

If you would like to view Inside Dirt issue 10 on our website, [www.trailrunnermag.com](http://www.trailrunnermag.com), the password for this issue is V10Roar. This password is case sensitive. We will send out a password for each issue with each month's edition. This link takes you directly to our Inside Dirt editions: [here](http://trailrunnermag.com/e-zine/toc.html) <http://trailrunnermag.com/e-zine/toc.html>

# TrailRunner **INSIDE DIRT** Issue 10

---

WELCOME TO *TRAIL RUNNER* MAGAZINE'S INSIDE DIRT, AN E-ZINE THAT FILLS IN THE BLANKS BETWEEN YOUR REGULAR ISSUES OF *TRAIL RUNNER*.

---

## **Breaking News**

### **Race the Planet: Gobi March 2007**

**Canadians aspire to glory in Gobi Desert, and raise funds for fighting breast cancer**

**By Aaron Coe**



Photo credit: [www.racingtheplanet.com](http://www.racingtheplanet.com)

Many North Americans have heard of central Asia's Gobi desert, but few people are likely familiar with the Gobi March, which will take place June 17, 2007, an event that

Team Gobi Canada is gearing up to win. To understand the immensity of this challenge and the extent of Team Gobi Canada's complex preparation, some education is in order.

We will begin with a geography lesson. Team Gobi Canada's three members, Donna Carrigan, Rob Mackay and Donald Peterson, hail from British Columbia's capital, Victoria, situated on the southern tip of Vancouver Island on Canada's west coast. In 2007, they will travel to the Gobi desert, situated most in Mongolia and northwestern China, which in places reaches up to 14,000 feet above sea level.

Transitioning to math, we learn that 500,000 square miles makes the Gobi a sizeable wasteland. For the Gobi March, a field of no more than 100 competitors must traverse 250 kilometers in six stages over seven days, each leg ranging between 20 kilometers and 80 kilometers. The frontrunners log nearly 30 hours of total race time. At the finish line, 18 trophies will be awarded to the top three men, women and teams, and to all age-group winners, though the gleaming hardware is hardly what entices competitors to a race as far-flung, epic and expensive as the Gobi March.

Which brings us to economics. Individuals pay \$2800 (US) to run the Gobi March, while teams fork out \$8400. Meanwhile, Team Gobi Canada hopes to use the event to raise \$25,000 (CAN) for fighting breast cancer. The team's first fundraising event is scheduled for September 28, 2006, at Victoria's Silvercity Theater.

Next, a geology lesson: Deserts fall into one of four categories: subtropical, cool coastal, cold winter and polar. The Gobi is the world's largest cold-winter desert, which means its climate is extremely dry, with temperatures fluctuating from freezing to triple digits, while relief from the 60-mile-per-hour winds is scarce—not ideal conditions for foot travel, much less a race. The terrain varies from giant sand dunes to slot canyons to salt flats.

History tells us that people have been trekking this daunting desert for ages. Three notable women were Mildred Cable and Eva and Francesca French, early 20th-century missionaries who crossed the desert five times. The Gobi March is held in part to honor these three intrepid individuals. Participants will also come into contact with the ancient Kazak, Mongolian and Ugyur cultures.

However, the Gobi March is all about physical education, and we're not talking kickball. Race coordinators will provide daily water rations, campfires and tents each night, a trained medical staff and course markings. However, competitors must carry their own seven-day supplies—all their own food and gear, even if they are on a team. Add the environment and duration, and this feat obviously requires some preparation. Team Gobi Canada is training for the event with a regimen of strength work, mental training, poor-weather practices and plenty of long adventure races. According to team member and former U.S. Marine Donald Peterson, they are confident in their training and fitness and know that tactics, "drive, perseverance, and total commitment" will be crucial for a victory.

Finally, the computer science: Visit [www.racingtheplanet.com/gobimarch](http://www.racingtheplanet.com/gobimarch) for even more info on the Gobi March and other Racing The Planet events. Look for Team Gobi Canada's website in September ([www.teamgobi.com](http://www.teamgobi.com)), but until then check out Peterson's blog at [www.trainharder.com/weblog/jarhead\\_weblog.php](http://www.trainharder.com/weblog/jarhead_weblog.php). You can also email the team at [teamgobi@chaosweb.ca](mailto:teamgobi@chaosweb.ca); if computers aren't your thing, their mailing address is Team Gobi Canada, 1721 Duchess Street, Victoria, B.C. V8R 4W2.