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## FOCUS: News

...Not Least

14.04.09

## Running 4,500 kilometers in 64 days

To run a marathon is considered quite a feat by most. But for the 68 runners taking part in the Transeurope-Footrace, the marathon distance is but a walk in the park. Starting on April 19, they will run between 44 and 95 kilometers per day to complete the 4,500-kilometer distance in 64 days. The athletes will be accompanied by a team of radiologists from the University of Ulm, who will be examining the effects of such an extreme strain on the human body and its ability to regenerate, with a mobile Magnetic Resonance Image (MRI) scanner.



The organizer Ingo Schulze announces on his website that the participants can "relax a little" this year, as it is shorter than the last installment of the race, when the runners had to complete 5,000 kilometers in 2003. This year's race totaling 4500 kilometers takes the runners from southern Italy up to the North Cape in Norway.

The German Research Foundation is supporting the study to examine the strain on the extreme athletes' bodies. It is the first study of its kind and is being supported to the tune of 200,000 euros.

"We have the unique chance to accompany the reaction of the body over a longer period in its daily interchange between extreme strain and regeneration," said Project Director Dr. Uwe Schütz.

Schulze warns potential participants of the challenges of taking part in the race pointing out that you have to be able to visualize this event in your head and be mentally prepared to deal with all possible aspects. It involves getting up at 4.30 a.m. every morning and running an average of 70 km per day.

"Before applying you must determine if you are capable and willing to do this for 64 days." Furthermore he asks, "To run during cold, heat, hail, rain, up & downhill, bad stomach or other ailments. Are you willing to do all this?"

The organizer knows what he is talking about. The 61-year-old has been an ultra runner since 1978, claiming his first entrance into the Guinness Book of World Records for his 1097 kilometer run in Germany in 1983. In 2003 he completed the "TransEurope-Foot-Race" – a 5,036 kilometer, 64-day run from Lisbon-Portugal to Moscow-Russia.

<http://www.transeurope-footrace.org>

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der letzte Schrei

1. last call
2. all the rage

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A website offering lots of information for international students in Germany.

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