



Log Train Trail Marathon, Half-Marathon and 10K

ALTHOUGH THE EDGE TO EDGE Half-Marathon, held annually in Ucluelet, B.C., might be “the prettiest” race in Canada, as reported in *Canadian Running* (Nov. 08), Port Alberni, B.C.’s Log Train Trail event might well be the prettiest “non-race.” It’s run wholly off-road, on a trail that used to be the grade of a logging railway. The run is non-competitive because trail conditions are often poor and the route can’t be accessed by aid vehicles. The goal is simply to enjoy the camaraderie of the trail in an incredible setting.

The start and finish are close to the last operating steam-driven sawmill in Canada: the McLean Mill National Historic Site. The scenery on the course is spectacular, with views of wilderness, farmland and mountain ranges. Forest shades almost the entire trail, lowering the generally high August temperatures. Deer, bears, raccoons and the occasional cougar frequent the path, as do horse riders, walkers and bikers. Bald eagles soar majestically above the Beaufort Range.

Port Alberni is about 120K west of Vancouver and is known as the “Gateway to the West” and the “Salmon Capitol of the World.” Here you can step back in time and discover the inventive machinery and simple dwellings that created this lumber camp in the midst of the forest. Take a ride into town on the old steam logging locomotive No. 7, which winds its way through the picturesque Alberni Valley to the harbour quay. This is also where August 19, 2009 will mark the 20th anniversary of the Log Train Trail Marathon and Half-Marathon, the fifth year of being hosted at this venue and the fourth year since adding a 10K.

Organized by the Arrowsmith Radical Runners, a local running club, the Log Train is billed as “Vancouver Island’s alternative marathon.” There are no prizes for finishing fast

or first and runners are encouraged to “buddy up.” Those who take part in the full and half-marathon receive a genuine railway spike (recovered from the trail) in gold or silver, respectively. All runners and volunteers are entered into a draw for prizes, which are donated by local sponsors. Last year, 70 per cent of the runners won prizes. With about 100 entrants, the run is small but well-organized. Water stations are carefully planned to give runners maximum support and volunteer cyclists ensure everyone’s safety.—DCS

DESTINATION LOG TRAIN TRAIL

Race Stats

Races:	Marathon, Half-Marathon and 10K
Location:	Port Alberni, B.C., McLean Mill National Historic Site, Smith Road
Date:	August 19, 2009
Start Time:	8 a.m.
Race info:	www.arrowsmithradicalrunners.com
Log Train Trail:	www.acrd.bc.ca
Port Alberni:	www.portalbernitourism.ca
Places to stay:	www.port-alberni.travel.bc.ca