

2021 Runner Profile: Charles Remillard

First time 50-mile runners often move up to the distance after experiencing shorter events.

Charles Remillard has decided to give the distance a try at this year's Tussey Mountainback 50 Mile Relay and Ultramarathon, after notching strong performances at numerous events, including the U.S. Olympic Team Trials Marathon.

Remillard, of Denver, CO, has posted fast times at distances from 1500 meters (4:06) to the 26-mile marathon (2:17:56).

But it would be inaccurate to say he hasn't run more than 26.2 miles in a day. Remillard ran the 486-mile Colorado Trail with a friend in ten days, averaging 48 miles and 9,000 ft of elevation gain each day.

"I first started running when I was around 12 years old," said Remillard. "I started running because my sister was a cross country runner, and I thought it would be good for getting me in shape for basketball!"

Remillard heard about the Tussey Mountainback from a friend, Tim Mateer, a competitive runner and graduate student at Penn State.

"He asked me if I wanted to join in on some shenanigans – a.k.a., a 50 miler!"

Remillard also paced a friend for 24 miles of the Leadville 100 miler earlier this year. "Watching people run this race was so inspiring, and the atmosphere really made me want to run an ultra trail race!"

Although the Mountainback race is 100% on forest roads, the route is 82% unpaved, which has helped draw in both road and trail runners.

When he isn't running, Remillard is a middle school teacher, and he finds the two activities work well together.

"Running integrates pretty well into my life as a teacher. I do have to run a lot of early morning runs and workouts as well as doubles in the afternoon. However, recently I have been helping out with the Cherry Creek High School cross country team, so they help me get my doubles in." Remillard also works at a local running store "in order to financially support my running habits."

For the most part his running life is somewhat secluded from his students, said Remillard, "until they Google me, which seems to be a fun pastime for middle school students. I do think that I have inspired some of my students to run competitively, and I have even had some of them follow me on Strava recently, which I thought was funny. I also had a student ask me the other day as he was leaving class for the weekend if I had any tips for improving his running, so we will see where he goes!"

Life paths can be unpredictable, and Remillard can attest for that.

"I grew up on a dairy farm, then ran for SUNY Oneonta in college, where I majored in physics and secondary education. I got accepted into the Peace Corps in 2017 and my medical clearance was denied a month before departing for Uganda. I had already quit my job as a NYC public school teacher, so I decided to move to Colorado, found a group to train with, and



qualified for the 2020 U.S. Olympic Trials in the marathon!"

Remillard does not have a specific goal time for the Mountainback race.

"I have no idea what to expect, which I am excited for! I am competing in the Tussey Mountainback a few weeks after the Chicago Marathon, so we will see how my body holds up!"

The Mountainback event welcomes both recreational and competitive runners to participate on relay teams of 2 to 8 runners, as well as offering the solo ultramarathon option.

Proceeds from this year's event will support CommonFood Centre County, a non-profit, all-volunteer group whose key mission is to resource underserved and under-employed elderly, single parent families, and low-income families in Centre County and neighboring areas with nutritious food and related services.

Tussey Mountainback 50 Mile Relay and Ultramarathon