

AsiaTrail

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4 Singaporean Trail Runners With a Head For Heights

14 NEW GEAR TO CHOOSE FROM

Discover the Best Climbers and Downhill Runners of the UTMB

INTERVIEW WITH CHINESE METEORITES - YAN LONG FEI & DONG LI



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Discover the Lost Horizon

Shangri-La Marathon & Ultra Race – China

www.shangri-la-marathon.com

By Terry Majamäki

When you hear the name Shangri-La, it conjures up visions of the Lost Horizon, a mysterious hidden utopia in the Himalayan Mountains, where people live in harmony and surrounded by grand beauty. On the weekend of April 25, the Shangri-La Marathon brought runners into just that kind of idyllic place; running a truly one-of-a-kind adventure race, in search of discovering the earthly paradise of the Lost Horizon.

You could feel the anticipation and excitement buzzing among the runners.

The adrenaline was pumping from the start, featuring a diverse group of runners from over 20 countries participating in the 50km and 100km ultra, as well as the 21km and 42km marathon distances. Runners were in awe of the grand scale of the mountain as they mentally prepared for the challenging 1,000m climb within the first 5km, reaching the mountain peak before descending into the picturesque and breathtaking Yubeng valley.

The 50km and 100km course took runners to the foot of Meili Snow Mountain, running up to a glacier

Results

Overall Winners

| | | |
|-------|----------------------------|----------|
| 100km | 王晓林 Wang Xiao Lin (China) | 12:17:34 |
| 50km | Tyler Harlan (USA) | 7:01:49 |
| 42km | Jeffrey Fong (New Zealand) | 7:27:31 |
| 21km | 辜桃君 Gu Tao Jun (China) | 3:51:10 |

Runner in search of the earthly paradise of the Lost Horizon.
Photo: Adventure Types - Chris Ord

and sacred waterfall. The tradition is to go around clockwise three times as the falling water blesses you, bringing good health, fortune, and longevity. Runners were also required to tear a page out of the “Lost Horizon” book — written in 1933 by British novelist James Hilton — and bring it back to the finish line as proof of completing the course. Several 42km, and even 21km, runners upgraded their distance to the 50km so they could fully experience the incredible beauty of the course and get their own page out of “Lost Horizon”!

The course offered a diverse range of terrain and microclimates: from dense mountain forests to rocky landscapes to dramatic cliffs; from the cold glacier to the high mountain desert. Coming into Yubeng, runners navigated the village pathways peppered with farm animals, local natives, and Tibetan pilgrims cheering them on. Crossing a bridge draped in prayer flags with roaring spring streams rushing below, before ascending into lower Yubeng and reaching a major checkpoint station. As runners progressed, the trails opened up with pockets of farm fields and meadows before coming across a river section where the forest became dense and the trail changed from a clear single track to being

scattered with boulders and rocks, requiring extra attention to traverse safely.

Here the trail parallels with a roaring spring river with several waterfalls, the sound and energy of the river is exhilarating, making it one of the most enjoyable sections of the course to run through. A pleasure only to be followed by one of the most dangerous parts of the course — the canyon section — which demands to be taken quite seriously. At first it does not seem like a big deal, but as the narrow winding path continues, the river begins to get further and further away. At a certain point, you look over the edge and it hits you, the river is hundreds of metres below, the canyon opens up and your adrenaline starts pumping while vertigo begins to kick in, your instinct has you stay to the inside of the path and keep moving forward.

As runners came to the finish, they were cheered for the incredible accomplishment of completing the race, an extremely challenging but exceptionally beautiful course. The pain, the tears, and the joy that runners experienced all came through. It was a life changing experience as they discovered the mystical land of the Lost Horizon. ^{AT}

