

The Enterprise

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Bridgewater man feels alive in 'Death Race'

Race set for June 27 in Vermont; only 10 percent finished last year's event

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BRIDGEWATER — Dave Long loves life. That's why he takes part in the "Death Race."
The annual event is about fitness, not fa-

talities, and takes place June 27 in Pittsfield, Vt. Featuring a series of torturous events, the competition can take from 48 to 72 hours to complete, if participants are even able to do so.
Last year, just 10 percent of the participants finished.

Run by the Vermont-based group Peak Races, the race features a series of grueling obstacles and challenges designed to push the limits of physical and mental endurance. Competitors aren't told exactly when the race starts — or finishes.

"It's all about what you can endure and how much you can physically take over that time frame," said Long, 44, of Bridgewater. "There's no sleep until you finish. You just keep going until the race is over."
The race, which has been run each year since 2005, will have 300 participants this

year.
The challenges are different and kept secret each year. Challenges of the past have included chopping wood for two hours, hiking 30 miles while carrying heavy rocks

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Bridgewater man to compete in 'Death Race'

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and 50-plus-pound rucksacks, and crawling uphill through a stream underneath a bed of barbed wire.

So why do it?

"Because I can," Long said confidently.

Long started running and intense training about three years ago. He progressed from jogging and biking to participating in outdoor obstacle courses called Spartan Races.

Last year, he completed a 13-mile obstacle course and a 10-kilometer snowshoe run.

"The Death Race pretty much brings it to a whole new level," he said.

Throughout the race, Long must carry a 70-pound backpack filled with items like weather gear, a shovel, axe, compass, map, food for 24 hours, water for 24 hours, hard-boiled egg and raw egg.

Both eggs cannot be cracked or broken by the end of the race in order to finish, Long said.

Long works as a carpenter and is a married father of two young children. He said he is hopeful he will finish, but can understand why most don't.

"For anybody that's been up a couple of days without sleep, you know it's very difficult to function," he said. "Your function mentally and your function physically start to fade because your body is not used to going to those periods of time without rest.



■ Dave Long, 44, of Bridgewater, says of the "Death Race": "There's no sleep until you finish. You just keep going until the race is over."

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE LONG

THE ISSUE

Some obstacles in past Death Races:

- Hike up a mountain carrying a 70-pound log
- Lift 10- to 30-pound rocks for five hours
- Cut 50 pounds of onions
- Chop wood for two hours
- Climb up a waterfall weighted down by a bucket full of rocks

—SOURCE: WWW.PEAK.COM

"I have two small kids, 3 and 5, and as they grow older I think it's important to set a good example. We're all strong, smart people and, unfortunately, I don't think a lot of people take advantage of the opportunities in front of them," he said.

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