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The desert race continues

by Tom Gallagher

NCR Today

Tom Gallagher, NCR blogger and Mission Management columnist, is blogging from Egypt, where he is racing across the Sahara Desert.

Day 4 - A rest day, but the race will continue

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Sahara Race (Egypt) 2009

While my system is quieting down, I didn't have the calories and strength at the start line on Wed., the 4th stage. I decided to take longer to recover and prepare for Day 5, the 54 mile day. Yesterday's temperature was 49 degrees C, making it something around 125 degrees F - the hottest day on record for this race. Day 4 is expected to be about the same.

This morning I rode with Jack Denness, from Rochester, UK, to the next camp. Jack is truly an ultra endurance legend. Among his achievements, Jack has completed 12 Badwaters, the 135 mile footrace in Death Valley in July. Jack is resting today and will go out tomorrow as well. It was a real treat to chit-chat. It was a silver lining to not starting. By the way, Jack is 74.

My tent mates are doing well. Guy, from London, is a top 10 competitor. There are 2 docs from the U.S - Matt in emergency medicine in Chicago and Sarbough in dermatology working in Washington, DC. Then there's Damon Vance, who lives and works 15 minutes away from my home. He's doing great. Then there's the Argentinian, Hernan, who is a world class sailor and naval architect living in Florida. My friend from the prior to races, James Pethigal from Seattle, is really doing a fine job.

All tent mates have a sense of humor. There's a real commraderie and they are fine people. It's the nature

of these events.

Two young guys (25+/- yrs old) from Connecticut, Brian Vogel and Stephen Minar, are making out well. They are in excellent shape, well prepared and in good spirits.

The staff and volunteers make the whole affair really work. They are first rate.

Also the Egyptian fellows setting up and breaking down camp are very helpful and friendly.

My goals for Day 4 are to hydrate, digest calories and rest. The medical staff is excellent, two of whom worked on prior races.

A word about the top competitors. It's hard to understand how they finished the course today in 4-5 hours. They are superb athletes.

I can't believe the terrific emails and blog responses I've received. Tremendous. They are like oxygen.

By the way, the infrastructure behind the emails/blogs is impressive. A woman in Hong Kong gets up at 3am to distribute the emails and blogs on the website, which are sent in batch once/day.

So the journey continues. It's great fun and onto tomorrow, the long day. (Sorry about the long blog, but I had some time on my hands today!)

In gratitude for all.

Tom

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