

The 10th annual Mount Mitchell Challenge & Black Mountain Marathon is in the books...and what a day!

2/24/07 Black Mountain NC - Bluebird skies, warm temps, the largest field ever and great running conditions again met all the runners...We put this race on to showcase our beautiful mountains and they never disappoint. But, while we here at The Dome know it's all about the journey to the highest point east of the Mississippi and back...at the sharp end of the field, it's all about the racing!

In the men's Challenge, the stage was set with 4-time champion **Will Harlan** up against one of the deepest fields on record. The lead pack bolted from the line and solidified into a tight, 6 man group by the Sourwood Gap aid station...At the Parkway, there was still little room between the men...Once on the single track, they started to encounter what little ice was apparent and as they crossed the summit of 6684ft Mt. Mitchell, the pack had splintered a bit, but had still not produced a clear favorite...Former marathon winner Coates Kennerly was pushing the pace, but Harlan and local stand-out **Mark Lundblad** were right on his heels. The descent proved to be the deciding factor as Harlan turned on the jets at Steppes Gap and began to pull away...by the return trip through Sourwood, Will had about 90 seconds on Lundblad and was really dropping the hammer. The finish line saw Harlan smash the un-official record for the full Challenge course (we have had to run some modified courses throughout the years) by 3 minutes in 4:54:21! Lundblad followed, also under the record, in 4:57:21. 3rd place went to Challenge rookie Steve Taylor in 5:14:04, while 4th and 5th found Drew Shelfer (5:18:27) and Jamie Dial (5:23:12) both beating the 5:30 mark...What a race!

The Women's Challenge, by contrast, was a solo affair...After her close second to **Annette Bednosky** in 2005, Asheville's own **Anne Lundblad** was back for more...With Lundblad as a World Championship silver medalist and Bednosky (also signed up for the 2007 Challenge) a former Western States 100 winner, it looked to be a clash of the titans.

From the start, Anne Lundblad went out hard & alone...and simply kept going...She crossed the summit with a big lead and extended it to 23 minutes by the finish in the fastest time run on the full course. Asheville local Sarah Almadovar held off a late charging Bednosky to take second 6:14:24 to 6:16:54. 4th and 5th went respectively to Rona VanWilligen (7:02:45) and Melida Yelton (7:27:48)

Masters titles for the Challenge went to 10-time finisher Mike Beamon from Cary, NC (6:03:48) and Asheville's own Maggie Everett (8:36:10)

In the men's marathon, John Basham from Lynchburg, VA destroyed the field by 13 minutes in 3:20:53...but it was Lauren Arnold from Danville, KY that stole the show with her debut marathon performance producing a stunning 3:33:35 to crush the previous fastest time on the marathon course.

Check www.blackmountainmarathon.com for full results and an Excel spreadsheet of all past results.

A special recognition goes to our four **10-time finishers**...Mike Beamon, Guido Ferrari, Luke Lucas and Dr. Robert Barker...Congrats and here's to another 10 years on the mountain!

I'd like to extend a huge thank you to all our volunteers...none of which could we do without. Here is a short list of the team leaders at the different points.

Sourwood Gap – Andrew Marsh and his team

Bill's Knob – Gary Bartlett and the Black Mountain Fire & Rescue team.

Parkway – Mike Nix from [Liberty Bikes](http://LibertyBikes.com), Dave Currence and Doug Miltch

Commissary Ridge – John Thompson from Black Dome

Summit – Karen McDonald and the folks from Mt. Mitchell
Steppes Gap – Scott Bowers
Montreat – Don McMahon and the Montreat Cross Country team
Finish – Danny, Wally and Tammy – [Jus Running](#)
Sweeps – Adam Hill and Dwight Shuler
Registration, Finish area and dinner – Ron and Don Davis, Chris, Jen, Drew and the crew from The Dome and the kids from Montreat College

Of course, the race wouldn't be possible without our generous sponsors...I have included a contact email to some of the more prominent benefactors if you feel inclined to extend a note of thanks...

Black Dome Mountain Sports (jay@blackdome.com)
Black Mountain Savings Bank (mwb_bmsb@bellsouth.net)
Black Mountain Chamber of Commerce (bmchamber@juno.com)
Montreat College (Bobt@montreat.org)
Black Mountain Fire and Rescue (fire@townofblackmountain.org)
Mount Mitchell State Park (mount.mitchell@ncmail.net)
Jus Running (Jusun@bellsouth.net)
The North Face (john_fellers@vfc.com)
Smartwool (rshoaf@smartwool.com)
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All our major sponsors are below:



Stay tuned to www.blackmountainmarathon.com for information on the availability of commemorative 10 year medallions hand forged by local Black Mountain artists...we will update you with how to purchase them as we get the details. And also, for you folks in the Asheville area, stay tuned to Charter Cable channel 20 for a special edition of [The Trail Explorer](#) hosted by Black Mountain's Vann Burnette...This year's race will be the featured topic for the March 14th episode (7:30pm)...you just might catch a glimpse of yourself on the boob-tube!

Of course, the largest cry of *Thanks!* Goes to you, the runners, for putting our little race on your calendar and spending some time in the mountains that we all love so much here! Come back and see us soon!

Cheers,

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