

## 2019 Relay Team Profile: Mountain Mamas Run Wild

“This Girl is on Fire” may be a hit pop song, but it’s also an apt statement for a group of local mothers who together will be taking on the area’s popular long-distance footrace, the Tussey mOUNTaiNBACK 50 Mile Relay and Ultramarathon.

Sara Ali is team captain of the Mountain Mamas Run Wild relay team that will take part in the 2019 Tussey mOUNTaiNBACK event on Oct. 27. This will be a new event for five of the team’s six runners, whose past running experiences also vary.

“One team member has done one leg of the race as part of a large relay team,” said Ali, of Port Matilda. “She is the one who convinced us all to go for it. Running experience in our group is a wide range, from track athletes to cross country runners to people like me, who haven’t run too much at all in life.”



Participating relay teams choose a runner rotation order that they will follow through the 12 segments, or legs, of the 50-mile course. “I personally have only ever run two races, one 5K and one 10K,” said Ali. “Of course when we drew straws for legs, I got the longest one, which I am so grateful for - this has been a real life-changer.”

Running as an all-women’s team packs added value for Ali. “We are a team of all females, which is in itself empowering. But, perhaps even more inspiring is that we are mothers to young children (two each, ranging from 9 months to 5 years old). We were motivated to form this group because we want to lift each other up and help each other remember how much we are capable of as strong, independent women.”

Ali said the team’s name has special meaning for race day. “The running wild part of the name has to do with us being kid-free for this running adventure. Many of us train pushing our kiddos in jogging strollers.”

According to Ali, the seeds for this partnership were sown early this year. “When we were all together this spring, we collectively decided that we needed a fun ‘push’ to challenge ourselves and meet our individual fitness goals. Tussey Mountainback has definitely been that push. We all really enjoy the outdoors and have spent lots of time hiking the area where the race will be. So we have been encouraging each other over the past several months to train, get into a healthy and fun fitness routine while also furthering our bonds as friends in motherhood and beyond.”

Proceeds of this year’s event will support Centre Volunteers in Medicine, a free medical and dental clinic that provides access to primary and preventive care for qualifying individuals living or working in Centre County who live in surrounding counties that do not have a free clinic or programs to meet their needs. For more information about Centre Volunteers in Medicine, visit <https://cvim.net/>.

*Photo: Collage of Team Mountain Mamas Run Wild.*