUT JUST AS MUCH, IF NOT MORE EMPHASIS ON THE AMOUNT OF ELEVATION ACROSS THE COURSE.

BY MELISSA ROBERTSON



RUNNING

TEAM S4H

THE HISTORY OF SKYRUNNING

Skyrunning was the brainchild of Italian Mountaineer Marino Giacometti who, along with a handful of other climbers, pioneered races on Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa in the early 1990's. Skyrunning itself took off as a sport in 1993 with races taking place across the world's mountain ranges. To address the need for rules and guidelines the Federation for Sport at Altitude was founded in 1995. Skyrunning is now managed by the International Skyrunning Federation, which took over in 2008 and is responsible for the direction, regulation, promotion, development and furtherance of Skyrunning on a worldwide basis.

To complete a SkyRace you don't have to be fast, you have to be mentally strong, determined and at least a bit fearless as the course will more than once just drop off the side of a mountain.

SKYRUNNING IN AUSTRALIA

Skyrunning came to Australia in 2014 with the Buffalo Stampede Ultra SkyMarathon and SkyMarathon. That first year saw over 200 runners take to the mountains around Bright, Victoria including the formidable Mount Buffalo itself. With 4,545m elevation gain in the Ultra and 2,942m elevation gain in the Marathon these were not your standard trail races.

After the success of the Buffalo Stampede a full Oceania Skyrunning Series was developed with races taking place across Australia and New Zealand under the direction of the Skyrunning Australia and New Zealand Committee.

WHO IS THIS FOR?

Anyone who wants a challenge! There's not many races you can look back on and say, "Yeah I ran a few hills as a warm-up, then ran to the top of that giant mountain you see over there".

To complete a SkyRace you don't have to be fast, you have to be mentally strong, determined and at least a bit fearless as the course will more than once just drop off the side of a mountain. It's possible to hike most of the race and still complete within the cut off times as long as you don't mind the burning calves as you push yourself up yet another steep hill.

Appealing to both your experienced trail runners and also the obstacle racing and adventure racing athletes, Skyruns push competitors to the limits of what they think they are possible of achieving.

THE FUTURE OF SKYRUNNING IN AUSTRALIA

The 2015 Buffalo Stampede was a good sign that Skyrunning is here to stay in Australia. With over 450 finishers across the three events and an impressive selection of elite Australian and international trail runners hitting the mountains around Bright the 3 day Skyrunning event was a huge success.

Skyrunning is a welcome addition to what is already an impressive listing of trail runs available in Australia.

SKYRACES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

AUSTRALIA

MOUNT BULLER SKYRUN (MARCH)

45km SkyMarathon - 2233m elevation gain

The SkyMarathon takes place as part of the Mount Buller Mountain Running Festival. The race includes climbing to the summit of Mount Buller itself.

BUFFALO STAMPEDE (APRIL)

26km Sky26'er - 1555m elevation gain

41.4km SkyMarathon - 2924m elevation gain

75.5km Ultra SkyMarathon - 4545m elevation gain

Leaving from the picturesque town of Bright, Victoria runner's head out into the surrounding hills. Both the SkyMarathon and Ultra SkyMarathon include the 10km climb to the top of Mount Buffalo. This is also the Oceania Skyrunning Championships and attracts a highly competitive elite field of Australian and International runners.

HOUNSLOW CLASSIC (OCTOBER)

21km SkyRun - 1434m elevation gain

76km Ultra SkyMarathon - 4106m elevation gain

Starting at Blackheath in the Blue Mountains this is one of the most anticipated races of the year. Taking place over un-raced terrain and featuring the most formidable of all the Skyrunning course profiles.

NEW ZEALAND

THE ULTRA EASY (JANUARY)

100km Ultra SkyMarathon - 4181m elevation gain

With a 3am start time you know you're in for a long race. Based out of Albert Town Tavern, Wanaka New Zealand and featuring 5 peaks.

THE HILLARY (MARCH)

34km SkyMarathon - 1704m elevation gain

80km Ultra SkyMarathon - 3712m elevation gain

Held on the Hillary Trail which was opened in 2010 and would normally be a 3-4 day hike.

MT DIFFICULTY ASCENT (JUNE)

42.2km SkyMarathon - 2650m elevation gain

Based on Mt Difficulty Cromwell, New Zealand this brand new race features some of the steepest ascents and descents in the Skyrunning series

SKY ROCK N' RUN (NOVEMBER)

42km SkyMarathon - 3607m elevation gain

Held in the Southern Alps and run over Mt Oxford

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Skyrunning Disciplines

SKYRACE	Minimum distance 20km & minimum 1200m vertical climb
SKYMARATHON	Minimum distance 30km & minimum 2000m vertical climb
ULTRA SKYMARATHON	At least 5% harder than the SkyMarathon & minimum 2500m vertical climb
ULTRA XL SKYMARATHON	Minimum 5000m elevation gain and over 12 hours for the winner
VERTICAL KILOMETRE	1000m vertical climb and not exceeding 5km in length
SKYSPEED	Minimum 100m vertical climb and more than 33% incline
SKYSCRAPER RACING	Minimum incline of 45% on stairs
SKYBIKE	Duathlon consisting of both a bike and Skyrunning race
SKYRAID	Multidiscipline team Skyrunning races
SKYTRAIL	Specifically trail with a minimum 15km

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION

SKYRUNNINGANZ.COM.AU

The official website of Skyrunning Australia and New Zealand including links to all of the races that are available in the series.

WWW.SKYRUNNING.COM

The official website of the International Skyrunning Federation. Who is the overseeing body of all the Skyruns around the world.

SEARCH4HURT (SEASON 3)

See Matt Murphy take on the daunting Buffalo Stampede Ultra Marathon.