



**Trail Running has always had a mystique, an edge, an undeniable panache.** Tales are told and retold over beers in the back of a pickup, on the trail head, or at the local watering holes of races where runners overcome unimaginable terrains and distances. Where the personal struggles and victories of larger than life characters, trail runners, inspire new generations to follow in their footsteps. Trail Running is an escape from stats, and time trails, gear and too much tech. Trail running is for the rebel, the everyman, the ones who seek solace in nature; and love to get lost and found with every footfall. The woods call to these rag tag renegades who ditch the safety of pavement for the uncertainties of dirt, and Western States Endurance Run is our holy church!

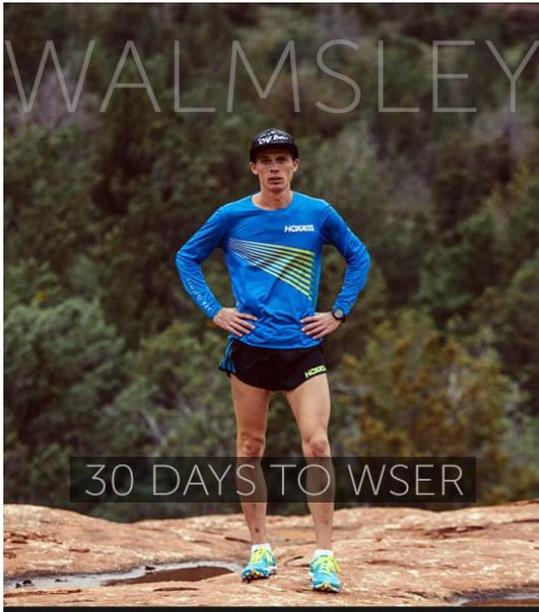
So why haven't we heard much about Western States this year, and how do we fix that? Where are the stories, the excitement, the heroes and the foils we love to watch as they battle over the Sierra Nevada's? The stories we are telling these days are good ones, but they aren't OUR stories. We've lost our way, and given into to hype of Stats, and the who, what and where to buy what we've been told we need. The truth is, we need a return to our roots! Like the runners who forged the path for us, we need to have more original, and more personal stories; these we believe are what makes our sport exciting, and relatable, one worth following. We think those stories are still there, stoked by fans and amateur runners as a quiet flame. So, let's build that flame into a bon fire, a beacon to call runners to listen and believe in their heroes; To invest their time and attention to our exciting races, like Western States! The stories don't have to be counter culture, as you can see in Lake Sonoma 50's Instagram feed, you can be mainstream and still hearken to an old truth: personal stories inspire personal dreams. We are proud to bring our focus back where it belongs, on our runners and on their tales of success and woes. This we believe is what keeps us invested.

Lucy Bartholomew grew up as a YMCA kid who turned Pro as a runner at age 16. The Aussie now 23 of Team Salomon esteem, finds her biggest struggle is being relevant in the sport after 7 years of blood, sweat, and tears, figuratively and sometimes literally. Lucy in true trail runner fashion, goes big and bold choosing Western States Endurance Run as the race to throw all her chips into, the big one! This Aussie has guts, not because it's a 100-mile race which would be adversity enough, but because the deck is stacked against her, and we can't turn away! We are captivated by the thought that this Australian running phenom is going to be running in snow, slush, water, and mud when we aren't even sure if she's ever even seen snow before! This is the type if story we need, these are OUR stories. Will she persevere, how will she make it? Real cliff hanger tales of triumph and sweet success that find you helplessly and hopelessly rooting for a runner, that is where we need to find ourselves once again as a sport.

Cheering on heroes as they tackle new and old courses alike, finding ourselves in their struggles and successes. Western States will always be an exciting time, and the future of it seems more exciting yet. We can't wait to see what this year and many years after will bring. To that, we say cheers to the people, places and stories that have brought us here to the foot of Squaw, and the struggles and success that will carry us over to the finish line in Auburn.

Skip Brand, Lindsay Murdick, and the whole Lake Sonoma 50 team

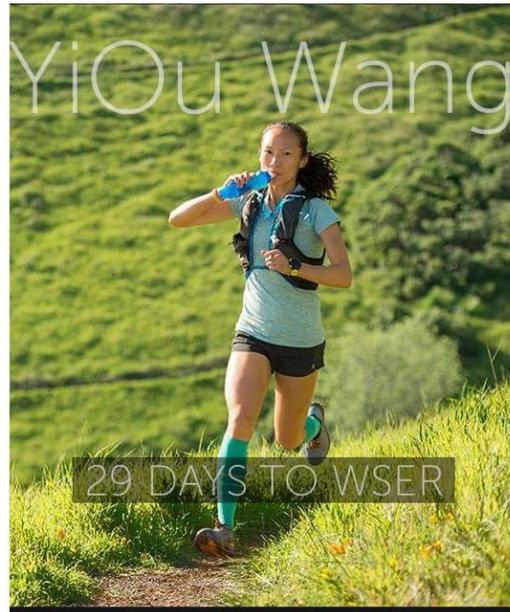
WALMSLEY



30 DAYS TO WSER

LAKE SONOMA  
**LS50**  
RELENTLESS

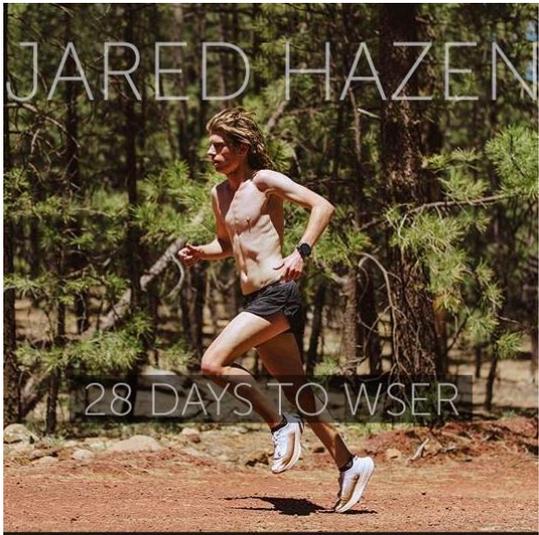
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29 DAYS TO WSER

LAKE SONOMA  
**LS50**  
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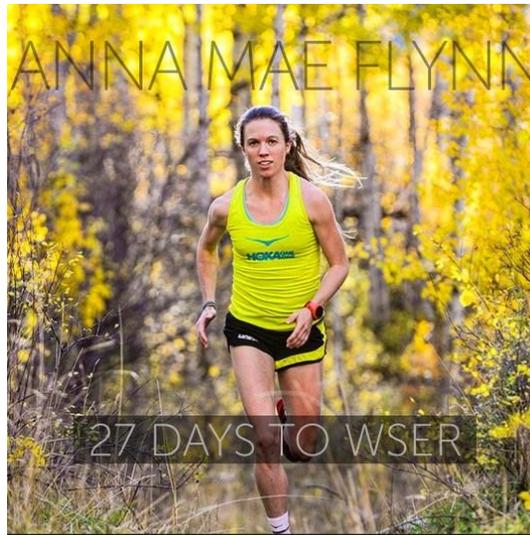
JARED HAZEN



28 DAYS TO WSER

LAKE SONOMA  
**LS50**  
RELENTLESS

ANNA MAE FLYNN



27 DAYS TO WSER

LAKE SONOMA  
**LS50**  
RELENTLESS

