

# ULTIMATE WARRIORS

## SURVIVING THE CRAZIEST RACE AROUND

Story and photos by Sean Chaffin

It's a humid summer afternoon in the Trinity River bottoms. Thousands of runners have turned out for one of the craziest races imaginable – the Warrior Dash. Jordan Moss and friend Ryan Green head for the last stretch of the course – sweat-soaked and tired, but facing two rows of fiery logs. The heat from the flames can be felt several feet away. The pair leap over both and head toward the mud crawl. After a brief crawl under barbed wire, they trudge through a soupy mud pit and slog another 50 yards to the finish line, gasping for air and covered with mud.

This is not your average race. The Warrior Dash consists of a 5K mixed with machismo, athleticism, and just plain fun that includes leaps over fire, mud crawls, river running, hay bail climbing, and other zany obstacles befitting a warrior. Finishers are rewarded with a fuzzy “Warrior helmet”, ax throwing, music by live bands, cold beer, and turkey legs and other warrior grub. Runners from across the country turned up in Dallas for the fun, many dressed in costumes including a Smurf, Fred Flintstone, and, of course, the Incredible Hulk.

“Warrior Dash is an event that runners will never forget,” race director Ryan Kunkel says. “It is not only the most extreme race in the U.S., it is also the most fun.”

And by the reactions of runners – the warriors agree. The Dallas race, held on the grounds of a giant paintball facility, is the first stop on a national series bringing warriors together all over the country. The idea for this energy-fueled fiesta was hatched by Red Frog Events owner Joe Reynolds and the first event was held last year in Joliet, Ill. The inaugural Texas event attracted more than 18,000 runners ready to get muddy.

As runner after runner leapt over logs engulfed in flames, two workers look on while manning a pallet of Dura-Logs. The heat is intense, and sweat beads formed on their foreheads. The Warrior grounds were a lush green from recent rains with tall oak trees in the background. A runner in Speedos and Superman cape made a daring leap over the fire. Most runners seemed to handle the obstacle well, a few shakier than others.

“Has anyone had any trouble making it over?” I ask. “One,” one of the two men responds. “But I think she’ll be alright.”

As if on cue, an orange and blue helicopter thundered overhead away from the grounds. While the Warrior Dash may be a bit of athleticism, machismo, and tomfoolery all rolled into one – there is still a bit of danger to the spectacle.



**The Warrior Dash continues through the fall and 2011. Organizers also recently announced plans for a spring date in Texas. For more information and more event announcements, visit [www.warriordash.com](http://www.warriordash.com). Here is a list of upcoming races:**

- Nov. 20-21 .... Austin, Texas
- Jan. 29 ..... Lake Wales, Fla.
- April 2-3 ..... Lake Elsinore, Calif.
- April 16-17 .... Roanoke, Texas
- April 30 ..... Florence, Ariz.
- May 14-15 ..... Mountain City, Ga.
- June 4 ..... Logan, Ohio
- Aug. 20-21 .... Copper Mountain, Colo.
- Sept. 17-18 .... Twin Lakes, Wis.



The men later added a few more logs to the fire, and the runners kept coming – jumping, leaping, and hurtling themselves through the heat.

Back at the finish line, Jordan Moss and Ryan Green attempt to recover some air – breathing heavily, but smiling. They are completely drenched, but are worry-free as they wait for the last of their group, Steve Enriquez, to cross the line.

“It was great time,” Moss says. “I trained for about three weeks.”

“We all had a bet among us three guys,” Green adds, pointing back toward the course and Steve. “And this guy finishing right here, he has to shave his head now ... and he loves his hair. Look how long it is. And he also has to drive us to Shreveport to gamble.”

Despite the impending loss of his locks, Enriquez takes it like a true warrior – offering up a muddy smile, particles of mud even in his teeth. He and his friends laugh and pose for photos. Next stop now that they have proven their warrior skills? A couple beers and a turkey leg, of course.

All three plan to “do the dash” again next year – no word yet on what next year’s bet will be.



Jordan Moss (from left), Ryan Green and Steve Enriquez catch the breath while clearing mud and muck from unwanted areas after the race. By the time you read this, Enriquez will have had his locks shorn.

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## PROMOTE YOUR RACE/EVENT AT THE MAJOR TEXAS RUNNING EXPOS

In the next six months, all major Texas marathons will have expos accompanying their highly attended races.

Runner Triathlete News will have an exhibit at all of these expos and we are offering to promote your race/event from our exhibit for a small fee. This is an opportunity for any event to have an affordable presence with the “big boys”.

A special display rack will be installed for the purpose of providing literature (brochures, entry forms, etc) about your event. (Please choose only ONE type of piece) The display rack will be headlined “FUTURE EVENTS” with your event name labeled above your literature hold.

**COSTS** – \$100 per expo – prepaid – you pick which expos! We advise sending about 300 promo pieces per expo entry. A total 10% discount is available if you display your event with us at 4 or more expos.

**TO MAKE RESERVATIONS**  
Contact Marie at 281-759-0555  
or email: [marie@runningmags.com](mailto:marie@runningmags.com)

### THE EXPOS AT WHICH RTN WILL BE HAVING AN EXHIBIT ARE:

**DECEMBER 5, 2010**  
Dallas White Rock Marathon

**JANUARY 30, 2011**  
Chevron Houston Marathon

**FEBRUARY 20, 2011**  
Livestrong Austin Marathon

**FEBRUARY 27, 2011**  
Fort Worth Cowtown Marathon

**MAY 21, 2011**  
Corpus Christi Beach to Bay  
Relay Marathon



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