

Mount Royal Summit Quest - Course Description *by Nestor Lewyckyj*



The race starts at midnight at the main lookout on Mount Royal on Saturday night. At the sound of the starters horn, you run up the steps to the left of the chalet and then take the gravel road to the right up the hill and you loop around the summit. As you come down to the lookout again, you have to remember to loop around the summit one more time, and then head on down the gravel road, past the top of the slope above Beaver lake and on downwards towards Park Avenue.

As you come to Park Avenue, be careful of the lights and cross safely across, down the stairs on the other side and continue due East onto Rachel and continue down past the bars full of Saturday night (and Fete Nationale) revellers towards Parc Lafontaine. You will hit the park at the North-West corner but you want to exit at the South-East corner, so you want to do a diagonal traverse. If you do not know the park, this may be a bit tricky, but you want to pass to the left of the lake that is at the center of the park. If you pick a good line, you should hit Sherbrooke just West of Papineau. Pick up Papineau and head south, staying on the right side. As you cross Ontario be aware that you will want to curl first left, crossing several lanes of traffic, so be careful of what is going around you, and then to the right, with a very small park to your right as you pick up the on ramp to the Jacques Cartier bridge. Run on the side walk on the right side of the bridge.

Midway across the bridge, in the saddle point, you must take the exit for Ile Ste-Helene to the right, and as you take that exit, bear to the left and run down the steep road curling right as you get onto Chemin MacDonald, running along the river against the current, now heading due South. A little over a kilometre further ahead will be the Pont de la Concorde, but you need to be aware that the pedestrian on ramp is before the bridge, a small path to your right and climbs right then bears left onto the stairs up to the bridge. As you come up, bear right and keep going towards, and then past, the Habitat. Almost 3 kilometres from the start of the bridge, you will reach the Bonaventure Expressway with a large parking lot on your right. You need to turn right at the Bonaventure, following a bike path on the right side. This path will weave a bit and go under the expressway itself but stay on it. The path will exit to the left just as you reach the Lachine Canal. Pick up the path on the left side of the canal and continue Southwestwards. You are at the 21 kilometre mark.

It's a beautiful run along the canal in the middle of the night. It will be about 02:00 - 02:30 by now and very few people will be out. Keep along the left side of the canal, past the Charlevoix bridge (and the famous Magnan's Tavern) until you see the pedestrian bridge that is arched slightly with the green steel railing. Cross the bridge over to the right side of the canal and keep heading Westwards. Highway 20 and the Turcot area will be very close to your right as you run along, but traffic will be very light by now. Several kilometres ahead you will come to a red Caboose which normally has an aid station. Past the caboose, take the bridge over to the left side of the canal again, and keep heading up the canal. As you hit the start of the canal, you will be taking a sharp right on Chemin du Musée which will then curl left and you want to end up on the left hand side of the street as it becomes Boulevard Saint Joseph, and later on, Lakeshore. You are at the 32 kilometre mark in Lachine and depending on your speed, it is about 03:00 - 03:45 and you will soon be hearing the birds chirping as they wake up.

You essentially just run westwards along lakeshore all the way to Pointe Claire. Remember that the bars have closed on the biggest weekend in Quebec. If you are running along the road, pay attention to cars that may be driving erratically. You will hit Pointe Claire Village at about the 47 kilometre mark and it will be about 05:00 - 06:00. You **MUST** remember to run all the way to St. Charles along Lakeshore, turn left at the traffic lights, and loop back along the water back to the Village. Your mid-point stop for rest, re-supply, equipment adjustments will be the parking lot on St-Anne Street. Volunteers will be waiting for you. This is the 50 kilometre mark and the start of the 50 km run at 06:00.

As you start running again, remember you **MUST** bear right again on Lakeshore, run back to St. Charles, turn left towards the water and come back to the Village and keep heading downriver, Eastwards. You now retrace your steps exactly for the next 50 kilometres. Everything you have done up until now you will now do in reverse. There are a couple of spots where you can get into trouble. You will be running on the right side of the canal but remember to cross over to the left side where the caboose is. Also, further down as you are running now on the left side of the canal, remember to cross over onto the right side using the arched pedestrian bridge with the green painted steel handrails. Runners in past races have stayed on the left side and have found themselves in the Old Port and Old Montreal! This sounds simple as you read it now, but you will be tired, you will have been running 7 or 8 or 9 hours by now, and it will take concentration to remember which way you should be going. Taking the wrong turn during the canal section is easier than it sounds now.

As you approach the Jacques Cartier bridge, remember that you are not a car, so you are looking for directions to the South Shore but instead, as you actually hit the bridge, you will turn left into town, running on the left side of the bridge. Just retrace your steps exactly. As you run up Rachel Westwards towards the mountain, take care crossing Park Avenue and take the gravel road up. As you approach the main chalet, remember that you **MUST** bear left and loop the summit, come back down to the lookout, and do the loop of the summit a second time, before finishing at the look out. Depending on how you have done, it will now be 09:00 - 13:00 and it may be 30°C.